

# THE BRIDGE

[www.k12.ginet.org](http://www.k12.ginet.org)

Grand Island Central School District

Fall 2007 The Bridge - The Community Newsletter for the Grand Island Central School District [www.k12.ginet.org](http://www.k12.ginet.org)

## Inside:

Superintendent's Column .....	pg. 2
Transportation Review to Begin .....	pg. 3
Bus + Safety = Fun .....	pg. 3
Student Council Elections .....	pg. 4
Blanket Making Workshop .....	pg. 4
The Monster Bash .....	pg. 4
New Award Honors K-12 Student Artists .....	pg. 5
Vocal Music Teacher Organizes International Music Conference .....	pg. 5
Cheerleaders Win First Place at UB Competition .....	pg. 6
Pep Rally Promotes Responsibility, Respect and Safety .....	pg. 6
Undefeated Tennis Team Makes History! .....	pg. 7
Attention Residents of Grand Island with Children Ages Newborn - 5 Years of Age .....	pg. 7
Summer Reading Celebrations! .....	pg. 8
Hoe-down at Huth - Yee-Haw! .....	pg. 8
What a Ride! .....	pg. 8
VCMS Celebrates Red Ribbon Week ..	pg. 9
The Hobbit .....	pg. 9
GIHS Student Travels to Washington D.C. ....	pg. 10
Region 12 DECA Competition Coming to GIHS .....	pg. 10
Business First in the Classroom .....	pg. 10
Maintenance/Custodial Study Completed .....	pg. 11
Something's Always Blooming! .....	pg. 11

## New Protections in the Student Loan Industry



Attorney General Cuomo's Chief Trial Counsel Benjamin Rosenberg, joined by Town Supervisor Peter McMahon and Superintendent Robert Christmann, spoke to 17 seniors at Grand Island High School on September 27th as part of a statewide initiative alerting students to pitfalls and new protections regarding the student loan industry.

Mr. Rosenberg, who helped lead the groundbreaking and nationwide investigation into the student loan industry, briefed the students about Attorney General Cuomo's Student Bill of Rights. The first of its kind

in the nation, the Student Bill of Rights is part of a new law resulting from the Attorney General's ongoing investigation of the \$85 billion/year college loan industry, providing new rights and protection to safeguard students and families from deceptive practices.

Rosenberg highlighted some of the worst practices identified during the Attorney General's nationwide investigation into the student loan industry, including the illegal steering of students to preferred lenders by specific schools, revenue sharing agreements between schools and lenders, university financial aid call centers staffed by lender employees, gifts and trips from lenders to schools' financial aid directors, and even stock in lender companies directly given to financial aid officers.

The Student Lending Accountability, Transparency and Enforcement (SLATE) Act of 2007 unanimously passed both houses of the NYS Legislature and was signed into law by the governor. The Student Bill of Rights codifies Attorney General Cuomo's College Loan Code of Conduct, the basis for settlements with lenders and schools across the country. Congressional leaders have also endorsed SLATE as a nationwide model. The bill gives to students and families the right to choose a lender, even if the lender is not included on the school's preferred lender list.

For a copy of the Student Bill of Rights and smart tip sheets visit [www.oag.state.ny.us](http://www.oag.state.ny.us)

# Message from your Superintendent

By Bob Christmann, School Superintendent



Superintendent  
Bob Christmann

Much has happened in the district since the last Bridge newsletter in August. Included have been many school activities, student and staff recognitions based on outstanding work, volunteer efforts and academic honors for students. There continues to be so many positive things to share about schools, about students and about life on Grand Island.

One of the potentially most far reaching developments is the creation and expansion of a "One Island, One Team, One Dream...to be Drug Free" committee. Coming together on a monthly basis has been an ever increasing group of students, parents, school staff, administrators, town officials, service providers, community members and law enforcement officers. They are committed to planning action steps intended to bring to students, parents and the entire Grand Island community a better understanding of how student substance use and abuse impacts lives in so many negative ways.

First has come clear and accurate information on a wide variety of

substances which have the potential to be misused by students. Included in that category would be prescription pills, alcohol, marijuana and other more addictive drugs. Next came discussions as to how we can work together to prevent our students from even one time use of these illegal substances. Programs on these topics are being planned by the committee. Parents and students would greatly benefit from attending these programs. We also need to make certain that should a student find himself or herself using these substances, his or her family would know where to turn for help. We need to connect parents with any necessary services on behalf of their children if personal situations call for outside assistance.

It is also important that nothing be hidden about what we learn about inappropriate student activities. If a problem exists with prescription misuse, the district and parents need to talk about those problems along with the solutions. In the same way if there is a problem with alcohol misuse, we need to be open and forthcoming about those problems and to share in what ways we can come together as an Island community to guide and care for our youth. We are very optimistic about the ability of this group of people to make a difference in the lives of our middle and high school students going forward.

In a related matter, I would urge parents to know at all times where their children are and what they are doing. There are far too many opportunities taken by students to

host and/or attend social parties in which alcohol is available to minors. Check out any student stories yourself. Visit the homes in which your children say they are located. Set reasonable hours for their return to your home and be there to greet them as they return home. For parents, certainly don't serve alcohol in your house. Don't allow students to bring alcohol to your home. Not only is it morally wrong, the legal consequence you'll face for serving minors is enormous. If you know that another parent or student made alcohol available – report it. We want your child to be safe. We want every child to be safe. They are not safe if they are in a car driven by a teenager who has consumed alcohol. Adolescents do not fully possess all the judgements that come to adults. While they will make mistakes, parents need to do everything that can be done to prevent those mistakes. Your children cannot be treated as an adult when they are still in high school. They are not mature enough to make every decision properly.

Recently, school officials met with Erie County and Grand Island law enforcement officials regarding a well publicized party on the Island in which alcohol was available. An agreement was reached that all parents who fail to prevent alcohol from being served in their home will be criminally charged. Further, students found at any alcohol related parties will be identified and tested for consumption levels. Parents of those students  
*(continued on the next page)*

will be contacted by the police. No student believed to be under the influence will be allowed to drive a vehicle. If it looks like the school district is taking a hard line, we are. We don't want any of our students, your children, to be tragic victims of a substance abuse related accident. With the holidays coming, the use of alcohol will grow. Do not allow your children to consume alcohol. Check on them and do so frequently.

Committee members have pledged to create programs and services to assist you. Look for notices on upcoming events. Your children are too precious to us and to you to ever want them to be put in harm's way. We are counting on parents and schools to do the right thing.

## Bus + Safety = Fun

Riding a school bus is a whole new world for younger students. There is so much to learn in such a short time but our school bus safety team is here to help! The school bus safety team members include Barbara Backlund, Carolyn Furman, Bonnie Kaiser, Denise McMahon, Karen Dallassandro, Faith Mantione, and Amy Ve Rost.

To assist the bus drivers with teaching bus safety, the team has designed a special program for K-1 Sidway Elementary and St. Stephen's students. It entails a bus safety movie, a review of the bus safety rules, a tour of the transportation center, and a practice run on how to exit a school bus in an emergency. The "Safety Bus" has special platforms that allow students to climb out emergency windows and mats are strategically placed to help them jump out the back emergency door. Students enjoy the hands-on learning and are safer for it.



*Amy Ve Rost, Bonnie Kaiser and Karen Dallessandro assist Madeline Mesmer, Sidway Elementary student, as she exits the back emergency door.*

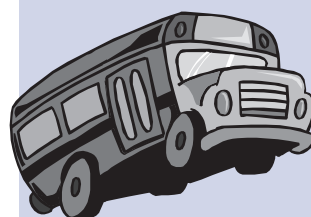
## Transportation Review to Begin

One of the most complex, least understood services provided by school districts are those under the transportation department. First, the Grand Island Central School District is blessed to have the high quality transportation staff that it does. No job is more challenging than that of driving a bus filled with children. Drivers have to watch the road and watch the students seemingly with the eyes in the back of their heads. Through all kinds of weather and traffic conditions, they bring the children to and from school safely. Unrelated to the personnel quality, an evaluation is about to be done by an excellent NYS consulting firm, Transportation Advisory Services, on all the different components of our district's transportation program. Among the areas that will be given an intensive look will be:

- Transportation policies
- Current bussing distances in order to receive services
- After school and late bus runs
- Busses provided after athletic practices
- Non-public after school late runs
- Locations of pick up points throughout the entire district
- Staffing levels appropriate to student numbers
- Routing effectiveness, costs and capacities

Perhaps most importantly, the study will look at the advisability, costs and capability of the district to change from three separate pick up/drop off runs (high school - elementary - middle school) to two runs (high school/ middle school - elementary). Instructionally and athletically there would be many advantages to using two runs. Is it possible? Is it desirable? These consultants will help the Board answer those questions and evaluate all of the other areas listed above.

It is anticipated that the report will be completed around February 1, 2008 as there may be some impact on the development of the 2008-09 budget either way. When the report is finished, there will be a wide sharing of the results with community members and staff.





## Blanket Making Workshop



For the fourth year in a row, the faculty and staff of Veronica E. Connor Middle School along with the help of students and parents will be making “No Sew Fleece Throw Blankets” for children in need. In the past, we have made and donated nearly 200 homemade blankets to the Roswell Pediatric Unit, Women and Children’s Hospital Pediatric Cancer Unit and this year the Women and Children’s Hospital Neo-Natal Unit.

This year’s workshop will be held Tuesday, December 4th at 3:45 pm in the middle school cafeteria. The blankets are simple to make and fun to do. All you need to bring is a pair of sharp scissors, a fleece blanket making kit (available at JoAnn Fabrics or WalMart) or 1.5 yards of patterned fleece and 1.5 yards of coordinating solid color fleece. Moms, dads, grandmas, children, etc. are all welcome. It takes about one hour to complete a blanket and the blanket making skill is yours to keep! If you are unable to attend but would still like to make a blanket, please contact Karen Grande at 773-8830 to set up a time more convenient for you. Also, if you would just like to donate the material or kit, we will gladly make the blanket for you. Thank you for your past support and thank you in advance for your help this year!

## Student Council Elections

Election excitement hit Veronica E. Connor Middle School as the Primary Elections were held on Thursday, October 18th. A field of 22 candidates was narrowed to 10 which left just two candidates to compete for each office: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and historian. Candidates’ posters adorned the walls outside the cafeteria and hallways while many students wore campaign buttons to show support for their favorite candidates. On Monday, October 29th, the candidates hit the stage in the high school auditorium to give speeches to the entire student body. At the conclusion of the election assembly, all students returned to their classes to vote for the candidates of their choice. Congratulations to all who participated. Here are the results of this year’s Student Council elections:

President:	Katherine Studley
Vice-President:	Marshall Cancilla
Secretary:	Bridget Kennedy
Treasurer:	Nick Soos
Historian:	Ashley Gugino

## The Monster Bash



Sixth- and seventh-graders at Veronica E. Connor Middle School had the opportunity to participate in the annual “Monster Bash” sponsored by Student Council on Friday, October 26th. The event was held after school and featured many activities for the students including a bounce house, sports obstacle course, football bungee, a giant game of Twister, Can-Jam, Bingo, face painting and crafts. Approximately 300 students and 25 faculty members attended and enjoyed pizza, pop and snacks.



## New Award Honors K-12 Student Artists

The art department of the Grand Island Central Schools is pleased to announce a new forum in which it may honor their many talented artistic achievers throughout the school year. The K-12 “Artist of the Month” is an award designed to honor one student each month who is currently enrolled in the district, and who has distinguished him or herself artistically.



Grand Island has long been home to many artistic and creative individuals, and students are certainly no exception. Students find the visual arts an appropriate vehicle for self-expression and often use the arts as a creative outlet and opportunity to improve and enrich the environment in which they live and attend school. In an effort to recognize and commend those students who have excelled artistically and who use the visual arts positively, one student each month will be featured as an award recipient beginning in September and running monthly throughout the school year.

It is hoped that the public will join in sharing the art department’s collective pride in the positive and creative contributions that our young people make to their school and their community and look forward to the features on our K-12 artists throughout the school year.

Pictured holding two of her recent artworks is September’s “Artist of the Month”, Orendael Miller –seventh grade. Says Orendael, “I like art because it is a great way to express yourself and to have fun while making a masterpiece”. Orendael, who has been interested in art since she was a little girl, says that Monet is her favorite artist. Art has been important in this student’s family. She credits her parents for inspiring her to make lots of art projects and for providing encouragement by drawing with her. In addition, Orendael says that her sister is an inspiration as well.

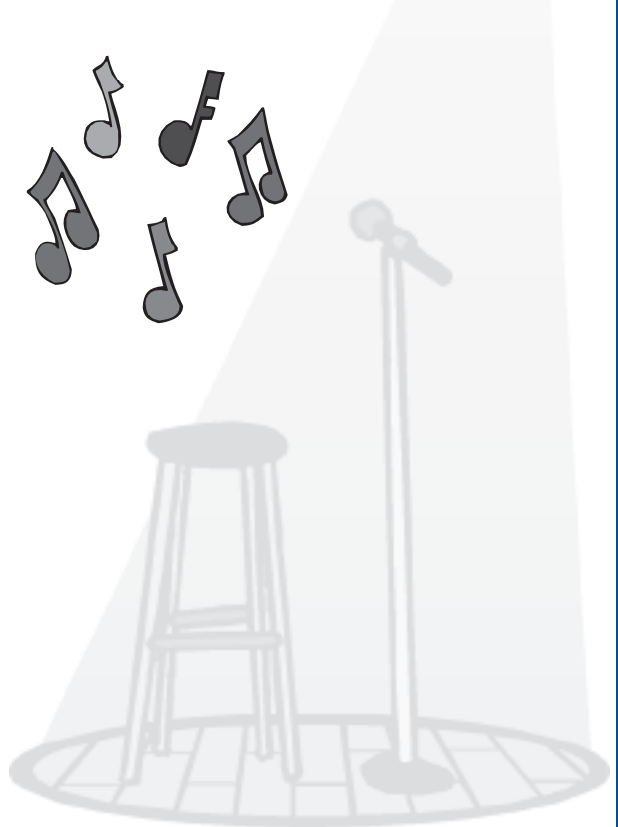
The art department of Grand Island Central Schools applauds this student’s creative achievements and unique artistic voice and wishes her much success in all of her future artistic endeavors.

## Vocal Music Teacher Organizes International Music Conference



**S**usan Waters, vocal music teacher for the middle school and high school, played an instrumental role in planning and organizing the 1st International Conference for the Gordon Institute for Music Learning (GIML) in Dayton, Ohio this summer. GIML is a music education organization which supports the research of Dr. Edwin Gordon. His research explains how we learn music, which in turn helps music teachers

establish sequential curricular objectives in accord with their own teaching styles and beliefs. Conference presenters came from Poland, Germany, Portugal, Italy, Dubai (United Arab Emirates) and the United States. Susan Waters was also appointed to serve on the GIML Executive Board as National Treasurer.



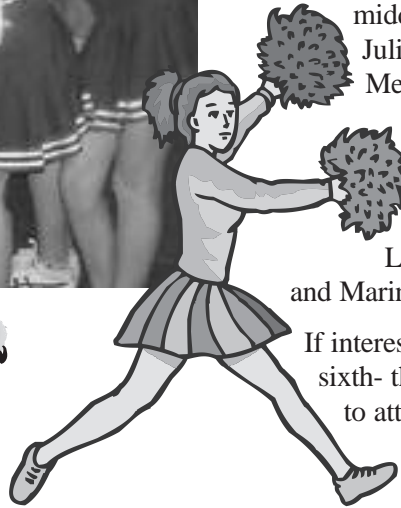
## Cheerleaders Win First Place at UB Competition



The Veronica E. Connor Middle School cheerleaders traveled to the University at Buffalo to participate in the annual cheerleading competition for middle and high school teams. On October 20th, the cheerleaders competed in the modified division and earned 83.5 points overall, dominating over their closest competitor by over 10 points. The team won a first place team trophy and each girl brought home a gold medal. This was the first competition that the team has ever attended.

The team is led by eighth-grade captains: Sydney Dudish, Morgan Green, Jessica Spiesz, and Rachel Watt and is coached by Lora Randles, middle school teacher. Other team members include Alexis Pearce, Julie Kilmer, Hallie Nowak, Jamie Dobson, Brittney Ducette, Megan Ambellan, Casey Jelonek, Maddy Mankowski, Katrina Rockwood, Laura Kondziela, Shannon Doctor, Breanna McGuire, Alex London, Taylor Sweet, Rebecca Masse, Jessica Spencer, Amanda Lore, Zari Foster, Kelly Ruminski, Lorie Scherrer, Alyssa Cinelli, and Marina Pozantides.

If interested in middle school cheerleading, sixth- through eighth-grade girls are encouraged to attend intramurals in the Spring.

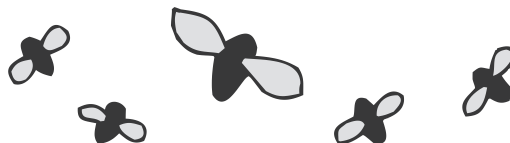


## Pep Rally Promotes Responsibility, Respect and Safety



Sidway Elementary School kicked off their Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) program on September 14th. The entire student body attended a pep rally to learn about the Sidway Values - Be Responsible, Be Respectful and Be Safe! Mrs. Dunbar led the students in a cheer about responsibility, respect and safety. The Sidway Bear made an appearance and several teachers and staff members helped out. Grand Island Central School District as a whole participates in PBIS and the three core values; Responsibility, Respect and Safety are consistent for kindergarten to grade 12 students. Kindergarten

and first-grade students at Sidway have the opportunity to “get caught” demonstrating these values throughout their day and earn a “Be Proud” certificate from any faculty or staff member. It was a great way to kick off the school year!



## Undefeated Tennis Team Makes History!



**Top Row (L-R)** Brittany Stallard, Ashley Koerntgen, Kristen Laurendi, Lauren McGowan, Micahlena Beyer, Brittany Papaj, Danielle Bruno and Courtney Catalano

**Middle Row (L-R)** Catherine Aughey, Stephanie Aughey, Kaitie Samland, Julie Hasselbeck, Alexandra Buscaglia, Anna Ferrante, Simarjot Cheema and Kelsey Mash.

**Bottom Row (L-R)** Courtney Papaj, Tara Hook, Molly Wynne, Breanne Rafferty, Alyssa Accardo, Caitlin Taylor, Kimberly Asbach.

**F**or the first time in Grand Island history, the Lady Vikings Tennis Team finished the season in 1st place in the NFL. The Lady Vikings had their first ever undefeated season with a 14-0 NFL record (14-1 overall).

Many girls contributed to our success this year. The team was led by senior, Brittany Stallard, who was undefeated at 1st Singles. Senior captains, Courtney Catalano and Lauren McGowan teamed up at 1st Doubles with a 13-2 overall record. Senior captain, Ashley Koerntgen, played 2nd Singles and had a 10-5 overall record. Ashley had two big wins over Ken-East and Niagara Falls which allowed our team to stay undefeated in the NFL. Our 2nd Doubles team consisted of sophomores, Alexandra Buscaglia and Kaitie Samland. The pair ended the season with a combined 7-5 record. Three seniors shared the 3rd Singles position, Micahlena Beyer, Danielle Bruno and Kristen Laurendi. All three combined for an 8-6 record. Senior, Brittany Papaj, had a varsity win against Lewiston-Porter in our last match this season.

Receiving NFL honors were Brittany Stallard, who received 1st Team All League in Singles and Lauren McGowan and Courtney Catalano, who received 1st Team All League in Doubles. Congratulations to all three players.

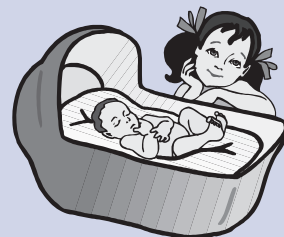
Many girls received individual awards at this year's banquet. Our "Junior Varsity MVP" was awarded to junior, Kelsey Mash. Our "Varsity Most Improved Player" was sophomore, Alexandra Buscaglia who made a huge impact this year. Our "Most Dedicated Award" went to senior, Courtney Catalano. Receiving the "MVP Award" this year was senior, Ashley Koerntgen. Seniors, Lauren McGowan and Brittany Stallard were awarded the "Viking Award" for their excellence in leadership, dedication and hard work their entire Varsity careers. Our captains next year will be Kelsey Mash, Alexandra Buscaglia and Breanne Rafferty. Good Luck to all eight seniors for their undefeated season and outstanding careers, we'll miss you!

## Attention Residents of Grand Island With Children Ages Newborn – 5 Years of Age...

To effectively plan for the 2008-2009 school year, we would like to know how many children reside on Grand Island who are eligible for kindergarten enrollment in September 2008. Any child who will reach their 5th birthday on or before December 1, 2008 is eligible to attend kindergarten next school year. Please call the District Office at 773-8819 between the hours of 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and give your name, your child's name, child's date of birth, address and telephone number.

We ask that you call even if you do not plan on sending your child to kindergarten next year or plan on sending your child to a private or parochial school. This will assist our transportation department, state and federal funding.

We would also appreciate calls from parents/guardians of children ages newborn to 4 years of age residing on Grand Island for future enrollment projections.





## Summer Reading Celebrations!



*(L-R) Kayla Myers, Madeline Mitchell, Bailey Kephart, and Kevin Minton enjoy the reading celebration at Huth Road Elementary School.*

Once again the summer reading program was a huge success. Sidway, Kaegebein and Huth Road Elementary schools all participated in the New York State Summer Reading Program in conjunction with the Grand Island Memorial Library. The theme this year was "Get a Clue at the Grand Island Memorial Library" and investigate some good books. The students were required to read books throughout the summer and return a completed form to school in early September. The school libraries each held a summer reading celebration where students were rewarded for their reading efforts.

Every year the librarians and reading teachers from all elementary schools meet with Mrs. Slater from the Grand Island Memorial Library to plan for the summer ahead. They are looking forward to yet another successful summer reading program in 2008.

## Hoe-down at Huth - Yee-Haw!



Second-graders at Huth Road Elementary School made reading come to life! After reading literature about life on a ranch, over 125 students dressed in their finest gear to celebrate western style. The cowboys and cowgirls gathered together in the gym for a good ole' fashion hoe-down complete with singing and dancing. Mrs. Boron led the western themed sing-a-long with her guitar while Mrs. Horrigan led the cowpokes in country line dancing.

Other participating classes were Mrs. Agnello, Miss Donnelly, Miss Mesmer, Mrs. Percival and Mrs. Shroeder. The second-graders enjoyed the hootenanny and a good time was had by all.

*yee-haw!*

## What a Ride!

On Tuesday, October 16th, six students from Sidway Elementary School were treated to a ride to school on a fire truck after their names were drawn at the annual Grand Island Fire Department Open House. The students were surprised to find Principal Mrs. Dunbar and Superintendent Mr. Christmann on board the trucks when they arrived to pick them up. Thank you to the Grand Island Fire Department for this exciting ride to school for these six lucky students!



*Students (L-R): Justin Gorrell, Madeline Mesmer, Olivia Ruiz, Natalie Turck, Lauren Merletti, Caitlin Kleinschmidt. Adults (L-R): Firefighter Tom Dewey, Principal Denise Dunbar, Firefighter Peter Mc Mahon, Superintendent Robert Christmann, Firefighter Peter Coppola and Firefighter Peter McMahon.*



## VCMS Celebrates Red Ribbon Week



*(L-R) Rebecca Gasiorek, Elise Lenzner, Rachel Ripellino and Jordan Davis pledge to be drug free.*

Veronica E. Connor Middle School celebrated Red Ribbon Week, October 22nd-26th. This week is recognized nationally and promotes staying drug free. The student services department planned daily activities for everyone to participate in to show their support.



Each morning began with facts about drugs and words of wisdom read over the morning announcements to highlight the problem of substance abuse and its negative impact on our schools, communities and nation. In addition, students had an opportunity to win prizes by correctly answering a daily trivia question about drug and alcohol use. The school was decorated for this special week with red ribbons, banners and posters that were hung in key areas of the building to remind students of the importance of staying drug free. The students and staff wore red on Tuesday to show their support. Everyone really got into the spirit of the week by pledging to be drug free, dressing backwards on "Turn Your Back on Drugs Day" and wearing hats on "Hats-On for Being Drug Free Day".

This week long celebration is meant to be both fun and educational for the students. Drug and alcohol addiction is a very serious problem in our society that can be life altering. We hope students learn to stay strong in resisting the pressures of trying drugs and alcohol and make healthy choices for themselves.

## The Hobbit

We hope you had the opportunity to attend the Spotlighter's Fall Production of "The Hobbit". Steve Vaughan, combat instructor, professor, and director at Niagara University, worked together with Katherine Scarafia, Grand Island High School teacher, to create a partnership for the show production. Liz Warden, a student from Niagara University's theatre department, taught the students



stage combat, choreographed fight scenes for the show and designed our sets! Shows were held on November 16th and 17th at 7 p.m.



*Luke Burkhart (Gandalf) and Sam Tilkins (Goblin Attendant) are practicing stage combat during one of the many long hours spent preparing for the production.*

## GIHS Student travels to Washington D.C.



Dustin Coryn has returned home from the National Youth Leadership Forum on National Security (NYLF/NS): *Exploring American Diplomacy, Intelligence and Defense*. Dustin is a junior at Grand Island High School and was nominated for this prestigious award by teachers Cheryl Chamberlain and Karl Koppmann.

Dustin traveled to Washington, D.C. for five days where the explorations offered at NYLF/NS allowed Dustin a chance to observe key leaders in diplomatic institutions, military installations and intelligence agencies as they went about their daily tasks. This first hand exposure provided Dustin valuable and practical information about careers and opportunities in these communities. In addition, Dustin and his fellow scholars spent time exploring Washington, D.C.'s most famous sites including Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian Museums and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial. Dustin was in awe after this trip and said it was the "adventure of a lifetime."

Students interested in exploring career area options through the internship program at Grand Island High School should contact the School-to-Work office at 773-8879.

## Business First in the Classroom

The Grand Island High School Business Department is excited to bring *Business First* into the classroom. Each week current copies of *Business First* are provided through the generous sponsorship of Aurora Consulting Group, for the *Career and Financial Management Class*. Teacher, Cheryl Chamberlain attended a workshop conducted by Tim Oshei, Managing Editor of *Business First*, where innovative ways of utilizing the paper with existing curriculum were introduced. Grand Island is one of a select group of schools that will enable students to study current financial and marketing news as reported by this publication. Grand Island is also proud to be a "Top Ten" district as recognized by *Business First*.

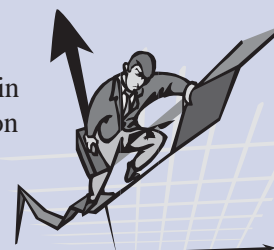


*L-R: Katie Cobello and Courtney Papaj utilize Business First in the classroom*



## Region 12 DECA Competition Coming to GIHS

The Grand Island Chapter of DECA, an Association of Marketing Students, is pleased to announce that Region 12 competition is coming to Grand Island High School on January 13th, 2008. Over 500 high school students from all over Western New York will compete in business related events during this conference. In addition, over 120 business and education leaders will assist as judges and proctors for this remarkable event. DECA is a state and national organization with goals that promote leadership development, civic consciousness, social intelligence and vocational understanding.

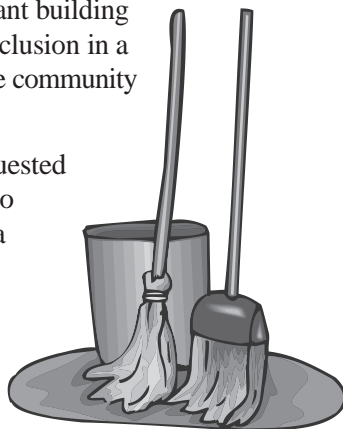


## Maintenance/Custodial Study Completed

As part of its October 29, 2007 meeting, the members of the Grand Island Board of Education received a report which evaluated its maintenance, custodial and buildings/grounds programs. Completed by Dr. Gerry Glose of the Western New York Educational Service Council, an in-depth analysis was summarized by him for the Board of Education and community. Dr. Glose studied staffing levels to see if the district's personnel numbers were appropriate to the size of our school. He also compared the responsibilities for each person on each work shift and evaluated the district's current preventative maintenance program. Using data and interview responses gathered over a four month period, Dr. Glose ended his report to the Board with several recommendations. Among his conclusions were:

- That there is a need to create more accurate job descriptions as some work is being done by staff in higher than necessary Civil Service titles.
- That the staffing levels are generally appropriate although some current vacancies may not need to be filled.
- That the evaluation procedures in place may need to be more targeted to the individual job titles rather than the current more general evaluation forms.
- That the new system of using on line work order requests is functioning very efficiently.
- That the current levels of third shift workers be greatly reduced or eliminated and that those staff on the third shift be reassigned to the first or second shifts for a more efficient cleaning of the buildings.
- That many preventative maintenance items identified as important building needs be considered for inclusion in a future capital project for the community to consider.

The administration was requested by the Board of Education to report back to them within a 45-60 day period with their action plan based on the very well done report.



## Something's Always Blooming!



Many students have worked very hard to turn a once dull patch of grass into a colorful, lush respite for birds, butterflies and students. The garden at Veronica E. Connor Middle School is a creation of Ms. Dawn Brooks, eighth-grade social studies teacher, and numerous dedicated students. Each spring the twittering of goldfinches can be heard as the garden plays host to two broods of baby robins, and bright green shoots of flowers, herbs and vegetables burst from the soil. Warm summer days nourish the blooms that greet parents and students, new to our district, as they register for fall classes. Fall mornings provide swarms of sparrows with breakfasts of dried seed heads of sunflower and black-eyed susans. The best aspect of the garden is that it provides a multitude of opportunities for teachers and students to work and learn in a natural setting.

The beauty in the courtyard continues to grow with generous donations from helpful teachers in the building. However, Ms. Brooks has bigger ideas for the garden. Future plans include: plants used by Native Americans and early pioneers; a water habitat; a cold frame; and a composter for classroom activities; statuary; vegetables; and more perennial herbs and flowers. As all gardeners know, a beautiful garden is always a work in progress and additional time, effort and funding are necessary to bring her vision to reality.

Ms. Brooks is sponsoring a courtyard garden photo contest. The contest provides an opportunity to express artistic and technological talents through photography and Adobe PhotoShop. There will be two prizes of \$25 gift certificates to the Boulevard Mall. The contest is open to all middle school students. For more information visit <http://www.k12.ginet.org/webpages/dbrooks/contest>.



# Community Ed Brochure and the Bridge Team Up!

*Grand Island Central Schools  
Community Education  
Fall 2007*



photograph by Kim Ludwig

*Glide into the Fall*



## Don't Miss it!

The next edition of The Bridge and The Grand Island Community Education Brochure have teamed up and will be delivered to you together in early January. Watch your mailboxes and remember to look inside the next Bridge to see what exciting classes Community Education has to offer this winter!

### **Grand Island Central School District**

1100 Ransom Road, Grand Island, NY 14072

#### **Board of Education:**

Richard Little, Jr., President  
James Hanna, Vice President  
Myrna Blair  
Glenn Bobeck  
George Casey  
Thomas Franz  
Neil Seaman

**Superintendent:** Bob Christmann

**Resident**

Non-profit Org  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 8  
Grand Island, N.Y.