

# The MSDB Student Life Newsletter

## Message from the Director

*By Jim Kelly II*

I hope this newsletter can provide a small glance at the great stuff we have happening in our Student Life program. For our formal Thanksgiving dinner, we have the tradition of “Thankful Leaves”. For the past week, students and staff have written what they are thankful for and those leaves are then placed on the walls in our dining room. Sunday night, before the dinner, I spent some time reading the things written on the leaves, and clearly we are blessed to have family, friends, teachers, good health, MSDB, food, pets, co-workers, faith, jobs, freedom and football . . .the list is endless!

Happy Thanksgiving to you of those in our MSDB Community – which is ALL of the Great State of MONTANA!

## STUDENT HUB



The Cottage Counselors and Lead Resident Advisors are so pleased to announce our first Student of the Quarter!

Staff members nominate students for showing growth in any of the following areas: caring for themselves, caring for their property and managing their chores, interacting with staff and students, being more responsible with time management and organization, and improvement in behavior.

Congratulations to Amerra Portee! Amerra is President of Student Council, a Student Ambassador, works an off-campus job, meets her school and cottage responsibilities and has really come out of her shell.

### Weekly Student Life Activities

- EOS (Mon/Wed)
- Swim Club and lessons (Mon)
- 4-H (alt. Mon)
- Goal Ball (Tues)
- SEL (alt. Tues)
- Student Life Social Hour (Wed)
- Student Council (Wed)
- Snack Shack (Wed/Fri)
- Swimming (Wed/Sun)
- VIP ((Thurs)
- Workshops (Thurs)
- Gaming Club (Fri)

### Christmas Cookie Decorating



We invite you to participate in our annual tradition of coming together to decorate some cookies with MSDB staff, students and families. 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes and door prizes.

December 16th 1:00-3:00

RSVP forms coming soon!!



## STAFF BUZZ: Embracing the Squiggle!

*For this year's Staff Buzz, we will be hearing from different staff about how they see success reflected in our students' efforts, mistakes and failures and not just in what goes "right" or "correctly". Success is not a straight line, but rather moves forwards and backwards and may take a winding path to our own, individual successes!*



Every day, I witness both successes and setbacks in our students at Geysers. In Geysers, we see students that struggle with frustration and communication challenges. This can lead to difficulty with friends, teachers, and staff. One of the ways we work on this is by modeling good communication. For example, if a student is getting upset when not understanding a game, we model saying and/or signing "Do you need help?". This has been successful for several of our students. As student skills increase, we can build on this basic level of knowing help is needed and available to knowing how to request help in a calm way. After constantly using this language, we now see "Can you help me please?".

By Amanda Taylor

## HALLOWEEN PARTY



## High School Happenings: Personal Health Information

By Erin Faulkner

The high school students attended a workshop where we explored information that is needed for filling out intake paperwork at a doctor's office. We reviewed the following concepts: personal identification information, medications, allergies, surgical history, current and past medical conditions and symptoms and family history. Students were encouraged to ask parents about their history and to participate more fully in their doctor appointments. These students will soon be adults and navigating their own healthcare needs. Students may not learn what all of the words mean on the intake forms, but they should know what conditions they have in order to convey accurate information to their healthcare providers. If you would like a copy of this form or to visit with me about this information, please contact me at [efaulkner@msdb.k12.mt.us](mailto:efaulkner@msdb.k12.mt.us)

## MSDB SAFETY: Fitness Rooms

By AJ Kauffman

The next topic of this article I will discuss is the use of fitness rooms. This article is important why? Because it is about using safety around people in the room with you and being aware of your surroundings with other people in the weight room, fitness room, gym room, and fitness facility. Here at MSDB, we do have a fitness room at the Mustang Center where you can sign in with what is called a QR code, whoever wants to go and work out can scan the code with their smartphone (iPhone or Samsung). If you are not aware of this, you can talk to our PE teacher Joel Auers. We also have new equipment which is really nice, because when I was a student here at MSDB most of the equipment was old so it is nice to see the new equipment.

The next thing I will be talking about is the rules for using the fitness rooms because some people like their space and privacy while they work out. Fitness rooms have many, many different rules so I will just narrow it down to more specific rules.

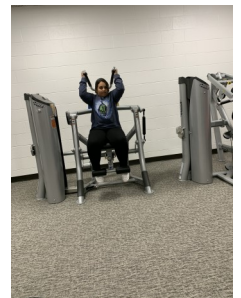
1. There is the number one rule of using fitness equipment: always put everything back where it belongs.
2. Don't hog the equipment, share with other people
3. Bring your own towel, always wipe things down after you're done using them
4. It is important to respect personal space
5. BE flexible with your routine if the gym is crowded

If you are with a partner ask them to spot you if you are lifting weights because you do not want to hurt yourself and it is important to lift with your knees, not your back.

You are allowed to bring water bottles, no food or beverages are allowed. Be respectful of the fitness rooms when you are using them.



**Thank you MSDB  
Foundation for the  
donation of the new  
equipment!!**



**Everyday Cottage  
Life**



## STUDENT COUNCIL ADOPT-A-FAMILY FUNDRAISER

Student Council is once again raising money to help an MSDB family by providing them with a Christmas dinner and the children some presents.

We will be raffling off 3 baskets:

1. The Great Outdoors
2. Craft and Create
3. I Love My Pet!

**Student  
Council**

Tickets will go on sale 11/30. Tickets will be \$1 each or 6 for \$5. The drawing will be held on December 13th. Venmo will be accepted for Outreach and non-local families. Contact [efaulkner@msdb.k12.mt.us](mailto:efaulkner@msdb.k12.mt.us) for more information.

## Bingo Night Fundraiser

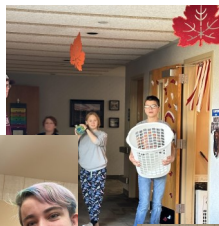
Student Council held it's first Family Bingo Night. It was a very successful event. Middle school and high school students assisted in all areas of night: introductions, food service, collecting entry fees, selling raffle tickets, and calling the bingo numbers. We welcomed families, past and current employees, students and a member of the Foundation board. Thanks to all who made this night awesome!



**CAT-GRIZ**



**7-37**



**Before**

**After**

## ACCESSIBILITY AND AWARENESS FORUM

Guest Contributor: Seri Brammer

Playing games with friends and family is a great way to have fun. However this can be a challenge if you're blind/low vision. Not a lot of games are made accessible for us. But in cottages we have found ways that both our blind/low vision and DHH students can play together. One of our students' favorite games around here is Bunco. This is a fast paced dice game. Our blind and low vision students used large print, Braille, and regular size dice. When blind and low vision students prefer to use the regular dice, staff will tell them what they rolled. This way the student has to listen and think about what they need to do, rather than staff telling them to roll again or to pass the dice. When one of our blind/low vision students ends up at a table with our DHH students and there's no staff to help communicate, our DHH taps on the table. One tap means pass the dice and two taps means roll again.

Having Braille or large print dice is very nice because you can use them in multiple games. My mom got me large print dice that we use to play Yahtzee.

We have some games that were already made accessible for the blind/low vision, like Braille Uno or Web Chase. Other games staff have made accessible by Brailleing the cards, like Apples to Apples.

We also have an electronic die that talks. We use it as well, for the Pop It game and Shut The Box.

### 4-H Project Day



### Outings/Activities

#### Look what we did!

- ILSP Workshop: Game of Life (10/26)
- Fright Fest (10/28)
- Cottage Halloween Party (10/31)
- Bunco (11/3)
- Movie Night (11/4)
- Workshop: Personal Health Info (11/9)
- VIEW (11/10-11/11)
- 4-H Project Day (11/11)
- Game Tournament (11/11)
- CAT/GRIZ Party (11/18)
- Family Bingo Night (11/18)
- Thanksgiving Formal Dinner (11/19)

#### Coming Soon-

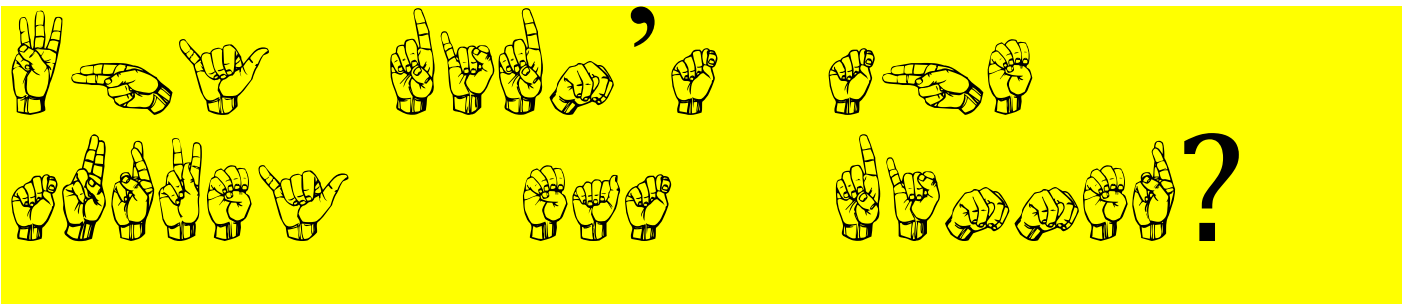
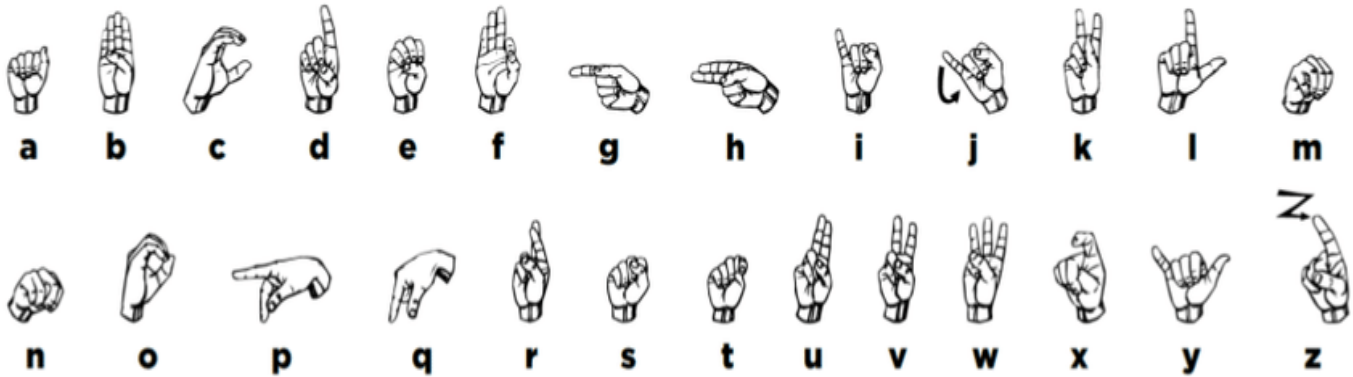
- Travel Return (11/26)
- Workshop: WM OTC Pharmacy (11/30)
- Christmas Stroll (12/1)
- Workshop: Planning a Party (12/7)
- Wizard of Oz play in Helena (ASL) (12/9)
- Geyser Christmas Party (12/10)
- Shoshone Christmas Party (12/14)
- Obsidian Christmas Party (TBD)
- Cookie Decorating (12/16)
- Cottage/Student Council Party (12/16)
- EOS Christmas Performance (12/17)
- Christmas Formal Dinner (12/17)
- Cottage Christmas Dinner Out (12/19)
- Travel Home (12/22)
- Travel Return (1/2)



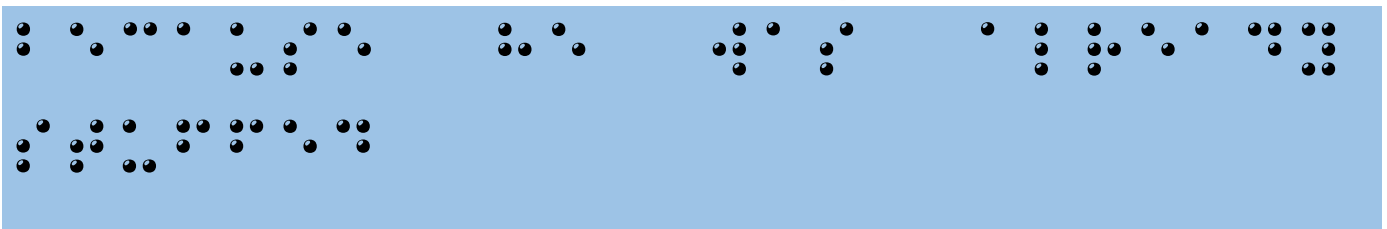
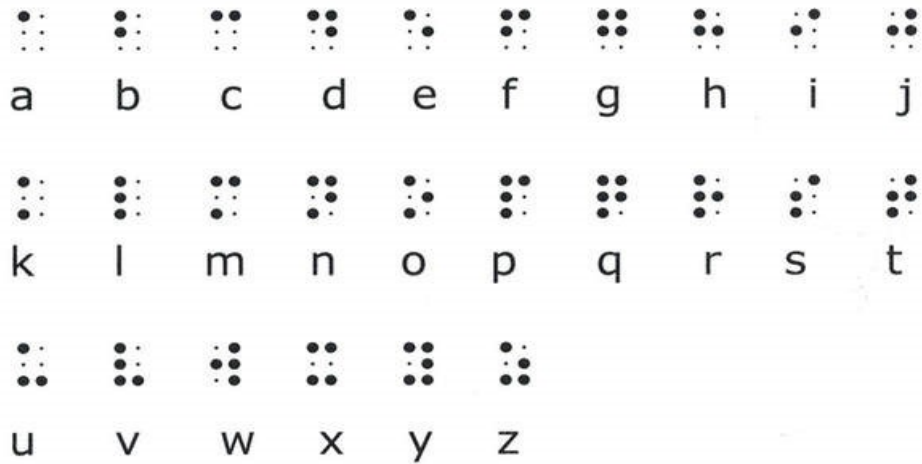
# PUZZLE PAGE

Decode the phrases using ASL Fingerspelling and Braille!

**Fingerspelling** is the process of spelling out words by using hand shapes that correspond to the letters of the word. A set of hand shapes used to spell words is known as a "manual alphabet."



**Braille** is a system that enables blind and visually impaired people to read and write through touch. It was devised by Louis Braille in 1821 and consists of raised dots arranged in "cells." A cell is made up of six dots that fit under the fingertips, arranged in two columns of three dots each.



**October Puzzler Answers:**

Fingerspelling: Why did the skeleton run away? Braille: Because the dog was after his bones.