



# WOODSTOCK NEWSLETTER

Date: January 26, 2007

## WOODSTOCK SCHOOL OFFICE

Dear Woodstock Families,

Winter finally arrived thanks to the "Snow Dance" performed by the Woodstock students! We were ready for some ski weather. Our Healthy Hometown Cross-Country ski program is up and running! Rebecca Henley coaches the K-2 skiers on Tuesdays and the 3-5 Skiers on Thursdays. We appreciate her efforts as well as those of the parents who help.

The Rug Rat program is well underway. Our 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders love learning to snowboard and ski. They have one more half day on January 30<sup>th</sup> and then a full day on February 6<sup>th</sup>.

Basketball is going along smoothly. Our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams have played games with Andover and Crescent Park. Check out the calendar for any upcoming games. The K-1 team will be finished at the end of January. Our 2/3 team will go a little longer because we split the team into an every other week schedule.

On January 16<sup>th</sup>, Woodstock Elementary School held its annual Math night. A big "Thank You" goes to Mrs. Hartford for another tremendous job. It was fun and showed a lot of ways we use Math.

The fifth graders held their annual Basket Bingo on January 21<sup>st</sup>. The parents and Ms. Wilson did a great job organizing this event. They raised enough money to send the gang to Boston and put together their promotion night.

Mariah's grammie, Sheryl Morgan, is our yearbook coordinator. She is busily getting this year's book together. Along with that task, she put together a calendar raffle, which raised a little over \$700.00. This money will go toward offsetting the cost of the yearbook. We truly appreciate her efforts.

The P.T.A. will be hosting a Valentine Dance on February 16<sup>th</sup>. This is a family dance filled with fun activities. We hope you'll mark it on your calendar and plan to come.

Report cards for the second quarter will be out on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please take some time to go over it with your child. There will be much to celebrate! This will also give you a chance to set some goals.

My final thoughts for this letter are about attendance. It is very important that your child be in school unless he/she is ill. So much of our instruction cannot be made up by doing worksheets or paperwork at home. In-class activities, discussions and direct teacher instruction are the basis for helping your child to meet and exceed standards. Being on time for school and staying through the day is also important. I know that things come up unexpectedly, but I would urge you to try to schedule around your child's school day.

Sincerely,

*Jolene M. Littlehale*

Teaching Principal

### **KINDERGARTEN - Miss Wilkey**

The Kindergarten class is happy that winter is finally here. We have enjoyed being able to sled on the hill at school. Also, we have been reading stories about winter. One of our favorite is actually a poem, *Stopping By Woods On a Snowy Evening* by Robert Frost. The class then brainstormed some winter words and wrote poems. They have also made snowmen to decorate the classroom with.

Winter has also been a part of our most recent theme. We have been studying what animals do in winter. The class has discovered that some migrate, some hibernate or sleep, and some stay active. Many students have been writing about animals in their writing folders. Bears have been especially popular. We have learned that bears are not true hibernators because they wake up at times during the winter. We also presented posters and animal facts for our Friday Meeting on January 19th. The kindergarteners did a great job!

In Math, we have been measuring. We began by investigating the lengths and heights of objects around the room. We measured them with non-standard tools of measurement, such as pencils, tiles, and erasers. More recently we have been measuring with rulers and learning about inches and feet. The class has also enjoyed experimenting with weight. They have compared the weights of objects by using balance scales.

We have also been trying to do addition and subtraction word problems. The class is getting good at using their fingers and counting on to get the answers. Students who answer the problem then explain how they did it so that others may learn their strategy. We will soon be exploring numbers further and are excited to be so close to day 100!

Lately, many students have become more interested and more skilled at writing. They have been writing sentences using sight words and are sounding words out well. We have been working hard to learn the short sounds of vowels and this is helping the class to spell.

Knowing vowel sounds better is also helping students to read. Some of the students are reaching levels where they cannot always rely on pictures or patterns to figure out a word. They need to be actively thinking about the letters and sounds in the word.

Up next for Kindergarten is a theme on Mapping. We will explore the United States and the world. AN important goal will be for the students to realize they are in more than one place at a time (ex. We are in Bryant Pond In Maine in the U.S.A).

### **GRADE ONE - Mrs. Wentworth**

The New Year has brought many challenges and accomplishments for first graders. They performed at their second Friday meeting a couple of weeks ago with a couple of. songs, a poem about snow, and a trivia game about the continents. The songs were some that we have been working with to help us learn some rules about letter sounds. The poem was our way of saying we'd like to see some snow and I guess we got our wish. Finally the continent trivia was a fun way to practice some mapping and geographical skills. This has been our focus of study in Social Studies over the past few weeks. Along with continents, first graders have been introduced to many new terms and skills. They have been learning about different kinds of maps, what they can be used for and how to read them. In the coming weeks, they will learn more about directionality, symbols, map keys, and creating their own maps. I thought the children did very well at Friday meeting and we were all pleased to see many of our parents in the audience.

In Math, everyone has been working hard to pass the timed addition and subtraction tests. I am happy to say that almost everyone has passed the addition one and some have done the same with subtraction. There are even a few that have been working on 2 and 3-digit addition and subtraction. I am so proud of them! They are also continuing to practice counting by 2's, 5's, and 10's and work on place value. Believe it or not, the 100<sup>th</sup> day school is just a couple of weeks away (Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> if we have no snow days). Along with some special activities for that day, first graders have been asked to bring in (or wear) 100 of something to show the class. We are looking forward to this day.

Everyone is having fun with writer's workshop. I am very impressed with how creative your children are. They have been learning how to write attention-getting beginnings, and detailed middles with lots of describing words and interesting word choices. We have also been practicing reading like writers during read-aloud time to get ideas for future stories. Most of the students try very hard to apply what has been taught in mini lessons to their own work. It is fun to see what great authors they are becoming. You will get an opportunity to hear some of their stories at our next Share Circle on Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>.

It has been a great second quarter. It is hard to believe that we are half way through the year, especially when I see how much your children have learned already. Every day brings new surprises. Report cards will be coming home next week. I think you will be pleased with their progress.

Keep your eyes open for that groundhog – who knows, maybe we've seen the best of winter and spring is just around the corner. ☺ Have a great weekend and stay warm.

## **GRADE TWO - Mrs. Meisner**

The month of January has gone by very quickly and looking back we've been working very hard and studying and learning about a lot of things!

We did a lot of studying about Martin Luther King, Jr. We read about him, wrote about him and presented a lot of what we had learned at Friday Meeting.

We are finishing our study of Africa as part of our Social Studies and are now getting ready to do our "Family Timelines". Each child chooses from 5 to 10 special dates and events in their lives and has to show me they can put them in the correct chronological order and then share this information with the class. It is not only an assessment of their ability to put the dates in the correct order, but it is also a speaking assessment. This is a very important assessment for Second Grade! They have two weeks to get all their information together to share.

We are also finishing "Solids and Liquids" in science this month. Our next unit will be "Motion". The kids had a great time doing the experiment with the penny and how many drops of water can you put on top this past week. They will be bringing home a bag with materials to share this with you and to try using other pieces of money and see what happens. Ask them to explain to you why!

We had a great time at "Math Night" last week. I found some great money games to use when we start doing our money unit!

We have just started on "Telling Time" and some can tell time very well and others need a lot of practice so please practice at home!

We are still doing a lot of work with trading. Some are trading with addition with 2 digits, some are subtracting with 2 digits and some have started 3-digit addition! Wow!

We do "Cooperative Math Groups" on Thursdays and I'm seeing a lot of improvement with solving "Word Problems"! Hooray!

February is one of the busiest, shortest months there is. There is Groundhog Day. The 100<sup>th</sup> Day, Valentine parties, Lincoln's birthday, Washington's birthday, and vacation! Wow! Check your calendars for all the special events!

## **GRADE THREE - Mrs. Burke**

January has really flown by. There is so much that we are trying to get done. First of all, we have been working on our Healthy Habits unit, beginning with nutrition. This week was our Healthy Snack Graph week. We spent a lot of time last week talking about the new USDA food pyramid, and just what the definition of a healthy snack would be, and we brainstormed some examples. Now we are counting up the number of healthy snacks that we bring in each day and putting them on a graph. Tomorrow (Friday), we are having a taste-testing of whole grain cereals and breads during our healthy classroom breakfast.

In math, we have just finished working on telling time, and have also spent some time reviewing (or in some cases learning) how to count money. And we are busily reviewing multi-digit addition and subtraction. We have also spent some time practicing for the upcoming MEA testing with some challenging released items from third and fourth grade. We are also practicing how to attack the released reading questions, and it's a good thing that we are. We definitely need the practice.

We have been very excited about our Rug Rat skiing, and one of our recent writing assignments was to write about our first day at Sunday River. The kids are doing a very nice job on this assignment, which is focusing on the skill of using paragraphs. We appreciate the great opportunity that has been given to us by the folks at Sunday River. I used to work there, and I know how expensive this would be if we were being charged for it. Please remember to have the kids dress in layers on these cold days, and to wear their hats and ski gloves.

Enjoy the lovely Maine winter, which has finally arrived, and try to stay warm too.

#### **GRADE FOUR - Mrs. Ferland**

Can you believe that the year is half over? Quarter two closed last Friday and report cards will go home next Friday! Fourth graders have been so busy since we got back from vacation. We have started learning about the Southwest region and Native Americans. There are a large number of Native Americans living in the Southwest region, so we learned about different tribes. We read many short stories and compared and contrasted the cultures.

This week, we started reading *Owls in the Family*. This is a funny story of a family that adopts two owls. The boys in the story get into a lot of mischief with the owls and crazy things happen. At the end of the book, we will dissect owl pellets. This sounds gross, but it is a great activity and the kids love it.

In writing, we are finishing writing and publishing Tall Tales. We read some Tall Tales such as Paul Bunyan, Mink Fink, and Pecos Bill, then we discussed what made a story be a tall tale. After that we started writing our own. They are funny stories that have a lot of exaggerated parts. In the next week, we will be revising and editing our writing prompts from quarter 2. We will share our stories with the class and score them. We will also help each other with ideas and give suggestions to make the writing piece better. Then we will put our plan into action and make them better. The final result will be an adventure story that everyone is proud of.

Our unit in math is multiplication right now. After spending a couple of weeks learning facts, we are moving on to harder multiplication. Students will master how to multiply a two-digit number by a three-digit number. This requires lots of practice and organized, careful work., so we will practice a lot. Some students will be challenged and will be multiplying with decimals.

Skiing has started and everyone is having a great time. Remember to dress in layers and bring warm hats and mittens, it can get cold on the mountain.

Congratulations to the Woodstock Wolves basketball team. I have heard great things about the team and how hard they are working. Keep it up!

Thank you to Mrs. Hartford for another great Math Night. Everyone appreciates the effort and hard work that goes into these nights. The students benefit from her dedication.

Have a great weekend and think snow! My snowmobiles are collecting too much dust!

### **GRADE FIVE - Ms. Wilson**

This quarter the fifth grade really worked on looking at numbers between numbers. A huge part of our quarter has focused on fractions and percents, and how those two ideas are related. We investigated money, food, time, and the calendar in relationship to this topic. Students are now able to convert fractions to percents with relative ease, compare fractional amounts, add fractions, and solve real life problems where fractions are involved. At the end of the quarter we began to look at how decimals are another way of communicating fractions and percents. We looked at how food labels use percents, and how a calculator can help turn a fraction into a decimal, and then convert that into a percent. Using this information, kids were able to figure out what percent of their favorite foods were made up of fat, and whether the snack was healthy based on that information. After our Basket Bingo fundraiser, which helped us raise \$2500 for our June Boston trip, we looked at the percentage of fat in the chips we sold at the refreshment table at the bingo. Unfortunately, the kids discovered that chips are more than 50% fat, so we weren't necessarily selling a healthy treat.

Our science studies focused on space, and we used our knowledge of fractions when talking about the sizes of planets compared to one another. Since we had been studying fractions, the kids could understand that the moon was  $\frac{1}{6}$  the size of Earth, and the moon's gravity is  $\frac{1}{8}$  that of Earth. Students also learned about how celestial bodies move in the solar system, and how that affects us on Earth. We studied the movement of the moon, the phases of the moon, which we connected to fractions, and how the moon affects the Earth by its gravitational pull.

Our reading unit looked at the book, Hatchet, and students were able to participate in a discussion group about the book. We worked on vocabulary building, drawing inferences, making predictions, and challenging each other's ideas about a book.

During reading, we looked at how our verb choices affect our writing. Student learned how to use the thesaurus, and online thesaurus, and the thesaurus on their word processor to help find alternative verb choices for their stories. They edited one of their stories using new verb choices, and they came out super.

So we are  $\frac{1}{2}$ , or 50%, or 0.5 of the way through the school year. The fifth graders have impressed me with what they can do, and I am sure they will continue to do so for the second 50% of the year!

### **RESOURCE ROOM - Mrs. Robinson**

The month of January has found us very busy completing DRA's to check on progress as well as our continued practice for the MEA's that will be coming up in March. The children have been doing a great job in their various programs and they should all feel really good about the progress that they are making. Many of them have finished one level and have begun on another.

I would like to remind the parents of third, fourth, and fifth grade students that have spelling with me that there should be some spelling homework coming home each week that needs to be completed and returned to school.

Have a great February. I hope that everyone gets to spend some family time during the break.

### **TITLE ONE – Mrs. Hartford**

I was most impressed with the parental involvement and teamwork during math night. Thank you for your support in making learning fun and meaningful. The kids look to us adults for meaningful investments of time and energy. They look to us as an example of how to learn and apply what we know in a valuable way. I had to chuckle when I approached Mrs. Littlehale for advise on how to kindly end our time together at 7:30 when so many were still very involved with the learning stations. It was a “good problem” to have! I have never witnessed such ambition to demonstrate understanding of math concepts for such a long period of time!

I was amused by some of the data collected too. It's no wonder the person didn't put their name on the measurement sheet that claimed they could do a 60 inch leg spread (split). They probably couldn't recoup enough to stand over the table and write their name after that! I was surprised to find that everyone completing the “It's all about You” measurement chart had a head that measured 20 or 21 inches around! I figured there would be more of a variety of sizes. I had a few concerns raised from the “My Important Times” survey. A couple of kiddos said their favorite T.V. show came on after 10:00! I hope that's a.m. on the weekend and not p.m.! No wonder some students aren't rested when they come to school! I wouldn't be able to focus on anything but the insides of my eyelids if I made those types of decisions either! Thank goodness most children watched their favorite program before 7:00 p.m.! I was very impressed with Elijah, Mariah, Kohl, and Cameron Pike's knowledge of the other ways to tell time. They knew the terms “o'clock”, “quarter past”, “quarter of”, “minutes past”, and even “half past”! Congratulations to Bobby Sicotte and Echo Hoyt for having the closest guesses of the number of Smarties' rolls in the jar. They both estimated 102 and there were 111 rolls of Smarties. I was very grateful that Bobby shared his winnings with us! I'm sure his dentist was too 😊 Thanks again for your participation at math night!

## **ART - Miss Ingraham**

Kindergarten has been exploring the use of patterns in various forms of artwork. Each student created his or her own geometric shape using a pattern of colors and dots. The use of pattern in visual art helps make the work look more interesting or provides more information about the object.

First grade has started a unit on Claude Monet. We started looking by looking at Monet's paintings. Monet was an impressionist painter from France. He is well known for his water lily paintings. We examined his technique of dabbing different colors of paint and tried this technique on our own.

Second grade has been discussing the meaning of respect in art class. We had a class discussion about how some people from different parts of the world wear crowns or hats to gain or demonstrate that they are to be respected. We also talked about what things we respect about people. We made our own paper hats and have been decorating them with words and decorations that describe why we should be respected.

Third grade has been working very hard! Each student has been learning how to draw the human figure in proportion. We are learning how to draw the head, arms and legs so that these parts don't look too big, long or short for the rest of the body.

Fourth grade students have been creating his or her own mythical creatures. We have been looking at various examples of mythical creatures from stories. From these examples each student can pick features that they might want to include in a new original creature that we have never seen or heard about before.

Fifth grade has just started the much anticipated mask-making project! We have been looking at various examples of masks from around the world and why they might have been created. We focused on masks from Mexico and how some believed that each person had an animal totem.

## **GUIDANCE - Mrs. LaVallee**

Got a minute? Give it to your kid!

Getting involved with your kid today will keep you connected tomorrow. Not only that, it will help your kid make better decisions – even about things like smoking, which kills one out of three people who become hooked. We know it isn't easy to find time, but here are ten tactics that other parents have used:

1. Schedule or plan ten minutes to spend with your child. Mark it on the calendar and keep the "appointment". The message you give to your child is "you are important."

2. Catch your child doing something right and give them a positive comment. “You’re room looks great!” Recognizing effort encourages good behavior and keeps the lines of communication open.
3. Prove you are listening. Really listen and ask a question or reflect a feeling. “You are really happy about getting that report done.”
4. Keep a family calendar. Write everything down, basketball practice, dance lessons, hair appointments, and everyone will feel connected and just as importantly know where everyone is. It’s good habit to develop, especially as kids become more independent and it helps you to monitor your kid’s activities.
5. Create simple rules and enforce them. Every child needs to know the limits. Say yes when you can, but make no stick! Only the rules you enforce will matter so avoid cluttering up your life with rules you have no intention of enforcing, it just creates confusion.
6. Regularly share a meal with your kid. Pick the meal and the days that are the most likely to be shared by everyone. It will encourage everyone to catch up with one another and keeps the connection alive and well. P.S. Turn off the television because it limits conversation.
7. Share your day. Tell a brief story or share something funny that happened and that will encourage your kid to share his day.
8. Write your kid a thank you note and slip it into her lunch bag or stick into his book or put it on a pillow. The underlying message is you care about them and appreciate them.
9. Ask your kid for advice. Asking for their input on any of the tons of small issues that happen every day shows that you value their opinion. “What pizza should we order tonight?”
10. Give your kid responsibilities that help the whole family. By giving your child responsibility that is meaningful you are saying, “I trust you and what you do is valuable.” Caring for the family dog, setting the table, taking out the garbage or recycling are simple but worthy tasks. This allows them to feel more “adult” – the same need that cigarettes or alcohol falsely provide a little later on in life.

**MSAD # HEALTH COORDINATOR –  
Ms. Russell**

The district’s Local Wellness Policy continues to take shape and the committee will submit it to the School Board Policy Committee in time for its March meeting. The nutrition and physical activity segments have been drafted. For more info or interest in providing input, contact [russellb@sad44.org](mailto:russellb@sad44.org).

## **INSTRUMENTS - Ms. DeVore**

Last week the fourth grade band began to learn "Star Chase," a three-part version of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." This is challenging for them, because all three parts will be played together at the same time! They'll be performing this piece (and a few others) with the Andover fourth graders on March 1.

The fifth graders are hard at work learning "Hogwart's March." This is by far the most difficult piece we've attempted, and they are working on some pretty complex rhythms. We still have a long way to go, but we'll be playing this piece with the Andover fifth grade band (and the Mahoosuc Community Band for backup) on March 1.

Our bands are progressing well, but as well as these students are doing they would all benefit from regular practice. The arrival of the New Year is a great time for improving habits. Encourage them to practice regularly, and to fill out their practice record. Any student who practices 45 minutes or more during the week gets a reward sticker in their book! And please remind your children to bring instruments to school on band day.

## **MUSIC - Mrs. Stowell**

Due to two holidays and a snow day, the classes at WES didn't get any music classes until this week! However, we jumped right in and quickly got back on track.

The third, fourth, and fifth graders have been reviewing notes and note values. I have used the "fraction fringe" which has helped in their understanding. Fifth graders have been learning train songs, and doing dances to a few of them. Fourth graders have talked about the dotted half note and sang a song in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time. Third graders learned a game song to "All Who Born In January."

Second graders have listened to two different "Sleigh Ride" songs and tried out some special instruments. First graders sang "Sky Bears" The Kindergarteners learned the song "Welcome Back to School." They added claps and stamps to the song. They learned about the quarter note and quarter rest and read several rhythm patterns using them.

## **PHYSICAL ED. - Ms. Russell**

We began 2007 with age-appropriate basketball skills. K, 1 and 2 have spent time learning and improving their dribbling skills, progressing individually from standing still to walking and running while dribbling. All have had chance to learn shooting with lighter balls at lower baskets.

Grade 2 students were assessed on its Physical Education Maine Learning Result during this unit.

Grades 3-5 practiced passing and honed their dribbling skills with dribble tag and relays. They have worked hard at improving their shooting technique. Grade 5 has moved on to some two on two games to work on their movement and defense.

### **SCHOOL NURSE - Chris Cole, RN**

If you signed your child up for the Maine Dental Health Out Reach program, they will be seen at school for dental services in May/June. Dental hygiene care will be available and free to eligible Maine Care recipients. If you did not fill out a consent form in September and feel your child may be eligible, please contact Chris Cole, RN at 824-2136 ext. 312.

### **MAHOOSUC ARTS PROGRAM**

The Black Diamond Family Entertainment Series presents  
Rainforest Reptile Show

Saturday, February 3, 2007  
7:00 PM

North & South Ballroom, Grand Summit Resort Hotel, Sunday River Ski Resort, Newry, ME

Tickets: \$4/\$6 kids (6-12), \$6/\$8 adults

FMI 207 824-3575

## Attention Parents:

Thank you for your help Making treats for Special Events at our school.

We have a collection of Tupperware containers in the Faculty Room.

Please pick up your container. They will be available at Friday Meetings until February Vacation.