

THE STRATFORD SPOTLIGHT

MARCH, 2025

HONOR ROLL AWARDS

Hardworking students deserve to be recognized! Therefore, students with an average of over 86.5% (a 3.5 GPA) in all subjects are rewarded with a classroom Honor Roll certificate. Additionally, if you achieve an average above 92.5% in all subjects (a 4.0 GPA), you receive a special certificate signed by the director of middle school, Mrs. Bhave.

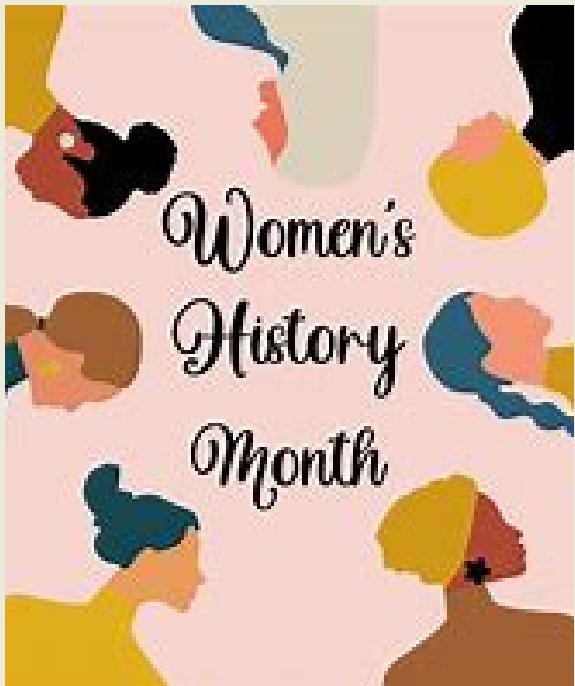
Equally important, maintaining a positive attitude in class and a healthy reputation with teachers and leaders is also necessary. During the assembly, students line up with other high achievers for a group photo with their certificates. Students qualifying for the Principal's Honor Roll are recognized throughout middle school.

For the first trimester, congratulations to Sidharth Arun Prasad, Saanvi Shah, Gaogao Lang, Darsh Shetty, and Praneetha Santhana! These certificates are a wonderful way to celebrate everyone's hard work and encourage other students to strive for success.



TICKETS FOR HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL JR: AVAILABLE NOW!

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stratford.booktix.com



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The coming month from March 1st to 3rd is Women's History Month, during which we acknowledge the determined, ambitious women who accomplished amazing feats that changed the world altogether!

One of the bravehearts, Amelia Earhart, was an American aviation pioneer who was close to circumnavigating the globe through flight. Rosa Parks was a notable woman who was an American activist in the civil rights movement. Did you know that Kathy Switzer was the first woman to run the Boston Marathon, even though women were not permitted to compete? In 1981, Sandra Day O'Connor was the first female to participate in the Supreme Court of justice.

Women have made an impactful difference to this world and accomplished the unthinkable- this month celebrates the significance and importance of all they have done for all of humanity!

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HOLI: FESTIVAL OF COLORS

Holi is a spectacular Hindu festival celebrated on March 14 by Indians all over the world. This exciting event celebrates the arrival of spring, love, and new life.

Holi traditions are associated with a famous myth of good vs. evil. It starts with the legend of Hiranyakashipu, a demon king, who loathed a Hindu god, Vishnu. Hiranyakashipu's son Prahlada was a steadfast devotee of Vishnu. The demon king wanted to kill his son. Holika, the demon king's sister, set a fire to kill Prahlada, but Prahlada escaped and Holika got burned to death in the flames. Later on, Vishnu killed Hiranyakashipu, and the story is known as the triumph of light over darkness. In other places, the legend of Radha and Krishna is told, in which Krishna threw colors at Radha, starting a playful game.

Today, Holi is celebrated jubilantly with family and friends. It includes lots of dancing to classical Indian music, delicious food, and the best part, throwing color powders at each other. Sometimes people also throw colored water balloons at each other and have fun water gun fights. Here at Stratford School, each grade comes together and spends an hour having fun chasing each other in a stream of colors. So the next time you see colored powders, remember the history of Holi and have some fun.

LUNAR NEW YEAR

Different cultures have unique new year's celebrations, and a very popular one that happens near the end of January is Lunar New Year. This is celebrated by people worldwide with heritage from southeast Asia. This year, it was on Wednesday, January 29, 2025, and people all over the world united and celebrated this festival.

Lunar New Year is said to have started in the Shang Dynasty (1600–1046 BCE) in China. The Spring Festival marks a new year on the lunar calendar and represents the desire for a new life. Some common traditions are dressing up and performing dragon or lion dances. Other people celebrate by lighting red fireworks and crackers. All people give their young ones money that come in red envelopes to symbolize good wishes and luck for the new year ahead. Overall, this is a very splendid celebration recognized worldwide.



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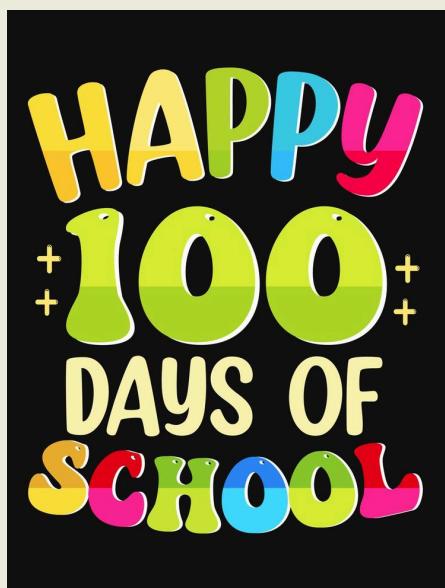
PI DAY

Though math is always accurate, there can be some excuses. The equation πr^2 is incorrect, as pies are circular, not square in shape! March 14th marks the celebration of the annual holiday Pi Day, as the date corresponds to the first three digits of pi, 3.14. Many people use this day as an excuse to eat as much pie as they can. Some host pie eating contests, where many participants try to cram their stomachs with pie. Though there are many traditions while celebrating Pi Day, there is also a deep history behind it. Archimedes of Syracuse discovered the concept of pi, and Larry Shaw founded Pi Day in 1988. Also unknown to many, there is a second Pi Day on July 22, as the approximate fraction of pi, 22/7, corresponds to the date. Pi Day shares a birthday with many famous figures such as Simone Biles, an Olympic gymnast, and Stephen Curry, a famous NBA player known for shooting 3-pointers with ease. This is just another reason why Pi Day is such a fascinating day, and one of the only days with a mathematical purpose.



100 DAYS OF SCHOOL

100 days done, 84 remaining! It may seem hard to believe, but more than half of the school year has blown by, and only four months remain until summer break. To celebrate this momentous occasion, January 29th has been designated as the 100th day of school. This was a day for creativity to flourish in the form of clothes and accessories. Students from all grades were buzzing in excitement in the hallways. Right before the special day, they could not wait to go home and decorate their shirts in all sorts of creative ways. Some students arrived at school with math expressions equaling 100 on their shirts. Others wore customized shirts decorated with pom-poms and pipe cleaners. They used markers, and made polka dots. Many also wrote 100 Days of School, 84 Remaining, on their shirts, and added their own pizzazz to complete their beautiful pieces. A few even dressed as 100 year olds! Overall, the 100th day of school was a jubilant event where people could embrace the creativity within themselves and celebrate 100 days of success!



PRESIDENT'S DAY

Long ago and far away in 1776, a great nation had awoken known as the United States of America. George Washington had been elected president and led the country for two terms. When Abraham Lincoln came into office several years later, he made every third Monday a holiday in honor of our first president. One fun fact is that George Washington would have turned 293 years old this year! This is a very special day for the history of America, and on this day, take the time to remember what Washington and Lincoln did for you.



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CITY SPIES

The narrative commences with the main characters, Sydney and Brooklyn, fighting off an attempted hijack on the *Sylvia Earle*, a cruise ship. The hijack took place in order to abduct two important children who were potentially worth a huge ransom. After their success, the rest of the City Spies, Rio, Paris, Kat, and Monty attempt to find the leader of the City Spies' children. The spies keep trying to find how Parker Rutledge, an MI6 detective, discovered Magpie's, the antagonist's, real identity. Parker Rutledge was a spy who was originally found dead in Muir Woods; MI6 is the head spy organization. To find the records of this strange situation, they rob a library for details. After that, Sydney and Brooklyn get interviewed by the Parliament of England to see what happened on the *Sylvia Earle*. The City Spies also find Mother's children's location. They go to San Francisco to interview a park ranger of the Muir Woods. During this, they discover that R.F. Stroud, Parker's alias, is a bird-loving prisoner in the Alcatraz. When they reach Alcatraz, they find Emil Blix, the main hijacker of the *Sylvia Earle*. When Paris calls Monty to tell her this, they find that Monty has been kidnapped by Magpie! Magpie says to exchange the records for Monty at Fort Point. When they reach Fort Point, Brooklyn herself gets abducted in order to free Monty. In the meantime, Sydney places bombs around the building while Magpie is distracted by the fact that Kat has sent many spam emails to her. Then Sydney and Brooklyn escape and Fort Point blows up. After this, the City Spies are adopted by Mother.



After reading this book, I feel that it is excellent and fits my expectations of a good story. The author, James Ponti, started the book off with a very important scene of the hijacking of the *Sylvia Earle* and branched out to different topics. The book fits the mystery genre perfectly, adding suspense and a twist at every corner to cleverly captivate the reader. However, I would give four out of five stars because it has a bit of unnecessary information. Having considered that, I would still recommend this to other readers who are interested in mystery and detective stories as well.



BOOK FAIR

Step into a world where stories come alive, authors meet their readers, and every page turns into a path of a new adventure when you hop on and start reading a book. Welcome to MGMP's annual book fair, sponsored by Scholastic! This event takes place in the MPR (Multi-Purpose Room), where you can purchase books, supplies, and other materials. All of them are available for students from each grade level. The book fair took place from February 10th to 14th 2025, and the shopping hours were from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. However, the timing was different for February 13, 2025, was from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. If you are unavailable to attend it in person, there is also an alternate option and that is to visit the online Book Fair at Scholastic Book Fair Online. The online Book Fair will be activated on February 10, 2025, and will end on February 23, 2025. This is a golden opportunity for students and their families to join and pick an adventure that they can fully enjoy. All of the purchases benefit the students and the MGMP campus.

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APPLE PIE RECIPE

Apple pies are delectable desserts that everyone enjoys. It's almost impossible to resist this incredible delight. It is filled with apples that are cut and mixed into a scrumptious jam inside of a crispy crust. It's a sweet and warm delicacy that everyone wants to bake. Here's how to make this heavenly treat (Serving size - 6 people):

- Cut apples (2-3) into whatever size slices you desire (preferably small cubes)
- Keep a pan on the stove and put in apples, sugar (2 cups), a little water ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup), butter ($\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon for greasing), and cinnamon ($\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon)
- Stir properly until the apples are completely cooked (usually 3-6 minutes)
- In a bowl, crack two eggs, put in wheat flour (3 cups), baking powder (1 teaspoon), butter ($\frac{3}{4}$ bar), sugar (a pinch), and salt (a pinch)
- Make sure to mix carefully till it's a dough-like mixture with a few tiny chunks of butter left!
- Grease a round tart pan with butter
- Mold $\frac{3}{4}$ of the dough along with the shape of the tart pan
- Pour all of the apple mixture on top of the crust and spread it evenly
- Make the rest of the dough into thin rectangular strips and place them on top of the pie in a checked pattern
- Preheat the oven to 375 °F and once done preheating, place the pan into the the oven and bake for 15-25 minutes
- After maximum 25 minutes, take the pan out and let the pie cool
- Now you can take the pie out of the pan and cut a slice to savor

Your apple pie is now ready, and it was so easy to make! That's why baking is extremely calming, fun, and enjoyable. Now you can bake this for your family and serve it at the dinner table. After tasting it, I'm sure you'll agree that it indeed is a splendid and special treat.

