

# ***The GPJHS Gazette!***

*The Official Newsletter of Gregory-Portland Junior High School: Home of the World's Greatest Students!*



*Andrew Bell finds a clue, as teammates Nick Napier, Skyler Marquez, and Cory Sullivan continue looking for more. Can you solve the puzzle of ...The GPJHS Escape Room? Learn more on page 9!*

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...and more!



# Learning is Delicious in Science

Coach Kilmartin's Science students had a tasty lesson recently. The Oreo Plate Tectonic Lab is about identifying three types of plate boundaries and demonstrating their movement. Students learned about divergent boundaries, convergent boundaries, and transform boundaries. The students answered questions about these different boundaries in class discussion, prior to completing the activity where they used an Oreo to emulate the Earth's tectonic plate movement.



Left to right: Zacary Lofthouse, Dylan Alaniz, Ian Leal Mozer, and Grayson Matthews take careful notes. Jeremiah Raub, Sklyer Hisle, and Grayson Matthews check their work with Coach Kilmartin.

*Photos by Mrs. Dornak*



## Meet Mrs. Pardo

**What do you do at GPJHS?** Para (short for “paraprofessional teaching assistant”)

**Education/experience:** Ten years

**Hobbies:** Watching movies & football

**Favorite Book(s):** Prayer books

**Favorite Game:** Mexican Bingo

**Favorite music, artist or genre:** Rhienna

**Something about me that might surprise people:** I love to watch all sports – especially football!



## Mark Your Calendar

There are a lot of exciting events coming soon to a GPJHS near you; to see when they will happen, visit the school's website, or click the link below!

<https://www.g-pisd.org/gregory-portland-junior-high-school/calendar/happening-now-event-calendar>





# Art Students Prepare for Academic UIL



*Photo by Mrs. Anfosso - Emma Denton, Athena Lankford, Justice Morris and Diego Aguillon are some of the students who plan to represent GPJHS at the Academic UIL competition on February 10.*



## Cat's Club Strikes ...at Bowlero!



*Coach Roussel, Mrs. Vanderford, Mrs. Vaseliades, Mrs. Rhoades, Mrs. Kinney, and Mrs. Ross enjoy fun and games with some awesome students! - Photo by Mrs. Dornak*

On January 23, Cat's Club students (and some lucky teachers!) had a great time at Bowlero, in Corpus Christi. Cat's Club is a reward for students who meet or exceed the criteria for good behavior and academic excellence. For each 9-week grading period, students who meet the criteria will be able to participate in this reward program. This can include but is not limited to; field trips in town or to a nearby area or an on campus activity such as movies, karaoke, and games. The criteria set forth by the campus is shown below.

By the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> progress report within each 9-week grading period, students should have:

- Maintained an 80 or above in every class,
- no more than 2 unexcused absences,
- no ISS referrals, no suspensions, no DAEP placements,
- and no more than 3 tardies.

*(continued on next page)*

(Continued from page 4) Some of the field trips may include costs, such as: entrance fees, food, and travel. Students who qualify for Cat's Club will be given a permission slip with the information for the event, a lunch order form, and any other necessary paperwork. The paperwork must be completed and signed by the parent, and forms and money must be turned in by the deadline.

Students who do not qualify for Cat's Club will not be punished, but will remain on campus and continue with their regular class schedule. If a student qualifies but chooses not to participate in the event, the student will remain on campus and will also follow the regular class schedule.

The dates set for the Cat's Club events may be subject to change due to availability of venues, number of students participating, and programs and other events scheduled throughout the year. Students meeting the above criteria (and their parents) will be notified in advance of the dates, locations, and any fees for the events.



## Meet Ms. Nichols

**What do you do at GPJHS?** 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Intensive Science Teacher, ABC (Academic Booster Club) Coordinator, Science Dept Head

**Education/experience:** Graduated West Texas A&M University, Bachelor of Science in Biology, been with GP for 12 years (including GP High School, GP Intermediate & TM Clark)

**Hobbies:** Scrapbooking, walking, watching my sons play basketball & tennis

**Favorite Book:** *The Bible*

**Favorite Game(s):** Uno, Sorry, Monopoly

**Favorite music, artist or genre:** Christian

**Something about me that might surprise people:** I have been to see "The Price Is Right", "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno", and "Oprah Winfrey"; my next plan is to see Ellen Degeneres!



## Writing Contest Deadline Extended

The deadline for the "Best of GPJHS" writing contest has been extended to February 23 (see the details on the next page). While several students wrote about what makes GPJHS special for them, none of them have entered the contest yet! Here are some excerpts from their first drafts:

- I love how Ms. Ellison makes math fun and how she turns a frown upside down!
- Mrs. Leisher is the best! She is the best at keeping us together like a family and making everything better.
- Something that makes GPJHS special is coming to tennis practice every morning.
- Coach Cox makes athletics fun and can joke around with the students.
- Coach Dav makes us laugh, but keeps us busy.

(Continued on next page)

*Best of GPJHS (continued from previous page)*

- Something that makes GPJH special for me to come to school is Choir. I love Mr. Campion so much. He is the sunshine of my day. He lets us have fun; at the same time, we get work done.
- Mrs. Anfosso has a really colorful personality, and is super helpful.
- Mrs. Nichols is quirky and helps us in any way she can.
- I like my math teacher, Ms. Solis; she is awesome and always calm.
- The coaches help us when we are hurt and they encourage us to get better.
- Mrs. Dornak makes everyone's day better just by saying, "Get to class, pretty people." She comes to school with a smile on her face every day. She is so supportive and friendly. She's a great vice principal and person!
- Coach Rob makes us laugh, and makes up weird names, while making sure we work.

What do **you** love about GPJHS? Tell us! In a 75-to-100-word essay, write about something or someone that makes GPJHS special for you, and explain why this person, class, or activity is so awesome! Your essay must be:

- Typed and saved as a Microsoft Word document
- 75 - 100 words (remember: Microsoft Word has a word counter!)
- Submitted as an attachment through the author's school (not personal) e-mail account.

This contest is open to all GPJHS students and staff. Please proofread your work before you send your essay (via your school e-mail account only) to [tthomas@g-pisd.org](mailto:tthomas@g-pisd.org) with "Gazette" in the subject line. Winners will be published in the March *Gazette*; see this month's winner on page 13 of this issue!



## **"Heart of Gold"** **Valentine Dance**

**Saturday, February 10**

**7:00 – 10:00pm**

We are requesting some help for dance chaperones, food table helpers, and help with setting up decorations. Any help will be greatly appreciated! For more information, please see or contact Mrs. Ramirez - [sramirez@g-pisd.org](mailto:sramirez@g-pisd.org)



# GPJHS Has Two Great Roads (not “Roads”)



## Meet Mrs. Rhoades

**What do you do at GPJHS?** 7<sup>th</sup>-grade Texas History

**Education/experience:** Bachelor’s degree in Education (History & Spanish), 29 years in education!

**Hobbies:** Reading, refinishing furniture, water skiing, snow skiing

**Favorite Book(s):** anything by Nicholas Sparks

**Favorite Game(s):** any sporting event

**Favorite music, artist or genre:** Christian & country music

**Something(s) about me that might surprise people:** I am a breast cancer survivor. I am also married to Coach Rhoades; we have four children who will all be teachers!

## Meet Mrs. Rhodes

**What do you do at GPJHS?** I work with students in P.A.C.E.S. (Positive Academic Classroom Experiences with Socialization)

**Education/experience:** 3 years in P.A.C.E.S.

**Hobbies:** Swimming, camping and running.

**Favorite Book:** *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell

**Favorite Game:** Phase Ten

**Favorite music, artist or genre:** Top 40 & 1980’s

**Something about me that might surprise people:** I am a die-hard fan of the Cowboys and the Ohio State Buckeyes!



## STAAR Testing – Wildcats, Strike Back!



STAAR (State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness) administrations will begin in April. Don’t be scared; be prepared! GPJHS will have mock (practice) STAAR testing soon to help students prepare for the actual STAAR(s). In the meantime, students and parents may prepare for the future by learning from the past. Visit this website for actual STAAR materials from previous school years:

[http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/STAAR\\_Released\\_Test\\_Questions](http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/STAAR_Released_Test_Questions)



# Why Does Abby Have Antlers?

Several ELA classes at GPJHS are raising money for student materials by participating in a read-a-thon. We have started our reading sessions in class, but students are also logging reading hours outside of class. Students, please be sure to log in to your reader dashboard on a regular basis and use the social media and email tools to share our Read-a-thon with everyone you know! Parents & community members, please ask a participating student how you can support their reading efforts ...and their education!



*Photos by Mrs. Ross*

*Pictured above: Ariel Castellano & Ella Spencer, plus Brita Rhodes & Abby Krisl are dressed as literary characters to promote the read-a-thon. Can you guess who they are? Next time you see them, find out if you guessed correctly!*



## Meet Mrs. Moore

**What do you do at GPJHS?** Attendance Secretary

**Education/experience:** 3 years at Abilene Christian University

**Hobbies:** Watching sports, camping, playing with my grandkids

**Favorite Book(s):** The *Harry Potter* series

**Favorite Game(s):** Play nine, Sleeping Queens, Chickenfoot

**Favorite music, artist or genre:** Elvis, George Straight, Country

**Something about me that might surprise people:** I like snakes!



# Meet Mr. Robbins

**What do you do at GPJHS?** 8<sup>th</sup>-grade ELA

**Education/experience:** University of Houston, 23<sup>rd</sup> year teaching

**Hobbies:** Collecting military memorabilia, reading

**Favorite Book(s):** *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

**Favorite Game(s):** Old-fashioned pinball

**Favorite music, artist or genre:** Texas country, classic rock

**Something about me that might surprise people:** A long time ago, I was part of the road crew for a rock band!



# Parents & Teachers Connect at Open House

*Pictures by Mrs. Dornak*



*Mrs. Arriaga listens to questions, Mrs. Sullivan helps Sunny Page find answers, and Mrs. Vanderford explains scientific principles to parents.*



*Students and parents play "Kahoot!", Mr. Wooten demonstrates his counting skills at the Math Fair, and three of our principals (Mrs. Vaseliades, Mr. Avarado, and Mrs. Lindsay) were happy to see everyone at Open House on January 24<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for joining us!*



Save the memories! Order your yearbook today! If you're reading this online, click this link: <https://goo.gl/S6mmwi>



# Escaping Routines

By Mrs. Reininger

I was so excited to return to the GPJH campus after attending the Gifted and Talented Conference in December! I was feeling like my class assignments needed a little boost of fun and energy, so I was thrilled to learn how some teachers are using escape rooms on their campuses.

An escape room is an adventure game in which players are “locked” in a room and must solve a series of puzzles and riddles using clues and hints in order to escape. Players are given a set time limit to solve the puzzles and find the key which is hidden within the room. Escape rooms are inspired by "escape-the-room"-style video games.

I got permission to build an escape room here on our campus and it is called the CORE-TEKS. My intention is to use the TEKS from the four CORE subjects of Math, Science, Social Studies, and ELA as part of the clues and puzzles. I was able to get the room ready for my students to “Escape” the routine assignments and have a little fun while we learn.

As my classes took turns in teams of 6-8 students, I took notes on what worked and what needed some tweaking. I was very excited to see students actively working together to solve the complex clues. The room is located across from the library. If you take a look at the board outside the room, you will see which team is currently dominating. I will be working with Mrs. Costilla and the GT students to start planning scenarios that will be open to all students at scheduled times. I suggest you do a little research online about Escape Rooms and get some ideas on how YOU might be the KEY to your team escaping!



*Colton Rogers and Syndi Vo find clues and answers; Tim Bang finds a key! Austin Sciba, Kaitlin Clark, and Ariana Dewey work together to ... ESCAPE!*



## Gazette Q & A

**Question:** Why am I (or my child) not listed and/or pictured in a *Gazette* article?

**Answer:** On a form they completed during student registration, some parents have requested that their children not be pictured nor listed in school publications; this applies to the school yearbook, as well as the *GPJHS Gazette*. G-PISD respects the rights of parents to protect their children's privacy. Parents may contact the school's front office for more information.



# Equations & Exhibits at the Math Fair

*Photos by Ms. Solis and Matthew Goodlad*

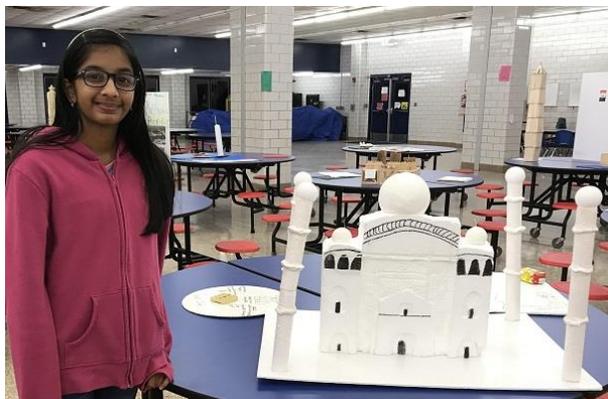
Here are some “samplings of the fare” at the GPJHS Math Fair on January 24:



*Brooklyn Thedin & Brooke Moreno*



*Matthew Rush (partner Ryan Fudge not pictured)*



*Aleena Roy*



*Hunter Sowell (partner Kaiden Johnson not pictured)*



*Emma Peralta & Isabella Garcia*



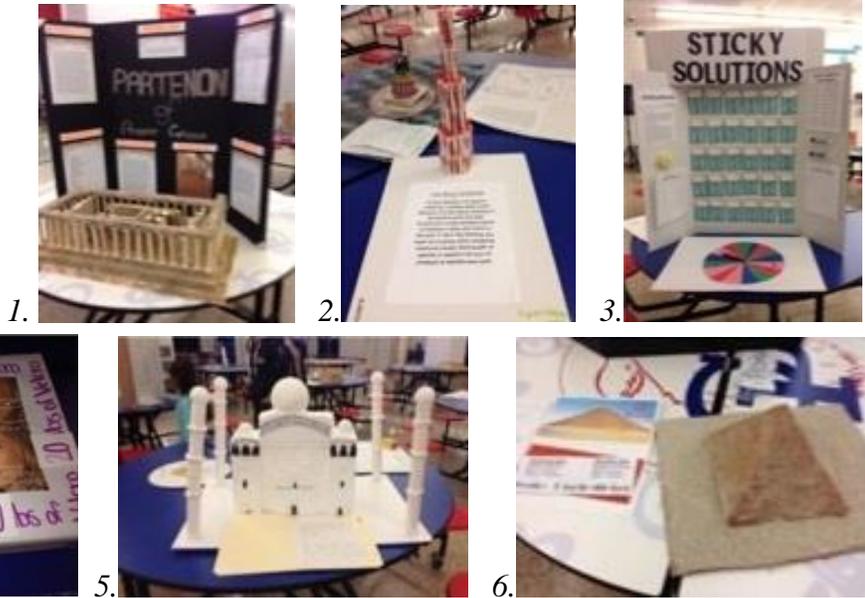
*Ashley Gomez (partner Erin Rodriguez not pictured)*

Project titles included (see pictures on next page):

1. The Parthenon of Ancient Greece – by McKenzie Saathoff & Abigail Schaberg
2. The Burj Khalifa – by Ryder DeLeon & Margo Hatton
3. Sticky Solutions – a game by Malari Masser
4. Math & Memes – by Justin Morris & Athena Lankford

5. The Taj Mahal – by Aleena Roy
6. The Red Pyramid – by Laura Bennett & Mikayla Fellers

Math Fair  
Projects  
*(Continued from  
page 10)*



## Hurricane Harvey Book to Help Students

Dr. Laurie Turner, a history teacher at GPJHS, is a member of the Nueces County Historical Commission. The Commission is documenting stories from organizations, volunteers, parents, teachers, and community members connected with Hurricane Harvey in the Coastal Bend areas.

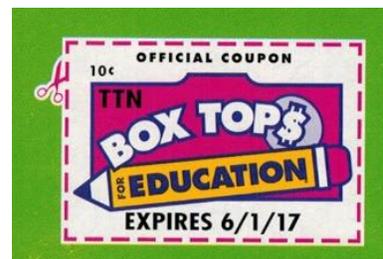
Part of the documentation Dr. Turner is collecting is narrative artwork from students! These stories, photography, and artwork will be included in a book! All proceeds from the sale of the book will be given to College Relief Scholarships for our Harvey victims. The artwork will also be displayed at the Corpus Christi Library for the public to view.

If you would like to participate, you can contact Dr. Turner at: [lturner@g-pisd.org](mailto:lturner@g-pisd.org)



## Trash or Cash? Cash, Please!

Please clip, collect and bring your Box Tops coupons to school. Money raised will support our school library! Box Tops collection bins are located in the front office, the library, and several teachers' classrooms. Last semester, we used Box Tops to raise over \$100.00 for our school; that may not seem like much, but it's not bad for items that would otherwise be in a trash can! Please remember to bring your Box Tops as soon as possible - they have expiration dates! Also, please register (if you haven't already) as a supporter of our school at:



<https://www.boxtops4education.com>





# No Cash Needed - Order Online!

<https://goo.gl/S6mmwi>

## Middle School Region Band Auditions

By Mr. Anderson

Congratulations to ALL students who participated in the Middle School Region Band Auditions on January 27. 43 students from GPJHS were entered to compete with local schools, and from the 415 students who participated, 31 of our students earned a chair in the region band!! Special congratulations go to the three students who placed **FIRST CHAIR over-all** in their sections:

Scott Gilbert  
1<sup>st</sup> chair Soprano Clarinet

Diondray Parker  
1<sup>st</sup> chair Bass Clarinet

Cristian Villeda  
1<sup>st</sup> chair Alto Saxophone

Also earning chairs in the region band are:

Angelena Barboza  
Livia Smith  
Isabella Garcia  
Emma Peralta  
Kenneth Allocco  
Marisela Rocha  
Sophia Martinez  
Matthew Goodlad  
Omar Mariscal  
Dustin Madsen

Vincent Nguyen  
Misha Stegall  
Laney Bustos  
Terrell Elliott  
Laura Bennett  
Peyton Felchak  
Ryan Fudge  
Katy Smith  
Jazmin Flowers  
Nathalie Gonzales

Clayton Cates  
Ella Spencer  
Aiedan Acosta  
Santiago Guzman  
Holden Vela  
Mia Aleman  
Olivia Saunders  
Brennen Forsythe

If you see any of these students in the halls, PLEASE, congratulate them on their fine accomplishments!! Way to go, BAND students!!



## Meet Mr. Alvarado

**What do you do at GPJHS?** Principal

**Education/experience:** B.A. in Psychology, TAMUK  
M.S. in Education from TAMUC

**Hobbies:** Wood Working

**Favorite Book(s):** *Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse

**Favorite Game(s):** Risk

**Favorite music, artist or genre:** Rock, Pearl Jam

**Something about me that might surprise people:** I was a juvenile probation officer before I got into teaching.

# MORE New Electives Offered 2018 – 2019



Last month the *Gazette* was the first source to tell you about how GPJHS will be welcoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders to our campus and changing our name to Gregory-Portland Middle School. The *Gazette* was also the first news source to tell you that GPMS will be offering *Journalism* as a new elective in the 2018-2019 school year! Students in this class will be producing content for the school yearbook, the school website, and the *Gazette*, while learning the principles and practices of journalism.

Now check out some of the other new electives planned for next year:

**Destination Imagination** (a full-year course for grades 6 - 8) – This is a fun, hands-on system of learning that fosters creativity, curiosity and courage through academic Challenges. Our Challenges blend STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education with the arts and social entrepreneurship. For more information and examples, visit <http://texasdi.org>.

**Speech Communications** (a one-semester, high-school-credit course for 8<sup>th</sup> graders) - This course is an introduction to the basic principles of public speaking. Students in this class will study and practice the use of body and voice, the speaker-listener relationship, introduction to delivering a speech, storytelling, manuscript readings, interview skills, and improvisation.

If any of the above sounds like something you want to do, keep it/them in mind when registering for next year.

More information about electives and registration will be available in a few weeks. In the meantime, if you're interested in journalism, there's still room on the *Gazette* staff; applications are available in room C112 or you may download a copy at this link:

[https://www.g-pisd.org/uploaded/personal/3133/Documents/Gazette/GPJHS\\_Gazette\\_Student\\_Staff\\_Application.pdf](https://www.g-pisd.org/uploaded/personal/3133/Documents/Gazette/GPJHS_Gazette_Student_Staff_Application.pdf)



## Grade Check with Skyward

Check your grades online and get the jump on progress reports and report cards; here's how:

1. Use the link at [www.g-pisd.org](http://www.g-pisd.org) , or (if you're reading a digital copy) click this link:

<https://skyward.iscorp.com/scripts/wsisa.dll/WService=wsedugregporttx/fwemnu01.w>

2. Your Login ID is: The 1st five letters of your last name (if your last name is less than five letters, you will need to type spaces - enough to equal five characters) and 1st three letters of your first name, followed by 000 (three zeroes). Some students may have a 001, 002, etc.

Login ID Examples: gonzajau000 (Juan Gonzalez's Login ID)

gonzajau001 (newer student, Juanita Gonzalez's Login ID)

fox pau000 (Paul Fox's Login ID – note the 2 spaces after “fox”)

3. Your password should be your student ID (lunch) number.



# And the Winner Is...

Here's the February essay contest winner for February:

*When I saw the Gazette's call for what makes GPJH awesome, I immediately thought of our fearless leader – Mr. Gabe Alvarado. It has been a crazy year with Hurricane Harvey, the intake of hundreds of refugee students, a snow-covered campus, and the freezing classrooms due to heaters not working. Mr. Alvarado has been busy caring for our students and staff. I love that he is truly building a community of family with fun activities for the staff like holiday cook-offs and frozen turkey-bowling and supporting fun for students through Cat's Club, dances, and field trips. Mr. Alvarado makes GPJHS awesome!*

~Written and submitted by Mrs. Reininger



Who or what makes GPJHS awesome for **you**? Tell us! In a 75-to-100-word essay, write about something or someone that makes GPJHS special for you, and explain why this person, class, or activity is so awesome! Your essay must be:

- Typed and saved as a Microsoft Word document
- 75 - 100 words (remember: Microsoft Word has a word counter!)
- Submitted as an attachment through the author's school (not personal) e-mail account.

This contest is open to all GPJHS students and staff. Please proofread your work before you send your essay (via your school e-mail account only) to [tthomas@g-pisd.org](mailto:tthomas@g-pisd.org) with "Gazette" in the subject line. The winner(s) will be published in the March *Gazette*!



## Do You Have the "Write" Stuff?

**Did you take or are you taking pictures at a school performance, competition, or event?**

**Do you have an opinion you want to share?**

**Do you like to create artwork (painting, drawing, photography, etc.)?**

If you answered "yes" to any of the above, **are you brave enough to share your work with the world?**

If you answered "yes" to that too, then you really should join the GPJHS Gazette staff!

Applications are available in room C112 or you may download a copy at this link:

[https://www.g-pisd.org/uploaded/personal/3133/Documents/Gazette/GPJHS\\_Gazette\\_Student\\_Staff\\_Application.pdf](https://www.g-pisd.org/uploaded/personal/3133/Documents/Gazette/GPJHS_Gazette_Student_Staff_Application.pdf)

Remember: If you want people to get it, you've got to *Gazette* it! See you next month, Wildcats!

