Why Wolves?

We are proud to be the Albany Wolves. There is no better mascot for our school. In fact, who chose that mascot 20 years ago when this school was built? The school board? A parent group? Students? Teachers? Whomever it was, thank you, and if anyone knows the story, please call and let us know.

Why are Wolves the perfect symbol for our school?

Wolves are tough. So are we.
Wolves are adaptable. So are we.
Wolves work as team. So do we.
Wolves take care of the members of their pack. So do we.
Wolves are intelligent. So are we.
Wolves are fast. So are we.
Wolves are gritty. So are we.
Wolves have stamina. So do we.

Please enjoy the latest edition of Wolf Tracks. You will be pleased and amazed upon seeing all the wolf characteristics in these pages.

“For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack.”

-Rudyard Kipling

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The Albany Way:
Kindness
Grit
Excellence
ACS Students Take Jay Peak, Part 1: Snow & Ice

This winter, grades 4-8 spent five full days skating, skiing and snowboarding at Jay Peak (with another day planned in April if the weather holds). Teachers went every time with them; however, if kids were not caught up on all school work they had to stay behind. “The trips were a huge incentive for keeping kids on track with school work,” noted middle school science teacher, Megan Jolly.

Ms. Jolly reflected on the Jay Peak days: “I think the biggest learning experience for kids was conquering their fear. Kids were really scared of the mountain. But after a few times on the slopes they gained a huge amount of self-confidence. It was incredible. They challenged themselves mentally and physically--Deavonte Mason, an 8th grader, fell while snowboarding and he would get right back up each time. He never gave up. Anthony Schneider did flips and 360s in the terrain park; he was really able to improve his alpine skills.”

ACS was accepted into the Foundations Program, a program set up by Jay Peak’s owner Bill Stenger to encourage local kids to learn how to ski. The program offers a much discounted rate to schools, and provides instructors as well.
Part 2: Water

On Friday, March 11, all grades spent the day at the Pump House at Jay Peak!

Junior Iron Chef Team Wins Lively Local Award at State Competition

Congratulations to Diana Mason, Deavonte Mason, Caroline Lowry and Katelyn Colecci and team coach, Meghan Stotko, for their second year victory! On Saturday, March 26, Albany Community School defended their title as Lively Local award winners at the statewide culinary competition, Jr. Iron Chef VT. Jr Iron Chef VT challenges teams of middle and high school students to create healthy, local dishes that inspire school meal programs. Now in it’s 8th year, Jr Iron Chef VT hosts over 50 teams from around the state at the Champlain Valley Exposition Center in Essex Junction. Each team presents an original dish to a panel of judges comprised of farmers, food writers, professional chefs, local celebrities, and legislators.

The Lively Local Award is presented to the team whose dish most creatively uses local ingredients. This year, Team Wolf’s winning dish was Radical Root Crepes: a thin French pancake tie-dyed with beet and carrot juices and topped with goat cheese, root veggies, balsamic reduction, and a maple-candied sunflower seed sculpture.
First and Second Graders Write “How To” Books

How to cut down trees by Logan Goodridge

How to cut down a tree. First, find hardwood trees on a hill. Then cut down the tree with an axe, down by the stump. Next, hitch the tree up on the back of the atv, to the atv. Drag it to the woodshed, and unhitch the tree. Finally, cut it up with a saw into a yard long piece. Stack it up!

Students in the after school Animal Care Club visited the Pope Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter on Monday, April 4. They brought along boxes of donations for the shelter, including cat toys, catnip pillows, dog and cat treats made by the kids, and paper towels, totes, leashes and pet food donated by the community. Students toured the shelter, met many of the animals, and learned a lot about cats and dogs from the shelter staff and volunteers. Thank you, Pope Memorial, for welcoming us!
Third and Fourth Grade learn about Native Youth Olympics (NYO)

While learning about the Iditarod, students learned about Alaska and the Native Youth Olympics (NYO) that students in Alaska participate in. These Olympic games started traditionally in villages as a way for natives to stay fit and busy during the winter months. The skills needed for the games sharpened their skills for hunting and survival by “increasing their strength and maintaining endurance, agility, and the balance of mind and body”. In the classroom students learned the seal hop, arm wrestle, leg wrestle, kneel jump, wrist carry, Indian stick pull, two-foot high kick, and one-foot high kick.

Eighth Grade plans trip to NYC

This spring, the 8th graders are going to New York City, May 31 - June 3, many of them for the first time. The students will be accompanied by four teachers, and their plans include elements of history, culture, and community service.

The trip is an ambitious undertaking. Since the fall, students, families and teachers have been busy raising funds to get there. Fundraisers have included a flower bulb sale, a candle sale at the holidays, and a yard sale in December that raised over $1100. Thank you to everyone who donated items! Each teacher has taken charge of one group fundraiser, and each student has committed to raising $200 on his/her own. It has been a real team effort, with parents and school board members getting involved, and everyone committing to one piece. Ms. Jolly, the middle school science teacher, got a grant to pay for tickets to the American Museum of Natural History, subway passes for everyone, and a meal.

They will have a native guide: Our school counselor, Amanda Spencer, grew up in New York City, and she will be accompanying the students on the trip. They will all be having breakfast with her family there. Other plans include going to a Mets game at Citi Field, visiting the Statue of Liberty, helping out at a food pantry, and a walk through Chinatown. They will be staying at a Hostel, located right in the middle of Manhattan at the north end of Central Park.

If you’d like to support the trip, please consider coming to one of the upcoming fundraisers. There will be a car wash on Saturday, May 14, from 11am-3pm, with fresh cooked French fries and other concessions for sale. You can also help by leaving your redeemable bottles and cans in the large wooden box outside of the school.
Albany Food Forest

There are a lot of new things growing at ACS! Last year, the school received grant money from a variety of sources, outside of the school budget, to plant a perennial garden on the school grounds. The garden is known as the Albany School Food Forest! The school is partnering with Rebecca Beidler and Jeffrey Ellis of Peace of Earth Farm in Albany. The money is intended to fund the planning and planting of a 50’ X 50’ perennial garden, which will include space for more annual vegetables if need be. Jeffrey has been working with Mr. Rivver, Miss Nook, Miss Stotko, Miss Jolly, and Mrs. Urie to make the plans to move forward.

We are planting the garden during the school day on Monday, May 23rd. Classes will rotate out to the garden throughout the day working on various projects. We’ll plant apples, pears, blueberries, raspberries, plums, grapes, asparagus, various herbs, and more. There will even be a living willow hut in the middle of the garden for story time! We received more money than our original grant, so that money is being used to incorporate the garden into the curriculum and school kitchen, create garden “how-to” manual, and help establish an on-site composting system.

We are looking for parents and other community members to volunteer in the garden in the future. Whether you’re interested in planning or planting, digging or teaching, we could use your help! Please contact Mary at the school to get on the garden crew list, 802-755-6168, or email mcubit@ocsu.org.

7th and 8th Graders learn about Shackleton and Participate in Vermont Reads

Each year, the Vermont Humanities Council chooses a book to inspire reading, discussion and learning throughout the state around a particular subject, through the Vermont Reads project. They grant books and offer support of programming to get people reading and talking together in communities around Vermont. This year, the Vermont Reads books center around Shackleton’s turn of the century survival story: The Endurance: Shackleton’s Legendary Antarctic Expedition by Caroline Alexander and Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World by Jennifer Armstrong. “Exactly one hundred years ago, Sir Ernest Shackleton’s ship, the Endurance, was imprisoned and crushed by sea ice near Antarctica. It nearly cost his crew their lives, but all twenty-eight of them would survive. Theirs is one of the greatest adventure and survival stories of the twentieth century.” From the Vermont Humanities Council website.

The 7th and 8th grade students are experiencing Shackleton’s expedition by reading, listening to, discussing, and role playing from the book Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World. Jennifer Armstrong details Shackleton’s journey with such vivid description from primary source material, that we feel as cold, miserable, and seasick as the crew did during their expedition. In fact, each student has “adopted” two of the crew to follow during the expedition and note what their character experiences. We are also having fun with team building activities and think about what it must take for a leader to safely deliver his/her team out of danger. In addition, students are considering whether or not Shackleton is a hero, or is he just lucky? They are looking for evidence from the text to support their opinion. The library has extra copies of both Vermont Reads books this year and you are encouraged to take one home to look at. The pictures themselves help to show a story of adventure and survival at the bottom of the world.

On Monday, April 4th, author Jennifer Armstrong spent the morning with ACS students talking about her writing process and challenging students to write about their characters.
Albany Middle School Wins Vermont State Chess Championships Again!

Congratulations to the 23 ACS students who played in the Vermont Scholastic State Chess Championships on Saturday, April 2. Six awards were won by Albany kids, and the Middle School Team came in first place for the third year in a row.

ACS Holds First Annual Readathon

On Friday, February 19, students, staff and community members joined in a 24-hour Readathon, with a goal of reading 10,000 pages. The goal was met by the afternoon, but the reading continued, with a total of 14,153 pages read by 8am on Saturday. Thanks to all who participated, and thanks to Goodridge Lumber, Bob’s Quick Stop, Sweet Rowan Creamery and the Craftsbury General Store for supporting the event.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

April 13 PTC Meeting 6pm
April 14 Board Meeting 5:30pm
April 18-22 Spring break- No School
April 20 Act 46 Informational Meeting 6pm, ACS
April 25- 29 Wolf Pack Session Five Begins
May 7 OCSU Spring Concert 2pm, Lake Region
May 11 Community Meal
K-4 11am  5-8 12:15pm
May 14 8th Grade Car Wash Fundraiser
May 14 Bingo- Doors open 4:30pm Starts 6pm
May 17 ACS Variety Show 6:30pm
May 18 PTC Meeting 6pm
May 23 Food Forest & Garden Day
May 27 Early Release
May 30 Memorial Day- No School
June 6 8th Grade Graduation, 6:30pm
June 9 Last day of school
If you’d prefer to receive an electronic copy of the newsletter in the future, or if you’d rather not receive the newsletter at all, please let us know by calling the school at 755-6168 or emailing kurie@ocsu.org.