



TIGER TALK

RETURN OF THE TIGERS

A Hudson Falls Middle School Newsletter

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RETURNING & REFLECTING: A LOOK BACK AT THIS YEAR

BY KATHERINE CHENEY

As everyone knows, the past year and a half has not been normal, and it has been a learning experience for all of us. Now that we have returned to school for 5 days a week, and with summer approaching and the school year winding down, it's a good time to reflect on everything we've been through!

Throughout this year, we all had smaller classes, and participated in hybrid/virtual learning--something we had never heard of before. We all have fought through it together. We might not have gotten to decorate lockers, walk to class with friends, or have school clubs. But there were some things that didn't change!

Luckily, we still had the chance to play some sports this year, and we still got to take encore classes. We got to know our teachers better (we even saw their pets sometimes!) and have gym class. Most importantly, this year helped us get to know ourselves better. We learned what we were good at, like trying new technology out. And we improved on our independence, working from home. And while this year has been rough on all of us, the future looks bright.

For these last few weeks of school, we got to come back full time to finish out the year. We got to see our friends again, and have fun. And next school year, things will get even better. Mr. Whitty, our new principal, said he is excited to see everyone come back and he can't wait for next year. Students are really excited too. One student said, "This year has definitely been strange, but it's nice to be back now and see my friends." And we could not agree more!

Since this year has been difficult for everyone, we can all agree that we can't wait for summer. But we kind of can't wait for September too, when everything will hopefully get back to normal completely!



Students play a "Talking Chips" game in ELA.

CREATIVITY BLOOMS DURING DISTANCE LEARNING BY ROWAN FLEWELLING

When you hear "Social Distancing," you think of being stuck inside, not being able to see your friends, and all of your favorite sports being canceled. Although all of those things happened, students at Hudson Falls Middle School found creative ways to make distance learning more fun.

The students that did come in two days a week, and even the all-virtual kids, were encouraged by teachers to have fun while learning, where it might have been missing before. Teachers put more enthusiasm and energy into things we learned every day to try and make class enjoyable, whether we were home or in school. Observing in Mr. Sliva's English class, the students have never been more optimistic about reading! Students loved reading *The Giver* and building utopian worlds. Projects happened all over the school, like the bird houses in science class with Mrs. Doody and Mr. Mazurak, or the book trailers that 7th graders filmed during Mrs. Sheridan's class. Although we were learning in a weird way, school had never been more creative. Because we were limited in activities, many students also tried engaging in new hobbies. Students found new interests, tried new sports at home, and just explored their creative side. Eighth grader Valeria Lopez said, "Before the virus hit all I really wanted to do was read and draw. I soon realized I was running out of ideas and books...I got inspired to play music again. I started to listen to piano, recorder, and guitars, all instruments I used to play. I dug up them out and tried to play. Turns out I really like piano, and if it wasn't for being stuck at home with nothing to do, I wouldn't have found out I really like it."



Students use Jamboard to collaborate and discuss evidence with virtual students.

The moral of this story? Even stuck at home, learning through a computer, Tigers always find a way to fight through and have fun!

Celebrations!

*Middle School Band & Orchestra
perform James Brown's "I Feel Good"*



*Middle School 7th & 8th Orchestra
perform "Levitating" Remix*



BEST VIDEO GAMES FOR SUMMER

BY HENRI WILSON, KEGAN LAFARR, & JACOB CROSSE

1. *Minecraft*

This is a very creative game, so you can do whatever you want in it. You can build houses, fight boss battles, eat chicken...Because it has a massive server base, there are a lot of people you can play against. Survival mode is our personal favorite. Everything in it is just super satisfying, like defeating the Enderdragon and Wither.

2. *Overwatch*

This is a hugely competitive game, and very creative. You can make mini games in it, and it has a lot of balance changes, so all the characters can be good enough to make the game exciting. You can do a lot of combo moves, and there are special shields and events and strategies to learn.

3. *Fortnite*

It's a classic for a reason. This is a huge game because there are thousands of creators. There are also monthly updates, with new seasons coming out every couple of months, and a large creator mode for games. This means there are infinite possibilities of what you can do!

*Click the videos below to
view our performances and
celebrations from this year.*

Moving Up Ceremony 2021



RECOMMENDED READS

BY KATHERINE CHENEY

Hatchet by Gary Paulsen

It's a really good book for those who love human vs. nature stories. It goes through many types of character development. This is a story of survival, and the main character has only his own brains and a hatchet to survive the wilderness.

Dear Martin by Nic Stone

It's about real life racial injustice, and is a good example of diversity. This book is mature, so make sure you have a parent's permission before you read it. If you do, though, it's a great learning experience.

The Newcomer by Mary Kay Andrews

In this book, the main character recently lost her sister and has to navigate the world in a whole new way, with her 4 year old niece in tow. This book will keep you on your toes and wanting to read more.

Hour of the Bees by Lindsay Eagar

Follow Carol to her grandfather's ranch in the middle of nowhere, and the place her Dad hates the most. As her Grandfather slips deeper and deeper into dementia, and his stories of bees get crazier, Carol starts to believe her grandfather, but will she be too late? This book has amazing description and has a realistic storyline.



Student Voices

WRITING DESIGNED TO MAKE YOU THINK.

HFMS EDITORIAL TEAM

ON FEMINISM

BY ALEXIS ROCKWELL

What does the word feminism make you think? Well to many, it is one of the most important things to them. Not only does it empower women, it makes them feel heard and seen. Feminism is still important today because we still need to promote equality everywhere for everyone and stop judging women for just living. Workplace inequality and continued violence are real issues, and they affect women much more than men.

It's sad to think that we don't have true equality in the 21st century. Since the beginning of time, women have been treated poorly, seen as lesser to men. The first thing we need to address is the unfair treatment women experience in the workplace. An article by Julian Bonte-Friedheim called "The Perspective on Feminism: Is It Still Relevant Today?" talks about the mistreatment of women in the

workplace in paragraph 3, "In fact, women employees were experiencing condescension from their male so much that a new term was coined for it: mansplaining. Apparently, women get mansplained to six times a week." This is an issue because of the mentality that women cannot do more difficult jobs, so 'useless' or 'easy' jobs are handed to them instead. In another article called "Why Feminism Still Matters to Young People" by Kristin Aune, it talks about women generally having lower income: "They have shouldered 86% of the income loss from changes to the tax and benefits system since 2010." It can be hard for not only women, but single mothers to earn a stable income unless they're wealthy.

In addition to workplace inequality, violence against women has increased, especially in 2019-2020. The article *The Perspective on Feminism: Is It Still Relevant Today?* by Julian Bonte-Friedheim talks about this: "Every 9 seconds, a woman in the U.S. is beaten or assaulted." This doesn't only go for the US, but all of the world, and a lot of women aren't getting the justice they deserve. In the same

article, it talks about why women can't get justice. "...it's not enough to stop violence; many women still don't get the help that they need due to lack of funding." Yet funds are not the only problem. They also face the fears of people not believing them or they're still too scared to come forward.

If you're reading this and saying to yourself, "Men go through this too," you're 100% correct. However, despite many seeing feminism as 'anti-man,' true feminism is about equality for everyone. Things like discrimination and eating disorders are more common in women, and *The Perspective on Feminism: Is It Still Relevant Today?* by Julian Bonte-Friedheim talks about the social struggles women are put through. "An issue for all women, whether models, celebrities or regular Janes of all ages, this condition is exacerbated by a feeling of needing to lose weight to look more attractive." This is a problem that most if not all women go through. It shows that even if you have all the money in the world, all the plastic surgery you want, somebody in the world or the Internet will have

something to say about it. The same article also talks about objectification: "The fashion industry and media - including social media - have long contributed to the objectification of women. This is reflected in society, where female celebrities are body-shamed for not having what's considered the ideal body type (and this includes men!)." With cellphones being a thing since the early '70s and social media platforms like Instagram and Twitter, men and women alike are feeling much better about themselves. Especially with the recent increased representation of plus and WOCs (women of color), which have been seen as "ugly," women are able to feel seen and appreciated no matter what they look like.

Feminism is seen as a heavy topic that only women bear. People who call themselves feminists are seen as men hating people, but that isn't what it is. It's all about equality that women should've had all along. We need to drop all of the toxic mentalities about women and finally see them as equal.

ANIMALS IN CAPTIVITY

BY VALERIA LOPEZ

Have you--yes you, the reader--ever seen a tiger? Or even an elephant or lion? If you have, where have you seen it? Was it out in the wild running with a pack, or stuck inside a building in an enclosure, day after day, lying around with nothing to do? Humans are not the only life force on earth. There are also animals, and unfortunately, we're changing them. Animals shouldn't be kept in captivity because it causes depression and other health problems, and after being in captivity, most animals die after being released.

A big reason why animals should not be kept in captivity is because it depresses the animals and can cause health problems. An example of this are orcas. In an article by *National Geographic* called "Orcas Don't Do Well in Captivity: Here's Why," it said, "A peer-reviewed 2017 study in the journal *Archives* show that orcas in captivity in the US have severe tooth damage. Some Orca populations in the wild also show wear and tear on their teeth, but it's symmetrical and happens gradually over decades, in contrast to the acute

and irregular damage seen in captive orcas." As a direct result of their captivity, orcas have unnatural things happening to themselves. Because orcas have been seen grinding their teeth to the point that their nerves are exposed, infection in the orca's mouth may be a big problem for the animal. A different example can be seen through "Zoos Cause Animals Far More Harm Than Good" by *Sentient Media*: "Zoos engage in animal exploitation by profiting from the visitor attention and conservation grants they garner while providing the captive animals with a poor quality of life. Since 1995, zoos have turned to antidepressants, tranquilizers, and antipsychotic drugs to alleviate depression and aggression among zoo animals across America." As shown, animals are clearly being neglected and not taken care of properly by zoos, so why should we send animals to a place of suffering?

Another reason why we shouldn't have animals in captivity is because most animals die after being released. In the article "Can captive whales or dolphins be returned to the wild?" by "WDC," it says, "It may not be possible to return all captive whales and dolphins to the wild. Following long spells in captivity, some may be too physically or mentally scarred to survive without human care." This proves that because humans have been in animal lives for so long, those

animals start to lose the ability to survive independently. If this is the case, most animals now can't go back to the wild and must remain in captivity, where they have to wait to die to be able to be free. If that wasn't enough, an article by *National Geographic*, "Most Captive-Born Predators Die If Released," also states that "Most large, captive-bred carnivores die if returned to their natural habitat, a new study has found. The odds of animals such as tigers and wolves surviving freedom are only 33 percent according to a team of researchers from the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom." This further proves that animals are most likely to die because of humans not letting them to learn how to survive.

Of course some people may argue that zoos educate the public about the animals, but animals usually don't even act the same way in captivity as they do in the wild. An example of this can be found in an article called "Wild vs. Captivity," by *Animal Welfare Institution*. It said, "Cetaceans can travel up to 100 miles daily, feeding and socializing with other members of their pods. Pods can contain hundreds of individuals with complex social bonds and hierarchies. Cetaceans are housed in small enclosures, unable to swim in a straight line for long or dive deeply. Sometimes they are housed alone without opportunities for

socialization, or they are forced to live with incompatible animals and even species with whom they would not naturally have close contact." This shows multiple awful things, like how zoos separate groups and give them far to small enclosures. How will they be able to be happy and socialize if they're alone? Something else it proves is that animals can't get enough exercise in captivity because they are in a limited space. In "Zoos: the Life of Animals in Captivity" by *Animal Equality*, it says, "The behavior of animals in zoos is typical of many other animals in captivity. It is stunted and unnatural. Zoos do not teach children about the natural attributes of animals, on the contrary zoos provide a distorted image and teach them how animals should not be living." This also shows that zoos are not educating visitors on the actual behavior of animals. They show a natural behavior that is not likely to be seen in the wild.

In conclusion, taking animals from their home is just wrong. They deserve to be in the wild where they belong. Being held captive causes depression and other health problems to the animals, and after being in captivity most animals die after being released. So why should we make them go through that pain? Next time you go to a zoo or aquarium, think how you'd feel if you were in their place.

ONEONTA

Kennedy Worline is the Team Oneonta featured student!

"Kennedy enjoys dancing and crocheting, and her favorite school subject is a tie between Science and Social Studies. Kennedy likes acting and says she "can sing if I really wanted to." Staying close to her family and keeping her grades up are very important to her. Currently, she is working on perfecting the dances for a musical she is doing at her church. Kennedy's motto is "just keep moving, even when it's hard, because eventually you will find light in your darkness."



#TEAMTALK

POTSDAM

Alexis Colvin is the Team Potsdam featured student!

Mr. Williamson says that "Throughout the year Alexis never missed a google meet or a day of school. She always worked hard and was respectful to all her teachers and peers." Alexis says that her main goal right now is to always do her work. She is also much more social at home (on her phone!) than she is here in school, and spends a lot of time doing arts and crafts. The most important thing to Alexis is her family and her friends. We are sure they're very proud of you! Congratulations Alexis!



CORTLAND

Hailey Wright is the Team Cortland featured student!

Hailey enjoys playing video games and skateboarding. Mrs. Niesz says that Hailey is very unique. Hailey likes to say "Let's gooooo da baby style!" She also says that her goals are to get onto the honor roll, and to paint a perfect picture for her dad. One thing Hailey is really proud of is a painting she made with a blue sky, white stars, and a black tree with white flowers. "It is probably my greatest accomplishment," she said. Way to go, Hailey!



PLATTSBURGH

The featured student for Team Plattsburgh is **Lexus Boyer**.

Lexus likes spending time with her family and enjoying a good book in her free time. She loves the movie Space Jam. Lexus's family and friends are extremely important to Lexus, and she knows she can count on them. Mrs. Steele said "Lexus is an incredibly hard worker." Lexus hopes to go to Harvard, Yale, or Princeton and become a lawyer. Congratulations Lexus!



ALBANY

The Team Albany featured student is **Skyler Rock**. Skyler enjoys playing baseball and playing video games in his free time. Skyler's family is very important to him. He used to live and work on a farm with them. His goal is to get his first job this summer. Mrs. Sheridan says, "Skyler has been a rockstar all year long. He constantly works hard and keeps everyone in great spirits during class." Skyler also has a message to share. He said "One thing I would like to share with everyone is to keep their head up high, and we can all get through this pandemic." Congratulations to Skyler Rock!

