

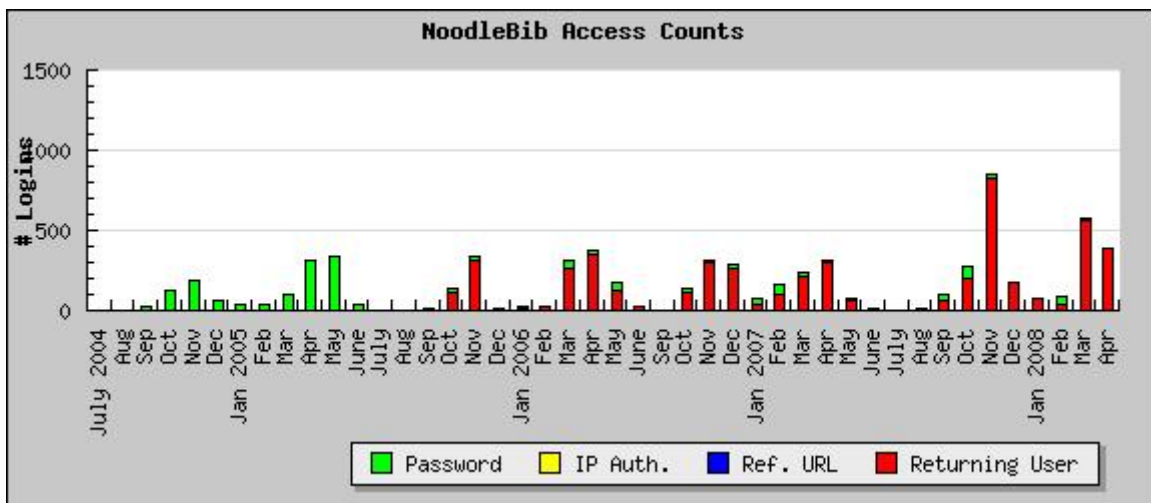
Monthly Report – April, 2008  
George Zini, Principal

**Overview of Activities for April:**

- Grade 8 Parent's Night was held on 3/31. Joanne Dashiell from Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA) presented basic college planning information. Mr. Zini and Mrs. Brown spoke with parents about the transition of grade 8 students to UHS as well as sharing scheduling information.
- On April 1, Mrs. Brown met with the class of 2008 to distribute information about all local scholarship opportunities as well as the application process.
- On April 3, Mrs. Brown and Ms. Hamelin took UHS students to the Career Fair held at Northbridge High School.
- April 7 saw UHS take part in a new Teacher Recommendation Day program. Students in grade 9-11 circulated through 3 venues, (1) the library where a presentation was put on by the Worcester County D.A's Office together with U.P.D. centering on cyber bullying, (2) cafeteria where students viewed a recently produced local movie about underage drinking and heard from Mr. Gary Mahoney a gentleman convicted of DUI, (3) gymnasium where teachers signed off on students' Course Selection Forms permitting them to enter higher level classes for next year.
- All seniors attended an extended assembly in the Auditorium on April 7 which covered making college and career count. This was followed by a short presentation from two UHS graduates about transitioning to college. Lastly the students heard from Parents for a Safe Graduation.
- On April 9, eighty-one juniors traveled to the National College Fair in Boston with members of the UHS staff. Mr. Burke, Ms. Rohan, Mrs. Biondi, Mrs. Plasse, Mr. Silbor, Mrs. Bouchard and Mrs. Brown acted as chaperones.
- UHS hosted a district wide guidance department meeting where on April 11 a plan was developed and has been proposed to Dr. Boyaj to begin work on enhancing the UPS Emergency Response Guide.

- The entire Guidance staff is currently busy inputting student course selection data into the IPASS system in preparation of having students receive their 2008-09 schedules at the end of this school year.
- On April 18, all juniors who took the ASVAB vocational battery took part in a workshop about understanding the results from this survey.
- On April 8<sup>th</sup>, Art I students created sidewalk art using colored chalk during the Red Sox Opening Day festivities in downtown Uxbridge.
- Seven UHS students submitted their artworks into “An Artistic Discovery 2008”. This annual art competition for high school students is sponsored by the Congressional Arts Caucus and coordinated by members of the US House of Representatives. Artworks will be on display in the Center Court of Tower Square in Springfield MA from April 21 to May 1. The seven students are Seth Anderson, Keri Lemoine, Matt Conrad (Grade 12); Rashelle Palmer, Dana Renault, Shane Robinson and Rylie Rockwell (Grade 11).
- Mrs. Lesperances Pre-Vocational Program
  - Spring is here and our class has begun to spend more time outside exploring the community. On Tuesday, April 8th, we walked down town and enjoyed the Red Sox Opening Day festivities on Main Street. Students visited with the many vendors located there and enjoyed a tasty lunch at Milestone's Ultimate Hot Dogs. One of the students in our class works there and was able to wait on us that day...very efficiently too!
  - Presently, the 10th graders in my program and I are in the process of putting the final touches on their MCAS Portfolios. It has been an incredible amount of work to produce these portfolios and the students are very proud of them. Many Thanks to Mrs. Burgess, Mrs. Allen, and Mrs. Jones-Barbosa for all their assistance with helping students choose work samples for the various strands and for all the proofreading they have been doing as well. The portfolios will be reviewed shortly by our principal and vice-principal and then will be submitted to the state, prior to the May 9th deadline.
  - The new bookcase built by Mr. DiMeglio's Wood Tech class has been installed and looks beautiful. It has added much to our room.
  - Academically, we are focusing on community exploration in Daily Living Skills. In Math, we are continuing to work on basic skills, calculator practice, and money skills. We are working on writing skills in English, where students are using the computer word processor daily. Our vocabulary lessons currently focus on school-related and place-related words. In Social Studies, we are learning about the Civil War and Reconstruction.

- In March and April, National Honor Society students collected small items, such as toiletries and puzzle books, for veterans. Several of the students attended a National Honor Society Conference in April where, in addition to attending workshops, they decorated and filled gift bags for the veterans. On April 12, several National Honor Society students and their Advisor participated in an MS walk in Worcester.
- The construction class finished the cabinet for the Spartan Café. They are also very close to completing the cabinets for the Family & Consumer Science Classroom.
- The UHS Chorus performed “God Bless America” during pre-game ceremonies at the Providence Bruins’ (AHL) final regular-season home game on Sunday afternoon, April 13. This marks the fourth consecutive year that the Chorus has performed at the Dunkin’ Donuts Center.
- The following chart is the most recent access count which is indicative of research projects students are engaged in.



Another indication of student research are the monthly database statistics from InfoTrac: Total sessions, 230; total connect time (in minutes), 2110; total retrievals, 448; total searches, 835. The new database, EBSCO's Literary Reference Center, does not, as of yet, yield statistical usage results, unfortunately, since it has become the most popular database for literary research.

#### New Materials:

The Polish American Social and Civic Coporation generously donated a signed edition of Worcester County's Polish Community by Barbara Proko and Janice Baniukiewicz, an *Images of America* series publication, which has been added to the collection for staff and student viewing and research. Other materials added were a new set of literary criticism

primary source materials titled *Conversations with...*, a series of interviews from various sources with major authors such as Hemingway, Vonnegut, Steinbeck and many others. Other additions are a *Girl's Health* series for underclassmen, a Social Studies series *Images and Issues of Women in the Twentieth Century*, a series on Indian Wars, and more additions to the Bloom Literary Criticism series.

### **Subject/Course/Classroom Activities**

- Honors Spanish III and Spanish III classes (Mrs. Brooks, Ms Clarke): students made “Cascarones”, a Mexican tradition. The word “cascarón” means eggshell. The cascarones made by the students are eggshells which have been emptied, washed, filled with confetti and then brightly colored. Many of them are representative of a theme. Cascarones are made for celebrations, festivals and other special events. Traditionally when you break one over someone’s head it means that you love them. The cascarones made by the students were meant mostly for decoration, giving/or collecting. The cascarones were judged by the faculty in the following areas: most traditional, most serious, most original, most adorable, overall most EGGcellent.
- Honors Spanish V and Senior Spanish Seminar (Mrs. Brooks, Mrs. Priore): students worked on an interdisciplinary unit on Mexican and Spanish foods with the Foods and Nutrition class. Once again, this was an opportunity for the Foreign Language Department to share with students at UHS an element of the culture that is being studied.
- Students in all Foreign Language classes continue to work diligently on activities in the language lab. Some of these activities give the students the opportunity to work on-line at home and submit the results of their efforts to their language teacher. So many of the students are enjoying this challenge.
- French I/Honors French I (Mrs. Lynch): students have been acquiring the necessary information to easily discuss basic foods, table etiquette and traditions of the francophone world. Menus were prepared and presented to the class. Working in small groups all students presented a skit in French of a typical café scene.
- French I/Honors French I: Currently students are involved in a study of the francophone culture in Africa. This seems to be an area that is quite new to the students. Many elements are involved: history, culture, customs, etc.
- Honors French III/French III and Honors French V and Senior Seminar: Students in these classes are beginning to prepare for their input in the International Fair for the second graders at Taft school. It is always wonderful to see how in just a few sessions with the second graders, a language can come alive. The interaction between the two groups is fantastic!

- Students from Mrs. Brooks' Spanish 5 class joined Mrs. Priore's Foods Beyond the Pyramid class for an interdisciplinary unit on Spanish and Mexican culture and cuisine. The two cultures were compared and contrasted in a week long set of activities including cooperative research, a spirited and educational jeopardy game and culminating with the preparation of Spanish and Mexican dishes. Do you know that if you ask for a tortilla in Spain you will be served something totally different from what you would get in Mexico? The students prepared and enjoyed both!
- Preparations for the annual International Fair for the second grade are in full swing. The Foods and Child Development classes are helping the children. In an interesting sidelight, two students who were in Mrs. Davis' second grade class for the very first International Fair are currently enrolled in Mrs. Priore's Child Development course. They are now experiencing the preparations for the fair from the other side! Opportunities for reflection on and insight into the different aspects of the experience have taken on a particularly poignant meaning for these students.
- Wood Technology: Students are currently working on their individual wood project ranging from simple to complex.
- Robotics: Students are continuing to work on material handling and placement using the robotic arm. Students are working on gear ratios and gear boxes.
- Entrepreneurship is working on advertising for the prom boutonniere fundraiser. They are in the process of selling muffins and boutonnieres.
- Independent Living: Students are working on preparing a budget for living in an apartment.
- Webpage Design: Students will be working with an outside client on creating a web-site for student parent recourses, for real world application. Mr. Sawyer will be attending in May to speak to the students regarding publishing to the web.
- Physics/Technology: Students have finished the Co2 cars and are now studying energy, power, and electricity.
- Honors Biology: Students are working on Mitosis, and the cell cycle.
- Honors Biology: Students finished their experiment on the affects of cellar respiration in mealy worms.
- Environmental Science: Students are testing water samples from the Blackstone and Mumford Rivers and are beginning to look at the similarities and differences between aquatic insects.

- Forensics: Heid Schultz-Dugas, an FBI certified forensic artist, recently addressed Uxbridge High forensic science and art students in the Uxbridge High Library. Ms. Schultz-Dugas, studied commercial and fine art at Butera School of Art, owner of Wild Mind Designs, and has received certification training in forensic art at Stuart Parks Forensic Associates of Idaho. She spoke about her artistic background, commercial art experience, education, training, and numerous training workshops that she has attended. Students were shown her composite sketches with photographs of convicted felons. Additionally, Ms. Schultz-Dugas talked about victim composite drawing, image modification, age progression, missing children, photo and video enhancement, reconstruction art of crime or accident scenes, multiple witness interviews, and cold cases. She stressed to students the need in the field of forensic for many specialists for such skills as tire track analysis, blood and liquid analysis, gunshot wounds, teeth impressions, and ballistics. One important aspect of her work is being able to travel on short notice since the first 48 hours are often crucial in criminal investigations. The speaking program is part of forensic science resource collaboration between science teacher Charlene Lussier, librarian William Sweeney, and art teacher Gail Blais.
- Deirdre Sweeney treated students to a demonstration of Irish step dancing and various musical instruments at the Taft and UHS libraries on St. Patrick's Day.

#### **Professional Development:**

- Mr. Sweeney attended a software workshop on *Using Camtasia to Create Tutorials* at the Central Massachusetts Regional Library Headquarters on April 1st. Milford Town Librarian Bernadette Rivard presented the program and has authored Internet Explorer tutorials using the Camtasia software package which are on the Milford Town Library web page.
- Sue Priore and Rebecca Plasse attended a class entitled “Baking with Whole Grains” at the King Arthur Baking Education Center in Norwich, Vermont. They joined participants from around the country for an informative and practical lab experience.
- Dr. Craig, Mr. Hennessy, and Mr. DiMeglio are collaborating on an idea of producing Educational videos for the Discovery Channel.

#### **General School/Department Information**

- The Uxbridge First Night Committee has again requested help from the UHS Art Department to prepare signs for their annual events. Sandwich signs will be dropped off at the end of April and students will begin to create new designs for the signs in June, with a goal to complete a few signs before summer vacation.
- Mr. DiMeglio and Mr. Hennessy are working on developing a district wide communication three year plans that will work in conjunction with Uxbridge Cable Access.

### Upcoming Events

- May 2: UniBank will finish up their Financial Literacy program, for juniors.
- May 2: Curriculum day the Guidance department will hear a presentation from Melissa Ratcliffe, a senior vocational rehab counselor with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission concerning programs for which our students may be eligible.
- The Blackstone Valley Art Association is sponsoring a *Family Spring Art Festival*. Students have been encouraged to submit 3 works of art for this event. Participating UHS students are Dana Renault and Shane Robinson (Grade 11).
- Honors Spanish V, Senior Spanish Seminar and Honors French V, Senior French Seminar: These classes will be traveling to Boston in May to visit the Museum of Fine Arts where they will experience the art of both cultures.
- The UHS music performance ensembles are winding up preparation efforts for their annual Spring Concert, to be held on Monday, May 5 in the UHS Auditorium.

---

George Zini, UHS Principal