



WOODSTOCK NEWSLETTER

Date: March 28, 2008

WOODSTOCK SCHOOL OFFICE

Dear Woodstock Families,

Spring is here! What better way to celebrate than to have a wonderful Art Show, and a fantastic music concert! Congratulations to our students and their teachers on a very successful evening. Our halls looked absolutely beautiful filled with the students' artwork. Miss Ingraham has every right to be proud of her students. The voices of our students and the sounds of their instruments blended together to welcome spring and lift our spirits. Mrs. Stowell and Mrs. DeVore have certainly done a great job with them. It was great to see so many family members and friends here.

As you know, Mrs. House pulled off another one of her big literature celebrations! We celebrated Read Across America with a Dr. Seuss Extravaganza. The children read and played games with Dr. Seuss Books. We started with a parade and ended with our whole school going to Casablanca Cinema to watch Horton Hears A Who. The children earned the money by selling their crafts at the Craft Fair. Once again, we are so appreciative of Mrs. House's creativity and energy. She is fun to have around!

Our MEA Tests are packed up and headed off to be scored. The students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 are to be commended on their fine efforts. These tests were not easy. The teachers have all told me that they were very impressed by the hard work and serious effort they saw their students putting into these tests. Results should be back in June or July and will be mailed out to you. Thanks for your support with good attendance and plenty of rest. It makes a difference!

I want to recognize the WPTA for their continued generosity to our school. They just purchased cork strips to go down our hallways. This will make displaying our students' work so much easier. The work will stay on the wall which will protect the children's hard work. I know Miss Ingraham will love to hang the Art Show on it next year.

X-Country skiing came to a close this week. Another year of skiing was made possible by the generosity of The Maine Winter Sports Center and the Mahoosuc Kids Program. Thirty four students took part in the program this year. They were coached by Rebecca Henley who did a great job with them. The children had a great time visiting all the local X-Country centers.

It has been a busy time! Take some time this weekend to enjoy your terrific kids!

Sincerely,

Jolene M. Littlehale

Teaching Principal

KINDERGARTEN - Miss Wilkey

Happy Spring! The kindergarteners are excited to be beginning a new season. We are currently starting a unit on weather and the seasons. Hopefully, it will begin to look and feel more like spring soon. Our music concert and art show have gotten us into the mood for warmer weather.

We have been busy in kindergarten. We are in the middle of an addition unit and will begin subtraction next. The class is very good at solving problems that require addition. They use manipulatives, drawings, their fingers, and number lines to help them add. They are learning the two ways to write a “number sentence”, as well as math vocabulary. We are also practicing explaining our thinking when we solve a problem. This part can be tough but the class is already getting the hang of it.

In literacy, we are writing and reading a lot. The students are learning about punctuation and capitalization. We are trying to become experts at where to put periods and when to use uppercase letters. Some of us will begin to work on editing and adding on to our writing. We are reading many books and the students often read to each other. One thing that we have been focusing on is fluency. When we see an exclamation point we need to sound excited and when there is a question mark we need to change our voice at the end.

In April, we will study dinosaurs. The class is excited to start this unit. We will learn about different types of dinosaurs and classify them based on what they ate. We will also learn about fossils and paleontologists. Without them, we would never have known about dinosaurs.

After subtraction, we will focus on place-value. The class is already becoming familiar with the hundreds, tens, and ones places because of the calendar work that we do in the morning. They enjoy writing out a three-digit number for the rest of the class to figure out.

The kindergarteners are working hard and have learned a lot so far this year. We are looking forward to spending spring together!

GRADE ONE - Mrs. Wentworth

Happy Spring everyone! Now if it would only start to look and feel more like it. March has certainly flown by. What a busy month with Read Across America Day, activities to celebrate Dr. Seuss’s birthday, some leprechaun mischief, and a spring concert! Amongst all of these special things, first graders have been working very hard.

In Math, we finished our unit on place value. We learned how to make, count, and write numbers, regroup objects into tens and ones, identify the place value of numbers through 99, and use models and place value to solve problems. At the same time, some children continue to work on their timed, subtraction facts, while others are doing double and triple subtraction, with and without regrouping. Now it’s on to Geometry. This is always a fun unit for students. We begin with identifying shape names and distinguishing between 2 and 3-dimensional forms.

Then we learn how to draw and describe each one. Students will be asked to create a geometry project for the curriculum fair in April. Be on the lookout for specific directions about that.

In reading, we have focused on some comprehension techniques for retelling, sequencing, and characterization. Some of the projects students have worked on are story pyramids, bookworms, and story mobiles. In April we will get back to using our reading response journals and learn how our schema (background knowledge) can be used to help us understand more of what we read. Children will apply some of the new strategies they have learned to the books they are currently reading, and during story time with think alouds and conversations. They will practice predicting, inferring, and questioning skills. Everyone seems to be enjoying our current read aloud – *Trumpet of the Swan*, which we should finish up sometime in April.

Our writing lessons have focused on different ways to develop a “how to” story, which is the focus of this quarter’s writing prompt. Students have learned how important it is to be as specific as possible when writing out directions. Currently we are working on developing a list of “Traffic Words” (better known as transition words) which help us move from one step to the next. In April we will move on to reading and writing some poetry.

Thanks to the assistance of Mrs. House and Tracy, we have begun working on the school’s laptop computers in our classroom. The children have learned how to turn them on, log into the system, and read their e-mail. Of course, this will take a lot more practice but they are certainly enjoying the lessons we have had so far.

In Social Studies we are finishing up our mapping unit. The students have been learning how to read and use a compass, symbols, and map keys. They will apply this knowledge to create their own maps. It’s been fun to watch them get down on the floor and study different maps, looking for special places and features. Our next unit of study will be one called “Then and Now.”

In April, we will be focusing on different life cycles in Science. The children will also learn more about the importance of recycling and taking care of our environment as we celebrate Earth Day.

April is another busy month with parent-teacher conferences and the curriculum fair. I look forward to seeing all of you. Have a great weekend and keep your fingers crossed for warmer spring weather.☺

GRADE TWO - Mrs. Meisner

March is just about gone and I just can't believe it! We've celebrated "Pig Month" with many piggy activities. Make sure you check out the "Pigs on Parade" in the hallway! We learned that Maine turned 188 years old this month. We celebrated St. Patrick's Day with forfeits and prizes for wearing green. We saw on the calendar that spring actually did arrive!

The concert with Mrs. Stowell will have taken place on the 26th. We've had teacher workshop days and we are having a field trip on the 27th! Wow!

Schedules for conferences have gone home. Please sign up and return them as soon as possible! If there is a scheduling problem please let me know and we can make different arrangements.

We are finishing up "Solids and Liquids" in science and will soon be starting on the "Environment" and "Motion".

The next piece of our Social Studies involves a lot of parent involvement. Parents need to help their child collect information about themselves to bring into the classroom. Things about their family history- dates and materials showing important events in their lives. It is an assessment for Social Studies and they will present this to the class and be graded on it. I will be sending home more information about it soon. I plan to have this on display Curriculum Fair night (April 17th) so please be aware of that.

We have two new students in our room! Christine Roberts and Tanner Kist have joined us recently. The class has done a great job welcoming them and they seem to be adjusting to their new environment!

There's a lot going on in April so check your calendars!

GRADE THREE - Mrs. Burke

I can't believe that we are already writing up another newsletter. The days are flying by way too quickly. Spring has sprung officially, but with no real signs of it in sight. Report cards will be coming home before you know it, and don't forget about parent/teacher conferences. I will be sending home the confirmation of your conference times along with this newsletter, so be on the lookout.

MEA's went very well. The third-graders all worked so hard. I don't think that there was anyone who didn't put their best effort into the test. And I do think that, as a class, we will be happy with the scores.

Now that we are not putting quite so much time into practicing for the testing we have more time to "get back to business." Our science/social studies time, along with our reading time, has been pretty much devoted to learning about inventors (discoverers) and their inventions (discoveries). I will be asking each student to come up with their own invention to be displayed at our upcoming curriculum fair, and will send home some information on expectations and ideas next week.

In math, we have finished up our unit on subtraction, are now working on graphing, and will quickly be jumping into some geometry. There are some new concepts in graphing that are now introduced to third graders, so don't be surprised when homework involves finding the range, median, mode, or mean. I actually had to review the definitions of these myself.

Our writing prompt is almost finished, the one from last quarter that is. The students have written some pretty convincing persuasive letters, so we will polish them up and maybe even deliver a few. If you hear about the Woodstock School having a Pet Day later this year or sometime next year, you'll know why.

Enjoy the longer days. Green grass and flowers should be here soon.

GRADE FOUR - Mrs. Ferland

Fourth graders have been working extra hard this month. Besides our regular classroom work, we tackled the MEA tests. Everyone worked so hard and did well. I am so proud of the effort that everyone put into these tests. There can be some tough questions, but everyone thought hard and put their best effort in to it.

Now that our school days have gotten back to normal, we have been able to finish our Midwest novels. Everyone read a book that takes place in the Midwest region. The Sarah, Plain and Tall group, made a life size picture of Sarah. Around the edges of the paper, they listed information and characteristics about her. The Twister group made little book reports about their book, Twister on Tuesday. Another group read the book, Moose Tracks. One activity from this book was drawing what they visualized in chapter 13. All groups did a great job understanding their books and learning about this region.

In math, we have finished our unit on geometry. Today, we had the district assessment about geometry. It is a long unit because it covers a lot of material. Now we have moved on to multiplication. One group is practicing their facts some more. I can't stress enough how important it is to practice at home. Everyone needs to know them so they can move onto 2-digit multiplication. Another group has proven that they know their facts and is moving on to harder multiplication and algebra problems.

In science, we have started a unit on ecosystems and biomes. The first thing that we brainstormed was habitats and animals that live in them. Then we discussed the living and non-living parts of an ecosystem. We drew pictures of an ecosystem including all the parts. This unit will also include food chains, food webs, and biomes of the world.

Thank you to Mrs. House and Mrs. Littlehale for arranging our trip to the movies! It was fun to see Dr. Seuss come alive on the big screen. Also, thanks to Darcy Tyler for doing a presentation on teeth for us. She shared with us some great information.

Don't forget our field trip to Augusta on the 4th of April. Also, I will send home confirmation for parent conferences very soon. I still need to arrange with other teachers. Curriculum night will be here soon. We will have projects in many different subject areas. So mark April 17th on the calendar.

Now that it is spring on the calendar, let's hope for the weather to catch up! Have a great weekend.

GRADE FIVE - Ms. Wilson

Wow - It can't possibly be April, can it? Maybe soon we will get some warm days to start finding the Earth again. The fifth graders are beginning to get the feel of spring, and look towards next year. Already plans have been developed for transition to the middle school, and the big event of promotion night.

We have concluded our studies on fractions, decimals, and percents. This class has a very strong foundation of skills in this area, and some of them may be able to calculate between fractions, decimals, and percents better than adults. The next time your family has a meal at a restaurant with wait service, ask your fifth grader to figure out the tip, and put their knowledge to the test! We have used these conversion skills with money, figuring out the nutrition in food, with grades, and with sports scores and results. We have really enjoyed applying such a life skill.

This month in science students invented their own constellations, and developed a story behind it. Students also had to research constellations in history, and how they were used to navigate. Students also investigated how stars are studied now. Since then, we have begun to learn about our own star, the Sun. Students have been working in research groups to answer questions about our star, and they will be preparing a project to present at Curriculum Fair in April.

Our social studies times have continued to focus on exploration. We have finished reading a historical fiction text about what it may have been like aboard one of Columbus's three ships. Students are currently working on a formal debate about whether or not Columbus Day should be celebrated in Christopher Columbus's name. Students will have to formulate arguments and counter arguments for their classmates on this issue. Next, we will be moving on to colonization of the New World.

Our reading unit continued to work on the books, *Hatchet* and *Sign of the Beaver*. Students continued to participate in discussion groups about the books. After students finished the books, we began to work on character analysis. Students are currently looking for personality traits they want to prove about the characters in the books, and they will have to write a response that proves their beliefs about that character.

Students finished their final drafts of their personal narratives, and published their autobiographical stories by turning them into keepsake scrapbooks. Student shared these stories with one another, and we scored them as a class. We have currently been working on our third quarter writing prompt, and we will be scoring those and using our writing block to work on our literature responses as well.

In our word study this month, we have really focused on contractions. We have made lists of contractions, categorized them, identified them in writing, and written them out into their larger forms. We have also looked at words with the gr blend at the beginning, and we have evaluated all the ways that the word "free" can be used in English sayings and expressions.

So we are making progress. The MEA tests are behind us, and we have gotten back to regular class work. I look forward to meeting parents for conferences in upcoming weeks, and also seeing all of you at Curriculum Fair.

RESOURCE ROOM - Mrs. Robinson

This month has flown by. Everyone should be very proud of the effort that they put into taking the MEA's. I have sent Parent Teacher Conference letters home and look forward to meeting with parents to talk about their child's progress.

Some of the students are surprising themselves by how much they have been learning. It is great to see their eyes light up when they realize they just spelled some great big word correctly without asking for help or something similar. I love those moments and they seem to be happening more and more lately.

I hope that everyone has a happy and healthy April.

ART - Miss Ingraham

Kindergarten has been learning what warm and cool colors are and how they are used to imply warm and cool things. We also have been looking at Japanese art.

First grade has been creating "Wild Things"! We read the story, Where the Wild Things Are and then created our own creatures. Each student was asked to fill the wild thing in with 3 different textures. We also created a place for our Wild Thing to live.

Second grade has been busy painting! We looked at pieces of artwork created by Jasper Johns. Jasper Johns created pieces of art using everyday symbols, letters, and numbers. We picked the first letter of our first name and made it as big as we could on our paper. We then painted the letters in and painted the background with patterns.

Third grade finished a project inspired by the artist Gustav Klimt. We looked at how Klimt created portraits of people with a realistic face and in the rest of the painting abstract. We created a portrait of ourself sleeping and covered with a quilt that is filled with abstract designs.

Fourth grade has just finished the printmaking unit we started a few weeks ago. We created prints using styrofoam and watercolor paints. Each student selected two prints to weave together to create a fragmented image of the prints.

Fifth grade examined the work by Georges Seurat. Seurat was a French painter that helped create the painting technique called pointillism. We used Seurat as inspiration to create landscape drawings in markers. Each student had to create the drawing with different types of marks made with the markers.

GUIDANCE- Katina Colombotos, LCSW

Hello, my name is Katina Colombotos and I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. School social work services are available to students, parents and school staff with the goal of helping children to be successful in school.

Please feel free to contact me, your child's teacher or Jolene Littlehale with any questions about services. You can leave a message for me with Queda or email me at colombok@sad44.org. I will also be available during parent/teacher conferences on Tuesday, April 15th between 3:00 and 6:00 PM. I look forward to getting to know you and your children.

MSAD # HEALTH COORDINATOR – Ms. Russell

Diane Brown, a family life educator with 23 years experience, met with parents of grade five students and followed that up as a guest speaker in grades four and five. She presented information to grade four students about personal hygiene, and discussed puberty changes with grade five.

The MSAD #44 Wellness Team will be holding a raffle to help raise some of the money needed to attend this year's conference. A basket full of a variety of items will be on display at each of the buildings before the drawing in early May. The Wellness Team promotes school community wellness- physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual, which results in a healthy climate for lifelong learning.

Last week, many staff members received daffodils in return for their financial contribution to Daffodils Days, an annual awareness campaign and fundraiser by the American Cancer Society; and in May, others will be participating in the Relay for Life walk in Norway. This event raises funds for cancer research, honors cancer survivors and commemorates those whose lives were taken by the disease.

INSTRUMENTS - Ms. DeVore

Congratulations to the fourth and fifth grade band students for their performances at the Woodstock School concert last Wednesday. This was the first time the fourth and fifth grade bands performed together, and they did an awesome job!

The fifth grade band will be performing again in a few weeks, this time at Telstar High School. Mrs. Bennett, the high school music teacher is planning an all-instrumental evening for band students from fifth through twelfth grade. On Tuesday, April 15 at 7:00 PM the fifth grade, middle, and high school bands will all be performing. Details will be coming home to fifth grade band families next week.

And, on Thursday May 1, the Woodstock bands will entertain the senior citizens at their monthly luncheon. We have a busy spring ahead!

PHYSICAL ED. - Ms. Russell

We are in our 3rd week of tumbling/gymnastics, one of the favorite units for the students. All grades began with animal crawls to get used to different body positions and putting weight on their hands and arms.

Next, we worked on basic rolls in the tuck and open positions. Grades 3-5 have continued with more advanced tumbling- backward rolls, cartwheels, round-offs, etc.

All grades have tried static balances, from the stork stand in K to the handstand in 3-5. For practicing dynamic balance, the students perform locomotor skills, balances and turns on the low and high balance beams.

As they progress, each student in grades 3-5 will put together and perform a routine composed of three to five moves on the beam or the mats.

We will also set up the Swedish Box for some beginning vaults.

W.P.T.A. UPDATE – Mrs. Walker

Our Spring fund-raiser is off and running. We are selling flower bulbs and little cookbooks. All the profits from these fundraisers go directly into your children's classroom account, which helps with class trips and with their fifth grade Boston trip. Every little bit helps, and the class that sells the most will win a pizza party. Thanks and Good Luck!



Presents

“Greek Myths: Out of the Box” by The Theatre at Monmouth

On Thursday, May 1st, the Mahoosuc Arts Council will present The Theatre at Monmouth's “Greek Myths: Out of the Box” assemblies at Crescent Park Elementary School. The assembly for students from Andover and Woodstock will take place at CPS at 10:00 AM and the assembly for Crescent Park Students is scheduled for 1:00 PM.

The Theater At Monmouth, Maine's only professional theater dedicated to performing Shakespeare and the classics, will present "Greek Myths: Out of the Box." This performance is a fun and lively play featuring some of the oldest tales ever told. Written in the style of an adventure story, students will learn the tales of Ikarus, Phaeton, and Pandora, among other well-known myths. Greek Myths: Out of the Box will include not only the tales, but the context of ancient Greek geography, life and traditions. The colorful costumes and sets, combined with outrageous characters and stories are perfect for the younger students, and the professional level of quality, strong acting, and intelligent writing are sure to engage the older grades.

"Greek Myths: Out of the Box" is a new play written and directed especially for The Theater At Monmouth by Jeri Pitcher, author of the highly successful Theater At Monmouth productions of The Odyssey, The Arabian Nights, Tom Sawyer, and Anne of Green Gables. As a director, Jeri has staged more than a dozen Theater At Monmouth shows. The cast of three actors will include professional performers cast from auditions in New York City.

Since 1986, The Mahoosuc Arts Council has been dedicated to supporting the advancement of the arts and humanities in the adult communities and school systems of the greater Bethel area. We welcome members of the community to join us in furthering this mission. For more information about The Mahoosuc Arts Council, call us at 824-3575 or visit our website at www.mahoosucarts.org