

RJEMS MONTHLY



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

How YOU can become a Computer Programmer

By Jack Sonder



Have you ever wished you could learn how to become a computer programmer? It can be very overwhelming and many just don't know where to start. In this article, I will explain some basic principles of programming and some recommendations on how to get started.

What is coding?

Coding or computer programming is basically giving your computer instructions on how to operate. It can be as simple as telling your computer to type your name or draw a picture. The best part about coding is that there are no limits to what you can do. Computer Programming consists of many different coding languages such as Java, C#, Python, and HTML. Each of these languages are unique and some work better doing certain tasks. Just like a musical instrument, once you master one language, you can easily learn another.

How do I know what language is for me?

Each language has its strengths and weaknesses, so it is best to determine your goal or project first. Do you want to develop your own website, build a computer game to play with friends, or create the next great app? There are coding languages that work better for different tasks. Although most languages are great, I would recommend sticking to the more well known languages such as Java, JavaScript, Python, Ruby, HTML/CSS, or any C language.

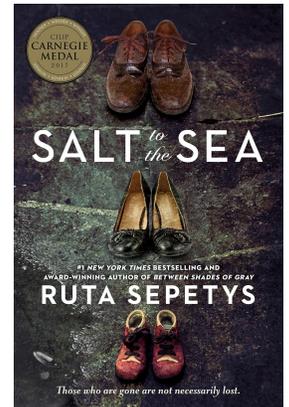
How do I learn how to code?

There are endless ways you can learn to code including online classes, reading a book, watching tutorials, or taking an in-person class. It really depends on how you learn best, but all of these options will get you started. I really enjoyed learning by taking free online classes. Platforms such as Khan Academy and Code Academy are fantastic and allow you to work at your own pace and learn multiple different languages. If you are the type of person who learns better by reading the material first, our local library has many books on coding basics which are very helpful.

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Book of the Month

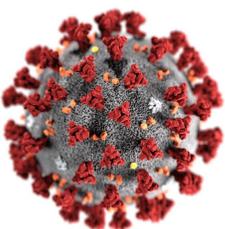
By Kaitlyn Olson



Salt to the Sea is a historical fiction novel set in Germany during WWII. It follows four German refugees as they flee to a ship, the Wilhelm Gustloff, which promises to take them, and all others who are lucky enough to board, to Kiel, a location of relative safety when compared to where they come from.

COVID-19 Updates- As of May 2nd

By Katie Chung & Kaitlyn Olson



Cases in U.S.- 32,429,536
Deaths in U.S.- 577,299
Cases in Itasca- 4,156
Deaths in Itasca- 53

Would you like to join the Newspaper Staff?

If you are entering 8th grade next year, have strong writing skills, and enjoy working with a team to represent your school, the RJEMS Monthly newspaper team may be the place for you! If you have any questions about being a part of the newspaper team, please find any member of the current staff (listed on the back page) or contact Ms. Johnsen at sjohnsen@isd318.org.

What's Inside?

- Meet the teachers
- School Announcements
- Student Shoutouts
- Sports and gym class updates
- Recycled Rocket projects
- Meme Competition



Spring Sports

By Ryan Martinson

April marks the start of spring sports. For some sports, middle school students play jv and varsity (track, girls lacrosse, fastpitch). This section is to give updates on spring sports.

The Grand Rapids Softball team played Greenway in honor of Jim Gibeau, a fallen Grand Rapids firefighter and Greenway Alumni. They also raised over \$400 for the family of Mr. Gibeau. Greenway Varsity won 13-0 and the Grand Rapids JV won 11-10.

The Grand Rapids Greenway girls lacrosse team played Hermantown Proctor on April 20th. The score was 9-4 Varsity (GRG), 16-1 JV (GRG). On the 27th, GRG played Hermantown Proctor again. They won again 9-1 (Varsity) and 15-4 (JV).

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. Linnell. She is an 8th grade English teacher. Her classes include advanced and non-advanced environments. Outside of school, Mrs. Linnell enjoys working out, singing, and dancing. When I asked why she wanted to teach she stated, "Well, when I was in middle school, I noticed that there were a lot of kids around me struggling with reading, and I wanted to help them and people like them." One of the last questions I asked was, what would you do if you won a million dollars? Mrs. Linnell answered, "I would give it all away. There are too many people out there who could benefit from it."

Mrs. Linnell's advice for middle schoolers: "I would really like for kids to look at themselves and know that they are valuable and precious. And because of that they should give their best shot they can at the world." Also, "Everyday is a gift and you should take advantage of it and not to waste it"

Some additional facts about Mrs. Linnell include...

- Her favorite foods are Mexican dishes.
- She participated in taekwondo and likes Gymnastics.
- Her favorite subject in school was also English.
- Her favorite color is blue.
- If she had any superpower, it would be to heal people.



School Announcements

By Kaitlyn Olson

This year has seemed longer than most, what with the switching from learning models and the recent MCA testing, but now it is almost over. There are only 22 days left! Remember to wear masks above your nose and social distance to the best of your ability. If any of next year's 7th or 8th graders are interested in joining the student council, applications will be available next Fall. Finally, yet importantly, remember to recognize the tremendous amount of work your teachers and the RJEMS staff have put into making this year fun, educational, and safe.

A note about Student Council from our school Counselors!

Student Council is an organization within RJEMS that gives students an opportunity to develop leadership skills by organizing and carrying out school activities and projects. In addition to planning events that contribute to school spirit and community welfare, the student council is the voice of the student body. They help share student ideas, interests, and concerns with the school wide community.

The makeup of Student Council will include students from 6th, 7th and 8th grade. We meet as an entire group; however, most of the work is done in committees. Our ultimate goal is to create a council that accurately represents the RJEMS student body they will serve.

Student Council generally meets 2-3 times per month and may include some projects that require time during the summer, before and after school, during lunch, and possibly weekends.

Student Council is a fun, energetic, and active group! It is a chance to meet new friends and work with a wide variety of people. We are looking for responsible students who are willing to work hard!

If you are interested in being in Student Council next year, applications will be available in the Fall. We'd love to work with you!



Toilet Flush

By Katie Chung

There's a belief among a large group of people that toilets swirl counterclockwise in the northern hemisphere, and clockwise in the southern hemisphere. But there's an equally large group of people who say the hemisphere doesn't affect the swirl whatsoever. So who's right in this scenario?

Right off the bat, toilets are going to automatically swirl in either direction because of the jets in the bowl. But try a more controlled experiment, and you come up with a different answer. (See

<https://youtu.be/ihv4f7VMeJw> or <https://youtu.be/aDorTBEhEtk>)

The water is swirling because of what scientists call the Coriolis Effect. This works because the widest part of the earth travels the farthest each day (from a bird's eye view), and the side closer to the pole travels less. The farther from the pole the water is, the more velocity it has, and the faster the water travels around the container. This creates the famous swirl.

So, who's really right? Well, toilet jets make water swirl in whatever direction manufacturers want, but the true swirl *does* exist as an effect of the Coriolis Effect. Just make sure to flush when you're done.

Zombie Virus

By Katie Chung

Looking at the global pandemic, one intriguing idea comes to mind. No, it's not that people really don't want to cover their faces, nor is it that we should all really invest in some good puzzles. No, it brings my attention to other viruses, like the black plague, smallpox, and, most interestingly, the zombie virus. But could a zombie virus actually happen? In the words of Samita Andreansky:

"Sure, I could imagine a scenario where you mix rabies with a flu virus to get airborne transmission, a measles virus to get personality changes, the encephalitis virus to cook your brain with fever"—and thus increase aggression even further—"and throw in the ebola virus to cause you to bleed from your guts. Combine all these things, and you'll [get] something like a zombie virus," she said.

So, maybe people weren't wrong in saying Gen Z would be the generation that would shape the world. They never said it would turn out good!

How YOU can become a computer programmer continued...

Finally, nothing beats taking a class from a teacher. Our very own Mrs. Lindula has taught computer programming classes for many years. She explained that she began coding in High School where she took a website design and robotics class. Mrs. Lindula has used her coding knowledge that she learned in high school and college and applied it to her jobs. She now teaches community education classes on website building and game design using the language "Scratch" which is a basic block-based program. Mrs. Lindula said her favorite computer programmer is Debbie Sterling, who was the founder of GoldieBlox. (A toy company that promotes STEM.)



I hope this gave you a basic understanding on how to get started programming!



Discrimination Against The Mentally Ill

By Natalie Neary

The “treatment” of the mentally ill, is a shameful part of America’s history. Ranging from beatings, Insulin-induced comas, Lobotomies, and repulsive living conditions, that was merely the surface of what people suffered in asylums. The goal of this essay is to shine a spotlight on the cruel procedures and treatment administered to mentally ill patients, while explaining how the treatment and care of these people has improved and overcome its dark past.

Originally, poor mental health was thought to be demons or bad spirits inhabiting one’s body. The procedures used to remove them was by either having the individual undergo an exorcism, drinking medicinal drinks, or drilling holes in their skulls to free the demons or spirits. Most patients died from this procedure. Romans believed a light version of hydrotherapy was most effective; they demonstrated this by having communal bathing areas. The wealthy people of that time used herbs and flowers in their baths. The Romans were one of the First Nations to recognize mental health as a priority. Fast forward to the Victorian era, institutions were constructed much like jails: barred windows, each door was to be locked separately, with tall fences surrounding the buildings. Once inside these facilities, people weren’t given an option to leave. Moreover, most institutions had procedures in place that allowed grueling punishments to be carried out on patients. If you were to be placed in an institution, which followed the cruel practices most performed at the time, you might not come back. People were not seen after being admitted, not for visits, or holidays, they just seemed to disappear.

A woman by the name of Nelly Bly, who was a writer, agreed to pose as a mentally ill woman for an assignment with a local newspaper. She documented everything that happened to her through a series of articles, which she later compiled into a book.



Bly’s works were hard to ignore due to their descriptive nature. “... I could not sleep, so I lay in bed picturing to myself the horrors in case a fire should break out in the asylum. Every door is locked separately and the windows are heavily barred, so that escape is impossible.” In addition to describing the physical building, Bly describes the extreme treatments she received, including solitary confinement, hair pulling and more. Bly’s book was a hit. She highlighted the horrors of what institutions (asylums) practiced and were like for patients living there. She also proved that mental institutions didn’t actually help any of its patients get better, but rather made their symptoms and illnesses worse. “The last couple of decades at the hospital were extremely violent. Patient to patient killings and female violations were frequently reported throughout the last few years of operation. There was even a report for a nurse who went missing for nearly two months before her body was found dead at the bottom of an unused staircase...”

By 1994 the asylum was deemed unusable. Conditions were likened to that of a German death camp, and closed for good. Women in the Victorian Era could be enrolled into these institutions for a variety of reasons, including: Menstruation-related anger, pregnancy-related sadness, post-partum depression symptoms, disobedience, chronic fatigue syndrome, anxiety, the list goes on. Victorian women could be placed in institutions due to these conditions, which doctors often labeled “hysteria,” once you got into the institution, women had few, to no rights, and disobedience was often carried out with severe punishment. “The purpose of the earliest mental institutions was neither treatment nor cure, but rather the enforced segregation of inmates from society,” writes Jeffrey A. Lieberman in *Shrinks: The Untold Story of Psychiatry*. “The mentally ill were considered social deviants or moral misfits suffering divine punishment for some inexcusable transgression.” In the early 1900s, experts began to try understanding what could make a person behave in such an erratic manner, and what opinions and thoughts that other people in the outside world would deem “madness.” A man by the name of Sigmund Freud was major influence here, in the fact that he developed several theories to possibly explain why people behaved so unusually. He excogitated therapies that aimed to soothe and aid people who might have one been placed in an institution. In the 1940s and 1950s, Chemists began to experiment with different forms of medications that could stabilize imbalances inside the brain, which is a key factor in disorders and mental illnesses alike. To a massive extent, this was a successful project. While this was taking place, the number of people hospitalized due to mental illnesses had reached inordinate proportions.

Continued on page 4.



Discrimination Against The Mentally Ill continued...

But even up until 1970s, approximately 50,000 lobotomies had been performed on U.S. patients, mainly in asylums. However, less than 350 lobotomies were performed per year in the 1970s. But by then, medication dominated mental health treatment. Now, drugs have been used in treating the mentally ill as far back as the mid-1800s. Their purpose then was to sedate patients to keep overcrowded asylums more manageable, like a chemical restraint to replace the physical restraints of earlier years. Medications like lithium seemed very effective when soothing people with severe bipolar disorder, while antipsychotic medications seemed capable of helping people with schizophrenia. Doctors administered drugs such as opium and morphine, both of which carried side effects and the risk of addiction. Toxic mercury was used to control mania. Barbiturates put patients into a deep sleep thought to improve their madness. Chloral hydrate started being used in the 1950s, but like the drugs before it, it had side effects, including psychotic episodes.

And then came Thorazine, the medical breakthrough psychiatrists had been searching for all these years. While it wasn't perfect, it proved much safer and effective at treating severe mental illness.

Beginning in the 1950s, experts began to get out of asylums and into communities, which made the number of people enrolled in formal institutions drop dramatically in just a few years. In 1955, the year the first effective antipsychotic drug was introduced, there were more than 500,000 patients in asylums. By 1994, that number decreased to just over 70,000. Starting in the 1960s, institutions were gradually closed and the care of mental illness was transferred largely to independent community centers as treatments became both more sophisticated and humane.

What's happening in gym?

By Emily Ericson

Mr. Casey's 5th and 6th hour classes performed in an archery unit the week of April 6th to April 9th. For many of these students, this was their first time shooting a bow and arrow. It was a fun and exciting time for the students. The high score for the boys six-arrow shot was 54, scored by Sawyer Loney. The high score for the girls six-arrow shot was 46, shot by Rainy Rother. Marlene Ericson had the highest number of arrows shot for the girls- 214 arrows. Sawyer Loney had the highest number of arrows shot for the boys- 252 arrows. These classes also had a fast and fun pickleball unit. The top team was in the 6th hour class. Tate Sweeny and Owen Stark won all six of their games. There were also other teams with good win/loss records. Sawyer Loney and Skylar Baker had five wins and no losses, and Riley Aultman and R.J. Mundahl also had five wins and no losses. During Mr. Casey's 6th Grade Swimming Unit, the students were timed swimming the 25 yard freestyle. The class received some extra help from 6th graders Savannah Feld, Kenzie Reinartz, Journie Casper and Mia Doell with using the stopwatches to help time the swimmers. The fastest Girl was Marlene Ericson with a time of 27.17 (from Mr. Otto's Classroom) and the fastest boy was Alex Stuber (From Mr. Hendrickson's classroom) with a time of : 23.03

Good job to all the students who participated!

Student Shoutouts!

Aubrey Scharpf--8th grade. Aubrey amazes me with her commitment for good quality work! Whether she is working from home or here at school, she gets the work done! She is a great friend to her classmates and I enjoy visiting with her as well! -Mrs. Lahti

Paige Dudley and Neveah Hoard for making staff appreciation signs. - Mrs. Kragthorpe

Alexandra Stelling, Genna Huisinga, and Aerryn Baird for daily help in the art room (cleaning, sorting and helping with the ConnectED prep). - Mrs. Kragthorpe

Leighton White for stepping up to help pass out the drawing boards to the class so we could draw outside. - Mrs. Kragthorpe

Emma Moran for helping with ConnectED prep. - Mrs. Kragthorpe



6th Grade Recycled Rocket Projects!

By Genna Huisinga



To the left is 6th grader Ronnie Pforr and Colorful Machine, her rocket. Ronnie’s favorite part of the project was launching the rockets. One cool thing about her is that she wants to be in Track and Field, so she used a running water bottle that would have been thrown away as part of her rocket. When asked if she could change one thing about her project she said she would have moved her fins up more so that the wind would catch it better. Her advice for those who will do the project in the future is to not use so much duct tape because it adds too much weight to the rocket.



Above is Shani Brown and her rocket, “Cool Blue Bean.” Shani’s favorite part of the project was launching the rockets. She chose to paint her rocket blue because it is her favorite color. If she could change one thing about the rocket she would have made it lighter and longer. Her advice for the project was to just have fun.



To the left is Mason Johnson and his rocket, Planey Mc Plane Boy. Mason’s favorite part of the project was creating his rocket because he liked a break from worksheets. One thing that’s cool is he decided to make a plane instead of a rocket, as you can probably tell. One thing he would change about his plane is ironically, for it to not be a plane because it didn’t fly very well. His advice for people was to make their rockets small with big fins so they can steer better and go farther. His least favorite part of the project was doing “paperwork” at the end.



Above is Preston Sweet with The Small Rocket. His favorite part of the project was launching his rocket. If he could fix one thing about his rocket he would have used a two liter bottle. His advice is to not use flimsy materials like plastic cups for your project.

To the left is Carter Hill with his winning rocket, 917 USA. He used his birthday for the name. His favorite part of the project was building the rocket. If he could change one thing he would make the nose cone bigger. His advice was to just have fun with your project and if it fails use it as a learning experience. Carter had confidence in his rocket but didn’t think he would win. He enjoys this class and says the teacher is a “fun guy”. His winning project was actually a second try because his first rocket wasn’t very good. His prize for the best rocket was a Mt. Dew trophy (pictured above).





THE FUN SECTION!

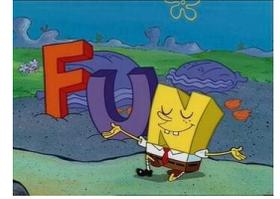
By Jack Sonder

Just have fun!



Dad Joke of the Month

"What did the janitor say when he jumped out of the closet? Supplies!."



Weird but True

Dolphins sleep with one eye open.

For 20 years, a cat served as mayor of an Alaskan town.

A woman lost her wedding ring and found it 16 years later on a carrot in her garden

Cotton candy was invented by a dentist.

A cornflake in the shape of Illinois sold for \$1,350

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

Picture This!



Last month's "Picture This!" Winner Whitney Ledford!

Answer key for last month's Sudoku.

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

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 Bob Ross painting? Tell us in the form below. May the best meme win!

[Picture This Submission Link](#)

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](#)

