



# ELEMENTS



Madison Country Day School Student Newspaper

## Highlights

**2 ~ Middle School vs High School** What do middle and high school students think of one another? An interesting account of what middle and high school students think of growing up.

**3 ~ Raptors in Wisconsin** Read about some of the types of raptors you can see right outside our school.

**4 ~ Spring Equinox** Read about how the Spring Equinox is celebrated in different countries around the world.

**5 ~ Spark Notes** Ever read spark notes to get a summary of the book you were supposed to read? Here is a compilation of some hilariously literal, brief summaries of some of the books we read in English class over the years.

**6 ~ Leprechaun Trap** Learn how to make your own, adorable leprechaun trap to decorate for St. Patrick's Day.



Lower school students at the March 2015 STEAM fair

## The STEAM Fair

By: Sophia '18

Since its debut in 2015, the MCDS STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics) Fair has developed into a spectacular display of all of the “steam-y” activities our community is involved with. The STEAM fair is the finale to MCDS’s STEAM week (March 5-9) throughout which students will have many opportunities to explore the STEAM fields. Here’s a preview of what you can find at the upcoming STEAM fair:

Similar to last year, there will be a human brain for visitors to look at and touch. The game Squirrel Nuts will also make a reappearance. There will also be more virtual reality (VR) technology which STEAM fair coordinator, Mr. Eaton, says are “usually very popular.” Additionally, the famous Dr. Bassam Z. Shakhashiri will present for the students again this year with his popular chemistry show, pursuing his dream of making science fun.

There will also be many new opportunities at the STEAM Fair this year. Dr. Rebecca Williams from the Planetary Science Institute in Waunakee will be visiting to talk about her work with the Mars rover. “She wakes up in the morning, goes to her computer, and drives the rover around mars from the comfort of her home,” Mr. Eaton explains, “They study the surface of Mars for evidence of water.” If you are interested in the planetary sciences, Dr. Williams would be an excellent resource to talk to. There will also be some representatives from NASA who work in this field. Other presenters include an artist who works with recycled materials, some people from the Henry Vilas Zoo, and a scientist from Amazon.

When asked what his favorite part of the STEAM fair was, Mr. Eaton said that he enjoys the student projects. Like in past years, the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students have been working on science projects of their own and will also be presenting on the day of the fair. Feel free to join us at the STEAM fair March 9<sup>th</sup> and talk to students, and industry professionals about the STEAM fields.

## Important Events of March 2018:

Friday  
**9**

MCDS STEAM Fair

Thursday  
**15**

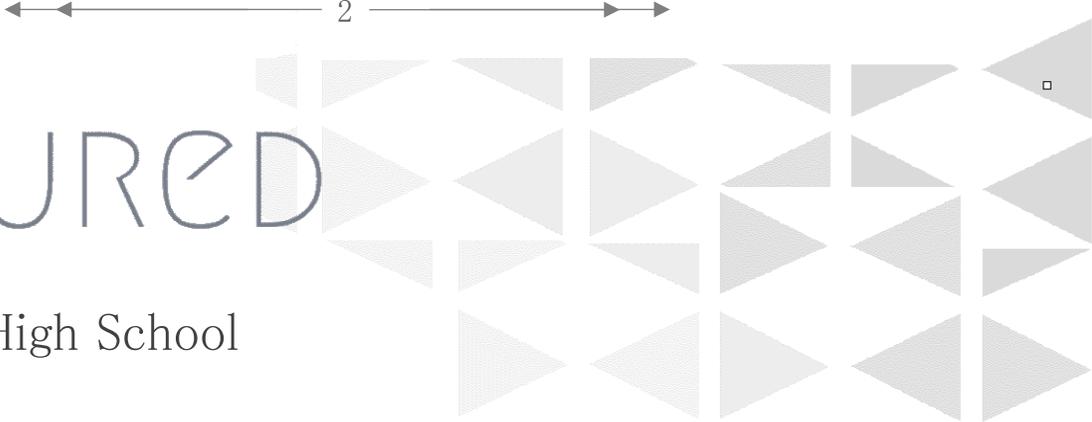
Parent-teacher conferences

Monday  
**19**

HS Girls Soccer Begins

Monday  
**26**

Spring Break!



# FEATURED

## Middle School vs High School

By: Kenzie '25

Welcome to the 1st Middle school vs High school!!

In this edition, I will be interviewing middle and high schoolers. Each month we will have a new question. This question will pertain to both middle and high schoolers (of course). Well, let's get started!

I talked to all of my 5th grade classmates about how they feel about high schoolers. I asked questions like: How do you feel about high schoolers? How would you feel if you were a high schooler? What are some differences between high schoolers and middle schoolers?

For the 1st question, how do you feel about high schoolers, I had mixed answers. One stood out in quite a few answers. It was that high schoolers swear a lot. This was not unexpected, as I have heard several different high schoolers swear, but what was also interesting was that some others said that they don't swear as much as middle schoolers. For the 2nd, how would you feel if you were a

high schooler, there were many different answers. Most said that they would correct the mistakes of the present high schoolers. That was kind of nice. The 5th graders, with them being so far away from high school, were looking for improvement. For the 3rd, what are some differences between middle school and high school, I didn't get as many mixed answers. Actually, almost everyone had the same answer. Height. Most 5th graders said that the high schoolers are taller than middle schoolers.

I interviewed only a few high schoolers (mostly because I don't know many) and I asked them questions like: How do you feel about middle schoolers? What are some differences between middle schoolers and high schoolers? How did you feel about high schoolers when you were in middle school?

For the first, how do you feel about middle schoolers, I got different answers so there were basically no similar answers. I got answers like: That they can be bratty and loud. The overall answers said

some version of middle schoolers can be loud, a little bratty and that they have less spacial awareness. This was not unexpected, as I see some of those traits in myself for better or worse. For the second, what are some differences between high schoolers and middle schoolers, overall I got: They can have a little bit of a greater sense of humor and they are sometimes a little more creative. I totally understand what they mean. Lastly, for the third, how did you feel about high schoolers when you were in middle school, I got that you always want to be on their good side and that they are intimidating. I also got that they are very studious and it makes you feel like "Aw, man, I'll have to do all that one day?!" I think it is pretty cool to see what the high schoolers thought when they were middle schoolers. Nobody really ever remembers that high schoolers were once middle schoolers.

And that's it for the first High school vs Middle school! Hope you enjoyed!

## Jokes with Mr. Stenroos

By: Emily '25 and Kenzie '25

We chose to interview Mr. Stenroos about his "dad jokes" that everyone loves. We all know his funny sense of humor and we were interested to learn where he got it and why he tells them. We also included a "Stenroos exclusive" where he gave us some of his jokes. If you don't know about his jokes now you will soon.

We asked him some questions like... Where do you get your jokes? How do you present a joke? And, how can you tell a good joke from a bad joke?

First, he talked about where he got his jokes. Mostly, he says, his jokes come from things he's heard over the years from his dad, on the internet, and things he's heard on television. Second, he talked about how to present a joke. He told us that it just comes naturally and you feel it coming and go with it. Lastly, he talked about how to tell a good joke from a bad joke, and the answer for this was: if the joke makes you think, groan, and smile at the same time, then it's a good joke.

Now, for the "Stenroos exclusive!" Here are some of Mr. Stenroos's best jokes:

Three men walked into a bar, the fourth one ducked.

I'm very good friends with 25 letters of the alphabet, I don't know Y.

My mom thinks I'm such a bright boy, she calls me sunny.

Why does Waldo wear stripes? Because he doesn't want to be spotted.

Those are some facts that we learned from Mr. Stenroos about his jokes. Hope you liked our article! And be sure to thank Mr. Stenroos for his funny and happy sense of humor! He makes the school a better place. Thank you, Mr. Stenroos!

## Raptors in Wisconsin

By: Elsa '23

Birds of prey is the common term that actually refers to almost all species of birds, even ducks, wrens, and penguins! This means any bird that eats other animals. What most people really mean by this term is often hawks, owls, eagles, and falcons. What separates this group from regular birds of prey is the fact that they catch their food with their feet, or talons. The correct term for these kinds of birds is raptors, not birds of prey.

Now that you know what I am talking about when I say “raptors,” let’s get in to the ones that live in Wisconsin! There are dozens of species, but the most common are probably red tailed hawks, great horned owls, cooper's hawks, barred owls, and American kestrels.



Red Tailed Hawk



Great Horned Owl



Cooper's Hawk



Barred Owl



American Kestrel

At MCDS there have been numerous sightings of red tailed hawks, a barred owl, and a bald eagle. People have also heard great horned owls. All these species are very important to our environment because they help keep all the other populations in check. By eating rodents, they prevent the numbers of vermin from getting so big that they run out of resources. Therefore raptors are both beautiful birds and are extremely important for the natural balance of our environment.

Of course if you are interested in viewing these fantastic fowls, feel free to hike on the beautiful MCDS trails, where several of them can be spotted, as well as many other species. Of course you can also get access to nature at state parks and other nature reserves, but if you are specifically interested in viewing raptors, one of the best places in the country to view them is Open Door Bird Sanctuary. It is located in Jacksonport, Door County, just off of County Road I. It has three great horned owls, two red tailed hawks, two marlins, a northern saw-whet owl, a Eurasian eagle owl, a kestrel, a turkey vulture, and a beautiful natural landscape including a prairie, boreal forest, and deciduous forest.



Elsa '23 at the Open Door Bird Sanctuary

If you have any further questions about raptors in Wisconsin, or Open Door Bird Sanctuary, please contact Elsa Moritz.

## Life Tips of Travel and Other Stuff

By: Elsa '23 and Iain '25

When traveling in Fiji, an island country in the South Pacific avoid touching anyone on their heads. It is only frowned upon now, but hundreds of years ago it was horribly disrespectful. The last victim was a missionary in the mid 1800's, who was killed and eaten! (Note: the people of Fiji today do not practice cannibalism.)

When in Romania (a large country in Europe) don't wave your hand goodbye like we do here in the U.S. because usually, it means hello. When you wave your hand with the palm FACING you, it means goodbye.

When in China don't point to things or people with your pinky because some people consider it rude.

In places such as South Korea and Japan it is not customary to tip.

In Greece it is considered rude by some to put your thumbs up; it has the same meaning as the middle finger in the Americas.

In South Korea it is customary to show up earlier than the time you planned on

When in Brazil do not make the OK gesture. This is considered the Brazilian equivalent to the middle finger to some people.

# Spring Equinox

By: Rachel '18

The spring equinox is the day when the length of the day and night are approximately equal. It falls on March 20. Around the world there are many different traditions associated with this day. Here are just a few.

## China

Chinese tradition dating back to ancient times where they would balance eggs on the day of the spring equinox for good luck and prosperity. In modern times, it is a common myth that the spring equinox is the only day where you can perfectly balance an egg on its end. This can actually be done on any day and feel free to try it!



## Iran

The Iranian New Year called Nowruz (literally “New Day”) occurs during the Spring Equinox and has been celebrated for over 3,000 years. It marks the beginning of a new calendar year on the Solar Hejri calendar. People prepare for the celebration by doing extensive spring cleaning and buying some new clothes. The celebrations last for two weeks during which people are expected to visit each other, often for short periods of time so that they have time to visit everyone. On the last day everyone goes outside for a picnic to connect with nature. Nowruz is also celebrated in some other countries including Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, and China.



## Mexico

The start of spring is celebrated in Mexico with festivales de primavera. One of the most popular places to celebrate the spring equinox is the pyramid Chichen Itza which was built by the Mayans in 1000 AD. The way that the light shines on the pyramid indicates the beginning of each season. At the beginning of spring the light is in the pattern of a snake going down the pyramid.

## Japan

The spring equinox is a national holiday in Japan called Shunbun no Hi. This was traditionally a time to venerate ancestors and became a holiday to pay respects to past members of the royal family. In 1948, the holiday was

secularized and celebrates the love of nature and living things. People also still take the day to visit graves and have family reunions.

# Editorial: Reducing Meat and Sugar in Your Diet

By: Rhea '24

Has someone ever told you to eat more protein? Did they also tell you that humans eat twice the amount of protein they need?

There are many common food myths all over the world. People say that you need to eat animals for protein, and that milk makes your bones stronger. But that’s all these were: legends. Maybe some of these legends were true at first (humans did need those things), but once humans started to eat those things too much, it became a problem. Studies have actually shown that greater milk consumption is closely related with hip fractures.

When humans drink milk, the milk releases an acid into your body, and to counteract it, your body takes calcium from your bones, which makes them less strong.

People say that you need meat for protein, when the truth is that all protein originally comes from plants. The animals who eat it (or pass it down the food chain) recycle the protein, making the amount bigger. But that doesn’t mean you don’t get protein if you eat plants, you just have to eat enough.



All the biggest animals (elephants, apes, etc.) are herbivores, and they get enough protein.

Humans’ teeth are actually shaped in the flatter, broader shape of herbivores’ teeth, not the sharp, pointy teeth that carnivores have. Also, humans’ guts are shaped differently from carnivores’, and more like herbivores’.

One important food myth is that eating too much sugar gives you diabetes. In reality, it’s not only sugar (this doesn’t mean that sugar is *good* for you), it is also meat, because of the fat. When fat builds up in your veins, it can cause clots in later stages. Fat buildup from meat also increases your chances of getting cancer and other dangerous diseases.

Humans have been able to reverse dangerous diseases such as cancer and diabetes by eating healthy!

## Spark Notes

By: Ari '23, Sophia '18, and Sophie '18

Every year in English class MCDS students are required to read some books. Listed below are some books that we remember reading over the years and accurate summaries written by people who had the pleasure of reading them for themselves. Beware, they do contain spoilers! (Feel free to read these before English class to help you out)

**The Pearl:** A greedy couple of parents find a bajillion dollars and almost kill their baby son while hunters hunt them for money, but with symbolism.



**To Kill a Mockingbird:** To Kill A Mockingbird features a late 1800s perspective of a young girl living in times of racism. You see the book through her eyes and through the author's. (this one's real)

**The Tempest:** A controlling old man takes his daughter to an isolated island. While practicing Jedi mind tricks on his own baby girl, the wizard tries to keep boys away from her at the same time he abuses his fish-man of a slave.

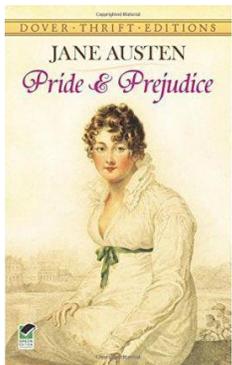
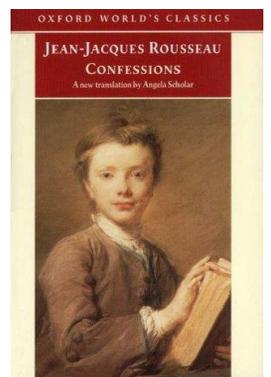
**Julius Caesar:** Another Shakespeare play where this time Brutus literally stabs Caesar in the back.

**The Great Gatsby:** Poor boy gets rich to impress an old love by whisking her around his giant mansion and extravagant parties in an effort to recreate the past. Did we mention she's married?

**Mrs. Dalloway:** This positively exhilarating tale follows a senior woman through the course of a single day in London: not only does she do a lot of walking and lists every single street name, but she also buys a dress (spoiler alert! It's green). It also details the troubled mind of a WWI veteran who is having some spousal issues.

**Rousseau's confessions:** Enter the honest confessions of a baby-faced man: peeing in a neighbor's pot as a kid, his father leaving him, and a few lady troubles.

**Fahrenheit 451:** The story of a man in a disturbing future where absurd things are illegal, such as books. The man realizes how dumb this world is, breaks some rules, then gets chased down by some robot dogs.



**Walk Two Moons:** A really depressing story about a girl who travels super far to see her mom, only to find that (spoiler alert) her mom had died and literally everyone she knew had been lying to her the whole time.

**The Odyssey:** A son journeys off to find his father who is imprisoned by a nymph. A combination of flowery language, mad people, and the powers of the greek gods and goddesses helps to bring the father home.

**Pride and Prejudice:** An illogical and spastic mother whose husband could not be more her opposite try to desperately marry off all five of their daughters; two of which are young and obsessed with every male they see, one which is sort of ugly and unappealing overall, and the oldest two which are actually decent and logical human beings.

**Hamlet:** Hamlet's dad (the king) dies and his mother marries his uncle (so he therefore has a dunkle?) and he just has massive mood swings throughout the entire play which basically leads to everyone's death. (Could a Shakespeare play end any differently?)

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Tax Simulation

By: Iain '25

The 5th grade is doing a simulation in history class where Mr. Stenroos is teaching them all about the taxes that King George III put on the colonists. First, we get tax popsicle sticks, and if you run out of sticks you go to debtor's prison. Going to debtor's prison means that you help Mr. Stenroos with classroom work during recess. Different taxes that we have now are the sugar act, the lead act, and the paper act. For the sugar act, 5th graders get taxed for sugar they have in their lunches and snacks. For the paper act, we are getting taxed on all paper we have that is not school related. But thankfully, the lead tax makes it so that if you are writing in pencil, you do not have to get taxed.





## St. Patrick's Day Leprechaun Trap

By: Rhea '24, Xanthe '24

Do you want to meet the leprechaun? Just set up one of our simple, easy to do leprechaun traps!

⚠Disclaimer: this trap probably won't work but it will still be fun to make.⚠

### Items Needed:

- Construction paper (all colors of the rainbow)
- A box (cardboard works)
- Toothpicks
- Tophat (other accessories optional)
- Glue or tape



### Instructions:

- 1) Take the cardboard box and cut a small, square hole in the top.
- 2) Now for the trap: take green construction paper and tape/glue on two/four flaps on each side of the square hole (see image below).
- 3) Cover the box (other than the flaps) with green construction paper. It doesn't have to be plain green construction paper: you can have decorated/patterned paper too.
- 4) Make a rainbow with your colored paper.
- 5) Fold the bottoms of the rainbow backwards and tape or glue it onto the top of the box.
- 6) Put your fake (or real) gold near the edges of the flap, so they don't fall in, but they are not off the flaps.
- 7) Take your toothpicks and make a ladder by gluing/taping any number of shorter toothpicks onto two longer toothpicks.
- 8) Prop the ladder onto the box (this will be the way the leprechaun climbs to the gold-and falls in!)
- 9) Now, it is up to you: you can decorate it how you want, maybe with things that would be attractive to a leprechaun, such as clovers, fake (or real) gold, or green hats, and you can stick them all over the box.
- 10) The leprechaun will fall through the flaps when they walk across to get the gold.

### Fun Facts:

-The color of St. Patrick's Day used to be blue, but it was changed to green when Ireland became known as the Emerald Isle.

-Chicago has dyed its river green every St. Patrick's Day since 1962.

## Bye Bye World

By: Kenzie '25

