



Basketball Basics

By Lily Mouw

From New York, to Paris, to Beijing and everywhere in between, the popular sport of basketball is played. It's even popular in the dusty plains of Africa, while in American cities, it spans across beautiful parks, as well as the expensive courts of the NBA. Basketball is played wherever someone can get their hands on a ball and a ring-like object. Unlike other sports that require many players, the sport of basketball just requires a group of people with a little bit of patience and the willingness to play.

Here at Merrill Middle School, we have our own basketball team. Last season, the Lady Mustangs White Team went undefeated, and the Blue team finished with an 11-1 season. I had the chance to talk to some of the girls who said they had a fantastic season; even while it was their hardest season, they had so much fun.

"Coach Luft, who has been coaching boys and girls basketball for several years now, has taught us how to try hard and play well," said Hanan Jama, a player on the girls Blue Team. Now, the girls' season is over, and boys' basketball season has started.

"So many boys are playing this year that we had to split into four teams," says Jackson Neary, a star player on the boys' Silver Team. The boys have had a rough start to the season with only a few wins, but that hasn't stopped them from trying their hardest and striving to defeat their opponents.

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MERRILL GAZETTE'S TEACHER FEATURE

BY DESTINY BOS



Mrs. Isabel Grosso: Spanish

Where did you come from?

- Seville, Spain

What's a major difference between schools in Spain and schools here?

- In Spain, students stay in the same classroom during the day and the teachers go from classroom to classroom.

Why did you choose to come teach in Iowa?

- "I had only 10 minutes to choose between California, Kansas, and Iowa. My grandpa was teaching at Iowa state so I decided to follow in his footsteps."

Why did you become a teacher?

- "I loved the profession because I was surrounded my whole life by teachers in my family; It was sort of vocational." She also said she liked to contribute to society with her teaching.

What is your favorite thing about teaching?

- "I love seeing my effort in teaching paying off in my students and seeing them grow, and being part of their life." She says her students in Spain still connect to her through Facebook.

What is your advice to anyone who would want to teach or study in other countries?

- It's hard to leave your home and your family and move to a whole new country. You have to open your mind to the new culture and society, but it's a very enriching experience and you can grow and learn a lot.



SOLVING MYSTERIES OR CREATING MORE QUESTIONS?

CONSPIRACY THEORIES OF TODAY

BY MIA RANDAZZO



Can some people actually be an alien- hybrid?

A new conspiracy theory that has surfaced over the last 20 years has people freaking out. The big question: Could thousands of humans living today be a form of some alien hybrid? Since the beginning of time, people have claimed to have been abducted, or have witnessed, aliens. With over thousands of testimonies of people claiming to have been abducted, a reoccurring pattern noticed is experiments. This could mean some people have alien genes and D.N.A. this could include experiencing déjà vu, minimal telepathic abilities, and a deep love and connection to outer space. Lots of people believe themselves or someone they know could be part human and "aliens" hybrid race and have the ultimate goal to eventually evolve the human race beyond what it is today.

Was Marilyn Monroe murdered?

Autopsy reports claimed that Marilyn Monroe had overdosed. When her body was found lying face down in her bed on August 5, 1962 there was sleeping pills scattered around her. Yet, there was no sleeping pills found in her stomach, nor any liquid to take the pills with. There wasn't even a glass of water in the room. When someone overdoses they vomit, yet no vomit was found near her. At the same time, news was leaked about her on-going affairs with John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert F. Kennedy. Did the Kennedys kill her?

Strange coincidences between Kennedy and Lincoln's death:

When looking back at John F. Kennedy and Abraham Lincoln you don't only find similarities in their lives, but also there assignments. Lincoln was elected to congress in 1846 and become president in 1860 and Kennedy was elected in 1946 and become president in 1960. While in the white house, they both had children who died. They were both shot in the back of the head on a Friday with their wives sitting right next to them. Lincoln was shot in Ford's theater and Kennedy was shot in a Lincoln made by Ford. Lincoln was shot in a theater and his shooter ran and hid in a warehouse. Kennedy was shot by a shooter who was in a warehouse and went and hid in a theater. Both were succeeded by Southerners name Johnson, Andrew Johnson who was Lincoln's was born in 1808. Kennedy's was Lyndon Johnson born in 1908. There shooters, John Wilkes Booth and Lee Harvey Oswald were both killed before their trials.

For more information: @unexplainedposts,
<http://metro.co.uk/2014/08/05/marilyn-monroe-death-conspiracy-theories-who-or-what-killed-marilyn-4817019/>,
<http://www.snopes.com/history/american/lincoln-kennedy.asp>



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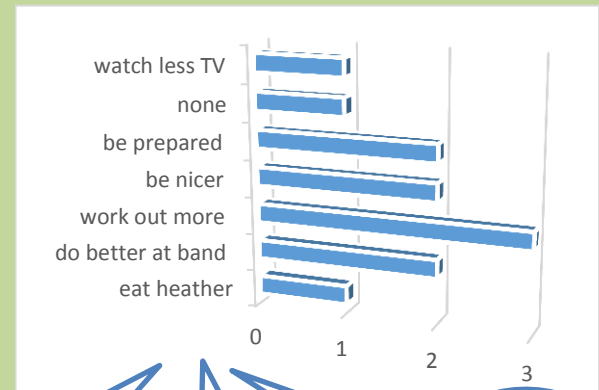
"Every time I step out on the court, I feel like I'm a better player than I was before," says Truman Morse, a player on the Mustangs White Team. "I feel rewarded when I make shots and like I'm improving my skills."

Many of the boys have goals when playing basketball - each coming at a different price - but they all have a favorite professional player they idolize to help them reach these goals. Tyler Anderson, of the White Team, says that someday he wants to play for the Golden State Warriors. It's been a great year for Mustang Basketball at Merrill - for the girls and boys on the court - and for this journalist to learn about such a popular sport!

New Year's Resolutions

By Mason Mengel

What are the people of Merrill resolving to do in 2017 and what percentage of people follow through on their resolutions? The top resolutions from the people asked wanted to eat healthier or work out more. But how many of the people are going to follow through on their resolutions and how many will give up in the first month? No matter what the results, people always try to start the year off better than the last. Best of luck to all those with resolutions!



"I don't do New Year's resolutions."
~Mrs. Randazzo

"Be able to do accents."
~The Merrill Drama Club

"Watch less TV and use less technology."
~Miss Tharp