

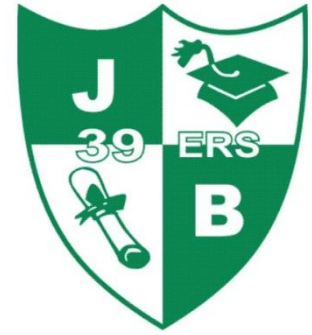


JACK BENNY L.A.D.I.E.S. HOLD ZUMBA CLASS

On [December 14th, 2011](#), Jack Benny's L.A.D.I.E.S. conducted a Zumba Fitness class. During the event students participated in the Latin-inspired dance-fitness program that blends red-hot international music, and contagious steps to form a "fitness-party" that is downright addictive. Jack Benny L.A.D.I.E.S., a student youth leadership group for young women founded by Ms. Catalina Quinones-Nelson (Assistant Principal), organized and facilitated the Zumba instruction as well as motivated the school body to participate in the health initiative. Great Job L.A.D.I.E.S.!

# Jack Benny Middle School Newsletter

DEC 2011-JAN 2012



## J.B. Staff Play for Charity

Jack Benny Middle School defeated Jefferson Middle School in the MIDDLE SCHOOL Staff vs. Staff Volleyball Tournament on [Friday, December 9th, 2011](#). Jack Benny, the underdog, at the beginning of the year, rose to surprising stardom defeating Webster and Abbott. Congratulations 39ers for the championship and special thanks to Jefferson Middle School for a game well-played. All the teams from each middle school were playing to assist charities. Jack Benny played for the American Cancer Society.



## Parents, Staff & Students Celebrate Thanksgiving.

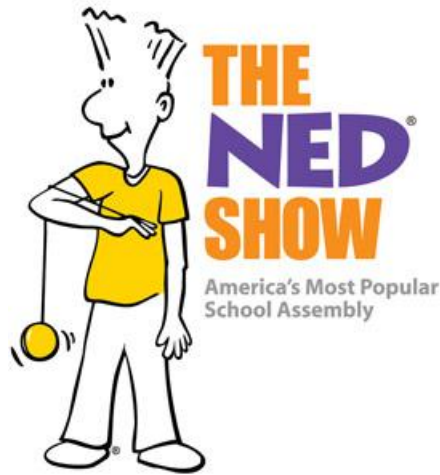
JBMS parents of students involved in clubs, sports and organizations rolled up their sleeves, donned aprons, and put on a Thanksgiving Pot-Luck. During the feast, clubs, sports and organizations shared their accomplishments as well as their goals for the year. Over 200 attended the event.

## Northern Illinois Afro-Aboriginals Present at Jack Benny M.S.



On [December 12th, 2011](#) Jack Benny 8th graders attended an assembly presented by the (NIAA) Northern Illinois Afro-Aboriginals. During the presentation, students witnessed the construction of a medicine wheel as well as developed a deeper understanding of inter-tribal regalia and participated in an eastern and western dance. Special thanks for Mr. Joe Russell, 8th Grade Social Studies Teacher, for his amazing presentation.

On December 12th, 6th and 7th graders participated in the return of The NED Show. The NED Show is a program designed to promote academic achievement through positive behavior and character development. NED is an acronym which means, Never Give Up, Encourage Others, and Do Your Best. Students listened to the story of NED's adventures on his way to your school. Throughout the story students learned the importance of kindness, practice, perseverance, setting goals, making good choices, and paying attention to teachers. The assembly aimed at building self-esteem, and encouraging good behavior. The assembly motivated and encouraged our students to remember that each of them has what it takes to become a champion at school and in life.



TONY- NED PRESENTER

"Never GIVE UP!"

"Encourage Others!"

"Do your Best!"

## Counselor's Corner

As we begin our second semester at Jack Benny M.S. the counselors would like to share with you news & upcoming events from our department.

ACCESS testing for our ELL and TPI students will take place January 17, 18, & 19.

Girl Scouts participate in Science Magic during lunch periods January 17 & February 21.

Benny Students Qualify for NUMATS by Scoring 90% or Higher on ISAT 2011 Reading and/or Math.

The counselors are proud to announce that 83 Benny students are eligible to participate in the Northwestern University Midwest Academic Talent Search (NUMATS) by taking either the EXPLORE, ACT, or SAT tests. Results from these tests give parents and students a more detailed picture of their abilities in comparison with other bright students. Testing dates run [January - June](#) for the various tests.

### Parent Ideas to Encourage Reading:

- \*Encourage books or magazine subscriptions as gifts, on topics that interest your child.
- \*Regularly plan a family outing to the library to check out books.
- \*Use newspaper and magazines to grab your student's attention.
- \*Use the web to expand your student's knowledge on topics that tie into their interests.
- \*Spend time taking turns reading together as a family and discussing the book.

Until we meet again,  
The Counselors - Ms. Scocchera & Ms. Zehren



Left to Right: Ms. Zehren and Ms. Scocchera

## LIBRARY CORNER

**Scary Story Celebration**

70 students submitted original scary stories to participate in this year's Scary Story Celebration. At the celebration, students enjoyed stories presented by Ms. Rich, Mrs. Goodnature, Mr. Russell, and Ms. Richardson's class, as well as scary treats. Prizes were awarded for the best stories and costume.

**UPCOMING AND ONGOING EVENTS****Book Fair**

The [February](#) Book Fair is scheduled for [Feb. 2-10, 2012](#).

**The Battle of the Books**

The annual Battle of the Books will take place at the end of March. All students are encouraged to sign up and start reading the four Battle books: Peak, The Heart of a Shepherd, Extra Credit, and Wild Things. From now until March, participating students can read and prepare for the Battle during their lunch periods, after eating, in the library. The Battle is a friendly competition when teams of students work together to answer questions about the books. Students are encouraged to read all four books but can participate if they read only two.

**READ-INS**

There will be a READ-IN every Friday that there is no MAP testing or Book Fair in the library, during periods 8 and 9. Students ask their Communications teacher for a pass, and then come to the library to enjoy reading and treats. The next READ-IN will be January 27.

**Classroom and Individual Reading Contests**

The classroom and individual reading minutes contest deadline has been extended until January 12. The communications class that reads the most minutes before January 12 will receive an ice cream party. The student who has read the most minutes by 1/12/12 will receive a pizza party in the library with a friend.

**Book Reports for Benny Bucks**

Students can pick up book report forms from the library, complete them, and return them to the library to receive Benny Bucks!

**Library Classes**

Every three weeks, students have library class either in the library or in their classrooms. Lessons taught so far include the following: Orientation, Importance of Reading, and Genre. Next, students will learn about the Dewey Decimal System so they can easily locate books in the Benny library and in all libraries across America.

**The Waukegan Public Library**

A representative from the Waukegan Public Library will be speaking to Benny students during their lunch periods about upcoming public library programs.



## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Team

**Team Leader: Mr. Cliff Turner**

The 6th grade is finishing off the year in fine style. As the end of the 2nd quarter nears, the sixth grade has been busy aligning curriculum and standardizing assessments to set the benchmarks across grade levels. 6th grade Social Studies have set out to move towards Ancient Greece in 3rd quarter. Communication and Math Teachers have been finalizing their alignments using the ISAT goals and standards as the benchmarks to meet, and the 6th grade Science teachers are continuing to engage student learning by using the scientific method and application to actively involving the students in the joy of science. The 6th grade team wants to wish all the parents and students a happy, warm, and safe holiday season. Please enjoy this time with your families.

## SOCIAL WORK CORNER



Between last spring and this fall over 50 students have helped plant a perennial garden in front of our school. The last work parties took place just before Thanksgiving when approximately 250 bulbs were planted including crocuses, daffodils, irises, and tulips and the students were rewarded with a hot chocolate / cider party to help warm up. These bulbs need to overwinter in the ground and go through a cold spell in order to bloom in the spring. It's kind of like our students who go through a growth period during the year and then surprise us in the spring when we stop to realize just how much progress they've made.

December is that time of year when everyone is looking forward to winter break and holidays. Here at school teachers are getting ready to finish the end of second quarter and students have been studying for finals and completing projects. The stress level is getting high and things that normally wouldn't bother people are harder to ignore. School-wide we are celebrating RAK (Random Acts of Kindness) Week. Students and staff are being encouraged to do small things to make someone's day better. We don't know what stresses other people are dealing with and sometimes just a small act on our part can make a world of difference in their day. As you go about your daily activities see what you can do to brighten up someone else's day. Try not to get too caught up in the materialistic part of the holidays and, instead, find ways to enjoy spending time together as a family.

Happy holidays to all,

**Sharon Ganellen, LCSW, Benny School Social Worker**

## Nurse's Corner

A case of pertussis, also called "whooping cough" has been reported in our school. Since October 1, 2011, there have been greater than 70 cases reported in Lake County. Pertussis is caused by bacteria infecting the mouth, nose and throat. It is spread through the air by coughing.

Symptoms can appear 5 to 21 days after infection. Usually only close contacts of someone with Pertussis may become infected. Pertussis **may** start with cold-like symptoms (i.e., sneezing/runny nose) followed by a cough that can gradually become worse. Others may develop the cough without any cold symptoms at all. **Those with Pertussis are most contagious during the beginning, cold-like stage and the first 2 weeks after cough onset.** The cough usually develops into "coughing fits" which can make one gag or even vomit. **Between these "coughing fits" the person appears well.**



Coughing in very young children may produce a whooping sound due to trying to catch their breaths (rare in older children). There is generally no fever and coughing may last four weeks or longer. **Adults, teens and vaccinated children often have milder symptoms** that may be confused with bronchitis or asthma. **Please observe your child for the above symptoms for the next 3 weeks.**

If your child comes down with cold symptoms followed by a cough, **it may be necessary to have your child evaluated by a physician.** Tell the doctor that pertussis has been reported in your child's school and report possible pertussis infections to your school nurse or administration. If your child was seen by a medical provider **and** Pertussis was suspected, **please keep your child at home for the first 5 days of the appropriate antibiotic treatment, or until test results are known.** The most accurate test for diagnosing pertussis is a swab placed through the nose called a nasopharyngeal swab. Antibiotics given early may minimize severe symptoms and prevent further spread of the disease.

In Illinois, the "Dtap" Pertussis vaccine is given until 7 years of age. Vaccine protection begins to fade in older children. If you have children less than 7 years old who have not been completely vaccinated for pertussis (particularly babies under one year of age), talk to your child's doctor about the benefit of vaccination. Make sure children receive their pertussis (**Dtap**) booster as soon as they **turn 4 years old.** Babies under one year of age and unvaccinated small children are more likely to have severe illness from Pertussis. When possible, babies should be kept away from people with a cough. **Any baby with a coughing illness should be seen by their doctor as soon as possible.**

**THE PERTUSSIS BOOSTER "Tdap" (diphtheria, tetanus and acellular pertussis) is now available and WILL BE REQUIRED AT THE START OF THE 2012/2013 SCHOOL YEAR FOR CHILDREN ENTERING GRADES 6-12. It is strongly recommended that you contact your child's doctor now to obtain this immunization for your child. As always, please submit paperwork to the School Nurse documenting their protection once it is obtained. Thank you.**

Ms. Susan Kuhn.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Team

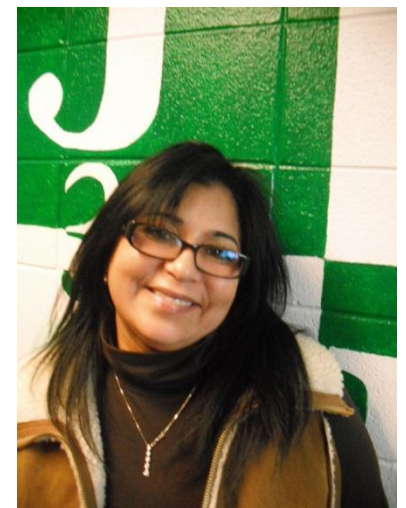
Team Leader: Mr. Min Namkung

The following students were awarded for seventh grade: Student of the Month were Skylar Murphy and Jose Cisneros, PBIS Student of the Month were Julianne Gantar and Jaime Medina, and Most Improvement (Student of the Month) were Rosalio Fernandez and Monique Martinez. In Math, students will be working out of Moving Straight Ahead. Students will need graphing paper. In Communication, students will focus on inferring and figurative language. In Social Studies, Mr. Lowrance and Mr. Chin are looking forward to engaging students in curriculum covering the Founding of the Colonies, the French Indian War, the American Revolution, and the United States Constitution. In Science, students will be looking into the world of micro-organisms, specifically bacteria. They will study their structure and function and use microscope to get an up close look. They will then study higher level organisms by comparing and contrasting plant and animal cells and discover their function.



## Language Liaison

Hi, my name is Zurina Luciano; I am the Language Liaison- Intérprete Bilingüe for Jack Benny. The teachers and staff use my services when they need help contacting/communication with Spanish-speaking parents. If you need help translating for a meeting with teachers or staff, call me. I sit in the main office and welcome all incoming parents to our school. I record the messages from the Principal to all parents about events. I am at your service. My phone number is 847-263-4712.



# 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Team

Team Leader: Mr. Jonathan Nicolosi

The 8th grade classes will be exploring new and interesting concepts in 3rd quarter. Math classes will explore quadratic equations and practice new operations to simplify expressions. Science will blast off out of this world into astronomy and discover the wonders of our solar system. Later in the quarter in social studies students will celebrate Women's History Month with a visit from elector Nancy Shepperson, who will introduce students to the suffragette movement. All classes will be engaged weekly in preparation for the ISAT test which will come at the end of the quarter. Students are reminded to make their classroom time productive and positive to make the most of every minute of instruction up to test day.



Saturday School Dates for January:

January 21<sup>st</sup>

Feb 4<sup>th</sup>

Feb 18<sup>th</sup>

Saturday School is held from 7 AM to 11 AM. Transportation is not provided.

## Planning Ahead For High School

There is an Open House at the Technology Campus in Grayslake. Here is your chance for students and parents to see what options are available to juniors and seniors in high school.

When: Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012 from 4:30-7:30 PM

Where: 19525 West Washington St. Grayslake, Illinois (next to the College of Lake County)

## Jack Facts!

What's up with Jack Benny always being 39 years old?



The gag started on Jack Benny's fifty-fourth birthday in 1948. While he often claimed to be younger than he was, it was at this point he "became" and "stayed" 39.



Film Club will be working on studying drama techniques with lighting, acting, and different camera shots. The camera shots we will be focusing on are wide shots and close ups. Students will then be writing their own scripts and creating their own drama film.

# Encore Team

Team Leader: Ms. Tara Alley

Ms. Alley's artists of the month! During third quarter in Ms. Alley's art class we will be focusing on color theory. Students will learn how to mix and really use color in a meaningful way to make art.



7th Madison J.



6th Angelita C.



8th Brandon A.

In Technology Class, students are learning to format Word documents, focusing on alignment, font choice, and font size. Additionally, students have created beautiful papers with winter watermarks, borders, and pictures. The keyboarding lessons paid off as they applied their new typing skill to these documents, some typing as fast as 78 wpm with over 93% accuracy!

The Jack Benny choir is looking to grow by adding some new members 3rd quarter. The choir also will be performing at a festival in March with the choirs from all 5 middle schools.

# PBIS



Ms. Vanessa Williams, 6<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher, will be running this year's 2011-2012 PBIS Universal Team.

# P.E. Team

Team Leader: Mr. George Goodnature

During the second quarter, the students participated in the following units: Boom Ball, Steal the Chicken or Pig, Tchoukball and a little Ultimate Football. Each game brought a unique fitness challenge for the students. In addition, being part of a team, each student had to define team goals and evaluate themselves as to how they contributed to the team goals. At the end of the quarter, the students were evaluated for fitness by taking the Fitness Gram quarterly assessment. For the first time, all students will receive a grade for this assessment in two different areas: Healthy Fitness Zone Achievement and in the areas of results improvement when compared to the previous quarter's results. It is hope that this process will better enable the PE department to better structure activities that will aid in the overall improvement of our Fitness Gram results.

Looking forward to third quarter, students will be involved in the following units: Basketball, Volleyball, Floor Hockey and a Team Building / Dance Unit. In addition, students will complete their personal fitness profile which will serve as a basis for creating their own personal fitness plan that will be used every time the student is on the stage using the fitness equipment.



*"...whatever it takes!"*

## SPOTLIGHT



**Who am I:** Ashema Powell

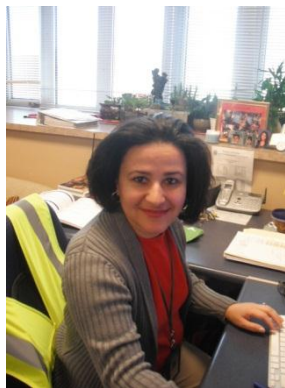
**What do I do at Benny?** I oversee the RtI/PBIS process at Benny Middle School. My mission is to build a sense of capacity in regards to using data to drive our decisions surrounding student achievement.

A little bit about me: I am originally from Kansas City, MO. I come from a family of all girls: I have two sisters and four nieces. Something that most people don't know about me is that I received a second bachelor's degree in German Studies and spent six months in Germany studying the language and culture. My passion has always been with working with children, so my personal and career goals all center on child advocacy.

**What are my plans for this year?** As a new staff member, my plans are to establish positive relationships with the Benny staff and to promote positivity throughout the school.

**What do I look forward to?** I look forward to feeling even more connected with the staff and students at Benny. I want to walk down the halls of Benny and be able to greet students by name.

## A Message from Ms. Minerva Cruz, Principal



What an extraordinary year this has been for us at Jack Benny! There has been much to celebrate in all corners of the school including increasing MAP test scores, offering energizing and motivating assemblies, continually striving for student excellence, at home and at school, and the always-outstanding accomplishments of our students, parents, faculty, and administrative and support staff.

Of course we all look forward to this very welcomed of the year when we can pause for a few days – to reflect on the year that has almost passed, to look forward to the future and, above all, to spend valuable time with our friends and family. Though everyone at Jack Benny works hard, we must also strive to achieve balance with our lives outside of the school. I urge all of you to make the most of this opportunity, to share more time with your dear ones, and to make time for yourself and the special things you love to do.

Jack Benny's greatness is the product of deep dedication, collegiality and ingenuity, and a firm commitment to our community and to the cause that we all share: A Model School of Excellence. That we are able to do so much with limited resources is a source of pride for each of us, as we look to 2012 to face the great opportunities ahead.

At this special time of year, I take this moment to say thank you, to each and every one of you who have contributed so much to Jack Benny over the years. Your work and your dedication to Jack Benny are deeply appreciated and important. The results speak for themselves.

I wish you and those you love a safe, healthy and joyous holiday season, and much happiness and fulfillment in the year ahead.

**"Jack Benny  
Middle  
School:  
A Model  
School of  
Excellence"**