

# RJEMS MONTHLY



To inform, entertain, and advocate for the student body.

## Science Fair

By Kaitlyn Olson & Katie Chung

What do plants, rockets, and chemical volcanoes all have in common? The Science Fair! We've had 6 students this year alone make it to the state competition. This extraordinary showing of science took place on Sunday, March 28th. RJEMS Monthly would like to congratulate the following students:

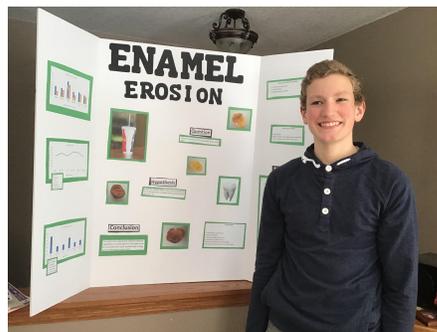
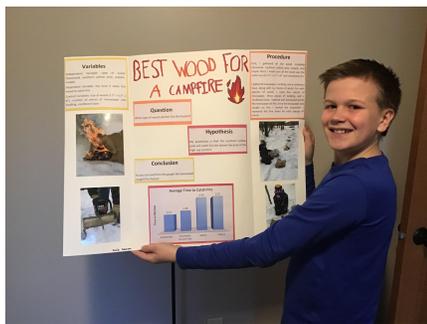
- Calvin Haddix
- Sophia Iverson
- Adam Jacobson - received a Silver Award
- Aaron McMullen
- Jack Johnson - received a Bronze Award

## The Bermuda Triangle

By Katie Chung

You may know about it from stories told around a campfire, or maybe a legend you read about in school. Dozens of ships and airplanes mysteriously disappearing with no trace of their existence. Roughly bounded by Miami, Bermuda, and Puerto Rico, the Bermuda Triangle is responsible for allegedly swallowing up ships, planes, and sometimes people. Conspiracy theories believe the cause of these evanescences range from aliens, to government testing, to wormholes into other dimensions. But why do shipments *really* vanish?

Continue reading on page 6.



Students Jack Johnson (left) and Aaron McMullen (right) with their science fair projects.

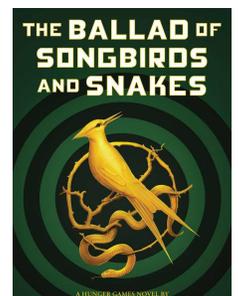
## Book of the Month

By Jack Sonder



April's book of the month is *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*.

by Suzanne Collins

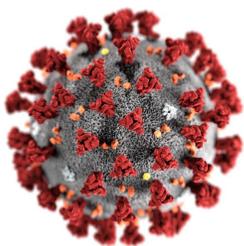


Are you a Hunger Games fan? If so, this is the book for you! *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* takes place 64 years prior to the Hunger Games series. It describes the life of eighteen year old Coriolanus Snow before he became the villain in the Hunger Games. Coriolanus struggles with his desire for victory vs. his feelings he has developed for a poor girl from District 12. This is a must read and will not disappoint!

## COVID-19 Updates- As of March 29th

By Katie Chung & Kaitlyn Olson

- Cases in U.S.- 30,470,285
- Deaths in U.S.- 550,685
- Cases in Itasca- 3,419
- Deaths in Itasca- 51



Source: The New York Times

During the Black Plague pandemic, the cholera outbreak of London, and many other pandemics that the human race has faced, people did not have a good idea of bacteria and viruses. Now, in the present day, we have amassed many more facts that can help us greatly as a human population if we only chose to use the information. Though everyone is tired of wearing masks and social distancing, experts say that if everyone followed these guidelines, the pandemic could, more or less, be over in a couple months. Please try to social distance as best you can, wash your hands often, and wear your mask over your mouth *and* nose.

## Student Submissions

6th grade student Whitney Ledford submitted a creative origin story for the baboon, which includes an excellent moral. Read the story by clicking this link!

[Read Whitney's Story](#)



## Girls Basketball

By Ryan Martinson

The Grand Rapids basketball team is wrapping up an eventful season. During the last Grand Rapids home game for ninth grade and JV, they both went into overtime! Ninth grade won and JV ended up losing but had a great comeback. The varsity team didn't stop yet though. Grand Rapids Girls were named champions of AAA section 7 and were headed off to state for the 8th time in thunder hawk history (girls). On March 30th, Grand Rapids faced The Holy Angels Academy. The Angels were making their 9th state appearance and are the 1st seed for the north while Rapids is 4th. The game was very back and forth. Everytime Rapids got on the board, the Angels answered back with a three. Caren (a player for the Angels) had five consecutive three pointers and could shoot from anywhere. Not to cut Rapids short, though. The Thunder Hawks hustled and played really well; our shots just would not go in.

**The final score was 93-69, The Holy Angels Academy with the win.**

## Meet the Teachers

By Ryan Martinson

Many students don't know what a lot of the teachers do in RJEMS. The teacher of the month is Mrs. Braun. She is a reading and language arts teacher. Her reading classes are small groups of sixth graders. She didn't always teach at our school, though. Mrs. Braun taught a combination of third grade and fifth grade for nine years at St. Joes. She has taught at the Middle School ever since 2011. Outside of school, Mrs. Braun enjoys watching the Minnesota Twins and the movie *Grease*. When I asked why she wanted to teach she stated, "I enjoy children. I want to make a difference in students' lives. I love to continue learning." One of the last questions I asked was, what would you do if you won a million dollars? Mrs. Braun answered, "I would pay off my house and I would donate money to a scholarship for those who want to go into teaching."

Mrs. Braun's advice for middle schoolers: "Listen to your teachers' advice even when you don't want to because they really do know what they are talking about and be yourself."

Some additional facts about Mrs. Braun include..

- Her favorite food is spaghetti
- She participated in gymnastics

Pictured right:  
Mrs. Braun with  
her grandson.



## School Announcements

Our esteemed administrators of RJEMS would like to remind students that hats are not to be worn during school hours.

Don't forget to purchase your 2020-2021 yearbook! This year the yearbook will feature some new additions such as sports action shots, a Speech & Debate page, and future goals for graduating 8th graders. To order online, go to the middle school page at [isd318.org](http://isd318.org), and find the yearbook link under "Quick Links." The deadline is soon, go buy your yearbook now!

## What's Happening in Gym?

Mr. Casey's period 5 and 6, 6th grade physical education classes participated in an indoor softball unit at the end of March. The top batter for the boys was **Nick Foix** with a batting average of .902, and for the girls was **Kaylah Asselynn** with a batting average of .833, both from Mr. Hendrickson 6th grade class.

### Home Runs were hit by

Jaxon Leach (2)	Tate Sweeny (1)
Alex Stuber (1)	Brennen Lane (1)
Owen Windorski (1)	Logan Wourms (1)



Recently we've been seeing tons of TV series building up our newest generation of superheroes. Fan favorites have been killed off, leaving new heroes to take their places. Phase Four of the MCU includes the likes of Wanda Maximoff (Scarlet Witch), Peter Parker (Spiderman), Bucky Barnes (the Winter Soldier), Sam Wilson (the Falcon), and more. These younger heroes are predicted to pave the way for a new generation of fans who haven't watched the older movies. But with any new roster of superheroes, a new batch of villains will be sure to spring up. This brings me to what I'd like to bring to attention: The Dark Avengers.

Foreshadowed in the past motion pictures, the Dark Avengers don't only appear in the comics, but have already been introduced. Allow me to explain. The Dark Avengers are a group of copycat villains who ultimately team up to rival the Avengers—they upgrade from the Thunderbolts. For the MCU, they are predicted—the team remixed a bunch in the comics depending on which you read—to consist of General Thaddeus Ross as Red Hulk, Yelena Belova or the evil version of Black Widow, Helmut Zemo, U.S. Agent, (for lack of a better term) White Vision, Agatha/Agnes, and more. We've already seen some of these characters appear on the big screens and teasers.

Remember back to *The Incredible Hulk*, and we've met General Ross. He was framed as the big bad of the movie, hunting down the Hulk. Since then he's turned to becoming a, more or less, neutral character in *Captain America: Civil War* with the Sokovia Accords. But look back to the comics, and Ross hasn't exactly been as impartial as we see him. In 2008, Marvel Comics spun the General into a much more sinister foe in the form of the Red Hulk. This

## Marvel-ous!

By Katie Chung

adversary was (as expected by the name) an evil version of the likable green giant. He was transformed into such a challenger in an attempt to recreate the supersoldier serum.

The main difference between him and Hulk is that the angrier he gets, the hotter he gets. Where have we heard of a serum that makes soldiers heat up and gain fire related powers? Perhaps another forgotten and poorly rated movie, *Iron Man 3*.

In *Iron Man 3*, we see a company testing their products on soldiers, the test subjects gaining powers such as fire-breathing and healing that looks fairly similar to magma. What company is this? Advanced Idea Mechanics, or A.I.M. Too bad we don't see this anywhere else... Or do we? Look closely at the *Black Widow* trailer, and we see a scene where Yelena is laying on a gurney, strapped and ready to go. Look closer and you see a logo on the side of some medical equipment. Look *even* closer and, you might hurt your eyes, but we see that logo spells three letters: A, I, M.

While A.I.M. isn't the big corporation that makes the Dark Avengers, they *are* one of the main fund-ers.

Furthermore, look at Yelena's scalp, and we see a fancy little line on her forehead. No, that isn't her hairline, nor a wig, but a fake face. Back to the comics, there was an edition or two where *Black Widow* took Yelena's place by face swapping to teach her how dangerous assassination is. Of course, that's a little rich coming from an assassin, but we'll cut her some slack.

Now think back to when, for no apparent reason, *Black Widow* suddenly went blonde in *Infinity War*. The reason: hiding from the government?



the marketing team just wanted to sell more action figures. But why would she need to get a sudden new hairstyle when we've already seen her use a nanomask in *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, posing as Councilwoman Hawley? The short of it is that the blonde in *Infinity War* isn't Romanoff. Jumping back to the trailer, we get a glimpse of Yelena wearing a familiar vest, a tactical vest without sleeves, two snaps along the neck, three double bracketed straps that wrap around the body, topped off with a half-zip. The exact same vest we see Natasha wearing when she goes blonde.

So we have evil replacements for five Avengers so far: White Vision and Agatha/Agnes from *WandaVision*, Helmut Zemo and U.S. Agent from *The Falcon and the Winter Soldier* trailer, Red Hulk from *The Incredible Hulk* and *Iron Man 3*, and Yelena Belova from the upcoming *Black Widow* Movie.

The only question now is who will be battling these villains. Who will step up to the plate? Who will keep the earth safe from evils within, and outside? Who do you think will become the newest heroes?

Tell us your thoughts in the following form:

<https://forms.gle/WtH9yi78Yxn6cGYNA>



## Art Update

Genna Huisinga

These are some pictures of clay projects from Mrs. Kragthorpe's 8th grade art class. All of these pieces will be on display at the reif center if you want

to check them out in-person.

#1



#2



#3



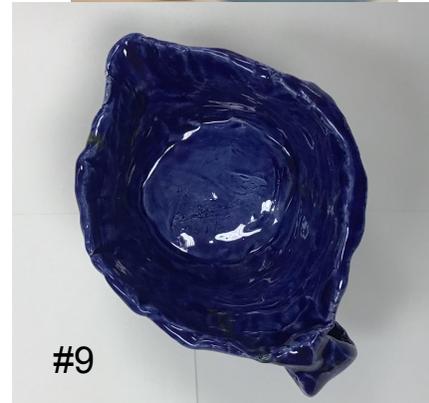
#4



#5



#9



#6



#7



#8



#13



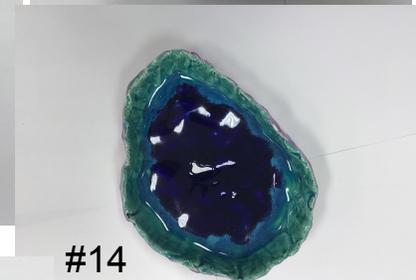
#11



#12



#14



#10



#15



#16



#17



#18



Vote for your favorite project here!

[Favorite Clay Project Survey](#)



#19



#20



#21



#22



#23



#24



#25



#26



#27



#28



#29

### Student Shoutouts!

A few kind notes from teachers to some excellent students.

6th grade student KrissaLynn Hoover from Mrs. Zebro's homeroom class is an excellent student. She is ready to work hard every day. She is great about catching up on work when she is absent, and trying her best while she's working from home. She is a wonderful contributor to our class! - Mrs. Zebro

Loren Bilyeu, Danika Kaczor, and Ariana Jasso all brought in rocks or fossils to show me. Their enthusiasm for geology ROCKS! - Mrs. Lindula

To Connor Swanson, 8th grade! I have had Connor every year since 6th grade. Connor displays great manners, and is the best helper without being asked. He helped with smoothies recently. His peers and myself appreciate all he does! - Mrs. Lahti

To Devany Green, 8th grader. She always stops to visit when I am on hall duty. She is kind and an excellent snowboarder. She is always appropriate in the hallways and just a nice person. - Mr. Casey



## The Bermuda Triangle

By Katie Chung

Continued from page 1.

Let's begin with the theories. Going out on a limb, there's the Lost City of Atlantis. Many theories point to the mythical crystals and creatures of this land being the cause of the disappearances. Of course, the same sources that say the city is the cause also report the legendary land is located in Greece, the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, and somewhere in the Strait of Gibraltar. Even if the metropolis *was* somehow in the Bermuda Triangle, the city wouldn't have any effect on the ships. Why? Because Greeks made up the place! When Plato originally wrote about Atlantis, he imagined it not as a mythological city, but as an ideal state of the government at the time. Eventually time and miscommunication transformed the writing into legend, and thus the Lost City was born.

If it's not Atlantis, maybe it's something else. Maybe it's something so few of us claim to have seen. Maybe it's something out of this world. Many conspiracies claim aliens are the causes of disappearing objects and people, but where's the evidence? Search for pictures of aliens, and drawings, paintings, even photoshop attempts to prove the extraterrestrials existence. But when do you ever see a true photo of an alien? When do you see something that doesn't look like all the rest, something that's not a generic representation of otherworldly beings? In psychology, there's a phenomenon called the bandwagon effect. This is the tendency to acquire a style or behavior because one sees others doing it. In other words, it's the same reason why trends exist, and why all aliens look the same. When enough people hop onto the bandwagon, there's a collective understanding that the idea is now the norm. So, do aliens exist? Maybe, but they probably won't look like what we've imagined them as.

But if it's not Atlantis, and it's not aliens, what's causing these mysteries? Maybe we should ask science. The explanations vary from storms, to shallows, to magnetic anomalies.

Based on the areas around the Bermuda Triangle, there

are possibilities that ships are crashing on shallows around the Triangle. Looking at geographic maps, we see Miami is only about six feet above sea level, while Puerto Rico's highest point reaches 4,389 feet above sea level and four feet below sea level at its lowest points(around the coastline). Bermuda sits at an average of 125 feet above sea level. This means the shallows around the Triangle may be causing the ships to sink, but how would we know? One of the many "attractions" of the Devil's Triangle is the unnatural ability for the space to prevent radio transmissions, making the disappearances even more mysterious. This means we have nearly no information on the area inside the Triangle, and *that* means we can't figure out if shallows are causing the crashes. This also means our wave enigma is busted, since we wouldn't experience the mysterious loss of communication with walls of water.

But maybe what's causing them is also causing the radio prevention. Maybe we've overlooked something with the ability to create the very land we stand on. Maybe the conundrums of the Bermuda Triangle are caused by underwater volcanoes.

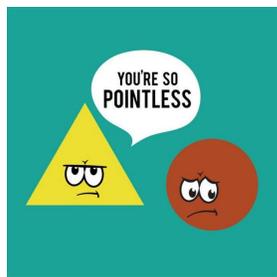
It sounds crazy, I know, but consider. Most underwater volcanoes spew water vapor, but some also release gases. These gases include carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, hydrogen sulfide, and other hydrogen halides. But while these may be detrimental to our health, if you're in an enclosed space without these gases invading your privacy, you should be fine. The volcanoes I bring to your attention are mud volcanoes. These are typically found off peninsulas, such as Florida, or some islands. The Bermuda Triangle just so happens to be in the perfect position to house these fissures. To solidify this theory even more, both Bermuda and Puerto Rico sit next to/on active fault lines, which tend to bring earthquakes and volcanoes with them.

So the location is perfect, but why would mud volcanoes be so substantial? Well, most of these volcanoes release methane gases. These gases can affect the buoyancy of the water, which means the ships wouldn't be able to float. Planes would also break down, since most rely on combustion to work, and methane naturally *loves* combustion. Essentially the planes would explode midair. Furthermore, remember the radio transmissions blocked by the Triangle? Methane gases tend to decompose these radio waves, preventing communication.

To conclude, the mysteries of the Bermuda Triangle aren't caused by aliens, Atlantis, or solely shallows. Instead, because of geography around the region, methane flows into the Triangle, affecting the buoyancy of water, and blocking radio waves, ultimately causing the disappearances.

## Mathcounts

Three RJEMS 8th grade students competed in the AOPS Mathcounts regional competition on February 25th. The top 5 students in each region earn a trip to the State competition. Jack Sonder, Preston Spawn, and Logan Hoffman took home a 1st, 4th, and 5th place win to advance to state. The state competition takes place on Thursday, March 26th. Good Luck!





# THE FUN SECTION!

By Jack Sonder

## Just have fun!



### Dad Joke of the Month

*“What do you call a factory that makes okay products? A satisfactory.”*



### Weird but True

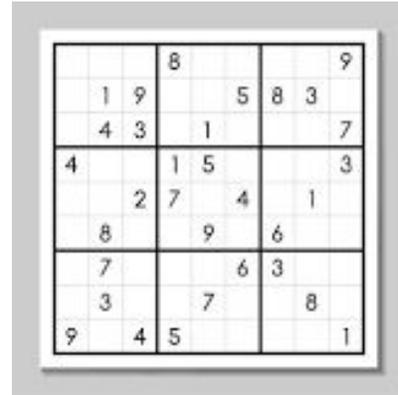
Grapes light on fire in the microwave.

McDonalds once created bubble gum flavored broccoli.

Professional ironing is a sport.

There is a toilet museum.

A snail can sleep for 3 years.



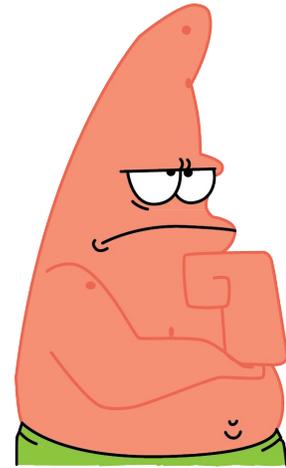
Answer key for last month’s Sudoku.

1	9	7	2	3	4	6	5	8
8	2	4	5	1	6	9	3	7
5	3	6	7	9	8	1	4	2
6	5	9	1	2	3	7	8	4
2	4	8	6	7	5	3	1	9
7	1	3	4	8	9	5	2	6
9	6	5	8	4	1	2	7	3
4	7	1	3	6	2	8	9	5
3	8	2	9	5	7	4	6	1



Last month’s “Caption This!” Winner: Logan Hoffman!

### Caption This!



The editors at RJEMS MONTHLY encourage you to send us a photo of this meme, but completed. The best meme-r will earn an optional interview and spot in the next edition. What is Patrick thinking about? Tell us in the form below. May the best meme win!

[Meme Competition Form](#)

### Newspaper Staff

(in order from left to right)

- Natalie Neary
- Genna Huisinga
- Katie Chung
- Kaitlyn Olson
- Ryan Martinson
- Emily Ericson
- Jack Sonder



The reluctantly photographed newspaper staff.

### Special thanks to our external contributors!

Would you like to see your work published in the RJEMS Monthly newspaper? Find a QR code hanging in the school hallway or submit your work using this link!

[Newspaper Submission Form](#)

