



FAIRLAND FLYER February 2009



Dear Fairland Community,

I hope that 2009 is off to a good start for everyone. The news and the outlook for our economy is currently bleak, but with patience, persistence and small sacrifices, we will all come out of this trying time sooner rather than later, as we hope for the best.

Thanks as always to the active FES parent and staff volunteers.

Time and time again you come through for the children of Fairland.

The impact of your contribution, the effects which are both direct and indirect make the Fairland experience the best it could possibly be for all our children.

Recent PTA events included Karaoke night, our Ice Skating Fundraiser and Bingo night which were all fun-filled events for attending families and especially for the children. Please join us in March for our Sports and Fitness Night and our 2nd Ice Skating Fundraiser at the Gardens Ice House in Laurel, Maryland.

My condolences go out to the members of our community who have lost loved ones recently. The sad bit of it is that quite a few of our parents and school staff members have had the sadness of the passing of loved ones. I hope every one of you will find comfort in memories of the good times you shared together in years, months and days past.

Peace to each of you in all your encounters Fairland Community!

Carla Austin, Fairland Elementary School, PTA President

Upcoming Events

PTA MEETING

March 3rd, 2009

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. - APR

March 6, 2009

Sports and Fitness Night

7 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. - APR

March 20, 2009

Ice Skating Fundraiser

7:50 p.m. – 9:50 p.m.

Gardens Ice House,
Laurel

No School

March 30, 2009

Fairland E-Mail Group

Welcome New and Returning Families!

If you are not already signed up for our PTA group, please send your email address to Kim Gibbs at kim_a_gibbs@hotmail.com.

The Yahoo group distributes valuable information about what is happening in and around our school.

Extra! Extra! Grade News!



Head Start News!

Head Start has been busy as usual! We have just completed our home visits, and really enjoyed talking to our families about their wonderful children. Thank you for having us in your homes and caring so much about their progress.

All of our students have come a long way since the fall. They are learning their letters names, both upper and lower case, and learning the sounds the letters make. A handful of our students are reading words! We are working on rhyming words, word families, and sorting. We are learning to count and order our numbers as well as being able to write them. We are learning sizes and the concept of "big, bigger, and biggest" and will be learning about three-dimensional shapes. We are reading winter books and are beginning our unit about the bakery. Our next unit will be about restaurants. We will turn our bakery into a Pizza restaurant and even make pizza in class. We had a wonderful Valentine's Day party for your children. Stay warm!

Mrs. Laub



Kindergarten News!

February is packed with learning! We celebrated our 100th day of school and had a lot of fun exploring the number 100. We started our next unit in math on measurement, shapes, and sequencing events. We have completed our winter round of testing and are so excited about our wonderful progress. We also celebrated Valentine's Day and President's Day this month. In addition, we are reading many nonfiction books on winter, penguins and other arctic animals. Through our study of the groundhog, we know that he saw his shadow and there will be six more weeks of winter. So stay warm and keep on learning!

First Grade Flash!

February was a busy month for us. We learned about the contributions made by African Americans and the impact they had on our country. We read stories about famous African Americans every day.

The first grade classes are busy reading and writing every day. We are using many strategies to gain comprehension when reading about folktales and fairytales. We are also learning to identify the main idea of the folktales. We will have worked on identifying the main character, setting, problem and solution in the folktales read. We are also working on vowel sounds with our spelling program. Please continue to work on the word wall words and spelling words each week.

In math, we are learning to solve fact families. We are using many strategies to help the students to write an addition and subtraction number sentence that corresponds to the fact family. We are also developing strategies to master addition and subtraction facts. We will also work on graphing and tallying.

In science and social studies, we will be learning about constructions and economics.

Thanks to our room parents who helped with the Valentine's Day parties!



Second Grade News!

The second graders are busy learning many new and fascinating topics in third quarter! In math, we finished our unit on addition and subtraction. Our next unit is on fractions and measurement. We will be learning all the different ways that people use measuring in their daily lives. This unit is great for at-home learning connections! Have your student help when measuring items for a recipe or telling time throughout the day. In reading, we will be studying how an inference can help us to be better readers. Then we will be moving onto the genres of folktales and tall tales! We will travel around the world and discover folktales from different countries. We will read stories about Pecos Bill and Johnny Appleseed and will soon read books about Cinderellas from around the world. Be sure to ask your student what an exaggeration is and to give you an example of one they heard in a story.

Also, you might notice your second grader being more persuasive at home. That's because we are focusing on writing to persuade this marking period. We are starting the unit by discussing what good persuasion techniques we can use and what techniques will not work. So when your student requests an item in the future, have him/her try to persuade you, using the techniques we learned, before saying yes (or no).



Third Grade Tidings:

It's a new year and we're doing some exciting things in the 3rd grade. Students have learned about folktales and historical fiction. We're also learning about analogies and how they are used in reading and writing, and the importance of sequencing events to help with reading comprehension. In Science students are learning the aspects of criminology by recording their fingerprints and understanding how to use investigative techniques to solve crimes. We have completed Unit 2 and 3 in Math. Students have shown that they have practiced their multiplication facts, but they need to keep it up! We want them to be Math Magicians, when it comes to mastering their basic facts in addition, subtraction, and multiplication. We know they can do it! Our field trip is just around the corner in April. Be sure to submit your payment and the permission slip for your child to attend this exciting adventure to the Baltimore Museum of Industry on or before March 6th, if you haven't already done so. We hope to have every child travel with us to Baltimore. Enjoy the rest of the winter months. Happy reading!

4th Grade Scoop!



In **Reading**, we are reading many different types of books, including mysteries, biographies/ autobiographies and even plays! In **Writing**, we are writing to persuade and working on strategies for writing brief constructed responses in preparation for the Maryland State Assessments. In **Math**, we are studying probability, fractions and decimals. The unit test will be given during the week of February 23rd. Unit 4 groups will be determined at the end of the month, with Unit 4 to begin in March. In **Science**, we are beginning our unit on matter. In **Social Studies**, we are examining the government and how a law is made, as well as creating family crests. As always, we are working hard and learning a ton!

Official Grade 5 News!

February 2009



Punxsutawney Phil recently informed us that winter will be lasting six weeks longer, but the fifth graders are warming up as we enter the last half of their final year of elementary school.

At this time, all fifth graders should have completed the registration packet for Briggs Chaney or Banneker Middle School for the classes they would like to take in sixth grade. The deadline for submission has passed. Any packets that have not been completed must be brought to the appropriate middle school. The health form packet that was sent home with the registration materials does not have to be completed and returned until June 1st. Any health packets completed by the physician and dentist before June 1st may be brought to Fairland. Health packets completed after that date must be brought to the appropriate middle school.

Mr. Blake and Mrs. Hester's Math A classes have just concluded Unit 2DC and are now working on Unit 3. Unit 3 focuses on geometry. This unit will have the students utilize compasses, rulers and protractors to measure and construct angles, measure and create quadrilaterals and construct circles. Mrs. Collins' and Ms. Menter's Math 5 classes are finishing up their study of fractions, decimals and percents. All students should be reviewing those very important basic multiplication facts that are necessary to perform higher level functions in math. All classes are reviewing each day for the upcoming MSA math exam which will be given at the end of March.

In social studies, we are learning about the events that led to the American Revolution. Those events include the French & Indian War, Proclamation of 1763, Stamp Act and Boston Tea Party.

Our fifth grade scientists are learning about astronomy. We have learned about the 4 properties of Earth that allow life (temperature, distance from the sun, water and atmosphere), compared the Earth to the moon and constellations.

In writing we have been working on using more advanced word choices, organizing our thoughts in a more cohesive manner and becoming better editors of our own work through more thorough proofreading. We are also perfecting our leads to make them more interesting and engaging for the reader. In reading, we have completed our study of poetry and will begin to focus on science fiction. We are also preparing for the MSA exam in reading by taking practice short answer tests and writing sample BCR paragraphs in response to a reading.

Please remember to check your child's agenda book for their daily homework assignments and the Friday Folder for important announcements and graded papers. Homework will be a very important part of the learning process for each and every student and completion of the homework assignments on a daily basis is vital to their academic success. Homework is assigned on a daily basis. We want to ensure that all students maintain their focus throughout the year. Independent reading due dates can be found in your child's independent reading folder or on the fifth grade link to the Fairland website.



A Message from the Health Room

February is not only the month we celebrate Valentine's Day, it is also the month we recognize National Women's Heart Health.

Heart disease is the #1 killer of American women. But heart disease can also lead to disabilities and a decrease in quality of life.

Unfortunately, women don't take their risk of heart disease seriously, or personally. Women often fail to make the connection between risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, excessive weight and their family history.

Do you know your risk factors?

Go to this website and see if you may be at risk for heart disease.

<http://www.mknowyournumbersbaltimore.com/>



Counselor Corner

Classroom Guidance lessons took a delightful twist in December and January to focus on empathy and how character relates to reputation. The book Little Prickles is a Kids Are Authors award winner and is written by seventh grade students Gavin and Kate Nelson from Connecticut and illustrated by their cousin Layne Suhre from Illinois. Our students were encouraged to write their ideas down because, as experienced in reading this book, kids do know what kids need to hear.

Little Prickles is a porcupine who is lonely because other animals say "ouch" when he comes near them, so he hates his quills and sits on the sidelines grumbling while the other animals play.

One day he gets the opportunity to share his quills for a writing lesson and he is overjoyed to give them away. However, he gives away all but three so he is unprotected. After the teacher tells Little Prickles that he doesn't have to give all of himself away just to have friends, she enlists help from the others to walk him home daily for safety's sake until his quills grow back. Little Prickles not only has friends now but he has also accepted himself, quills and all. (continued - next page)

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Empathy is shown by Buzzy the Bee who says he has something that can hurt others as well but that he can play other games and be careful. A dot game followed with everyone having a colored dot group except for 4 "odd dots. As students found their color group, they felt excited, happy, connected and surprised. The odd dots shared feelings of sad, mad, disappointed, left out and lonely that they didn't have a group. They then became the group of "odd dots" and their frowns turned upside down into smiles. Students were encouraged to seek out the lonely students on the playground and to connect with one another.

Character and reputation are closely related. Students heard the actions and speech of 8 different characters including "Pushy Pete", "Cooperative Clyde", "Generous Georgia", "Bonnie Bad Sport", "Tattling Tammy", "Goofy Gordon", "Helpful Holly" and "Listening Louie". They then made decisions as to whether they would like to have the reputation that earned those names. The realization that their reputation is connected to their character traits encouraged them to make good choices when it comes to their actions and their speech which do display character.

The lesson ended with the students being exposed to the M and M belief that it is what is on the inside of people that counts. Students got to choose between a brightly colored beautiful bag and a brown crumpled up Starbucks bag. The bright bag, although beautiful on the outside has trash in it and the battered Starbucks bag had M and M's in it to reinforce the learning that it is what is on the inside (character) that counts. Students then saw a toy with a light inside and they sang, "I am going to let it shine...This little light of mine." Each child then received an M and M for their respectful character during the lesson. Of course, they had to use their politeness and courtesy to say, "Thank you." They didn't seem to mind.

PTA Cultural Arts News!

Cultural Arts - Artist in Residence: Caryl Henry Alexander 3rd - 5th grades (242 students)

The end of the Artist in Residency was marked by the February 6th Dedication of the Chesapeake Bay Life Mural made by the 3rd & 4th graders and the Inaugural Playing of the Loteria Game made by the 5th graders. The Loteria Game was created with the help of Ben Kassel and Robert Rose for the final technical aspects of producing the game.

Approximately 100 students and family members attended the evening's celebration and playing of Chesapeake Bay Life Loteria which is a picture Bingo game.

A special "Thank you" to our Artist, Caryl Henry Alexander, Ben Kassel and Robert Rose who worked with Mrs. Ivette Burgess to bring the following two permanent installations to Fairland. The Loteria Game can be obtained from the Media Center for classroom teachers to use as a teaching aide for classes studying the Chesapeake Bay Life. The Bay Life Mural is now hanging in the hallway leading to the blacktop near the stairs that lead to the 4th and 5th grades.

The combined costs for the Residency was \$3960.00 of which the PTA funded 50% and the Maryland State Arts Council funded the remaining amount.

Thank you to all of those who volunteered, recognizing that sometimes circumstances precluded all who wished to attend from being able to participate. Your willingness to sign up and even try to be present in the classroom to help shows such support and is always appreciated.

The Parent & Classroom Volunteers were:

Annette McVeigh, Sheri Melvin and Kuroji Patrick who were present weekly to assist on the project.

Alex & Yaminah Wells
Deepak Kaul
Mrs. Cobb
Asmeret Aylay
Sunshine Mamodesene
Marissa Thomas

Mesganaw Dejene
Ms. K Brown
Josephine Amog
M'Liss Dematatis
Medague Webster
Candace White

The project took 16 days over the course of 5 weeks to complete. Apologies if we have oversighted and missed someone.

We had tremendous support from our 3rd, 4th and 5th grade classroom teachers as well. Thank you to Miss Menter and Mr. Blake who were able to assist the completion of their classrooms' Loteria Game Card pieces by altering their schedules after an unforeseen schedule change resulted in a change to the Residency Schedule.

Assemblies:

To date we have had one All School Assembly (K thru 5th) - Billy B's Recylcemaniam (10/08).

Upcoming performances are currently scheduled in February as follows:

Monday, 2/23 10:30 am

Head Start and Kindergarten - DinoRock performing "Dinosaur Babies"

"This show is about baby dinosaurs and family behavior" performed using songs with puppets (hand, rod & string and body) and active audience participation.

Wednesday, 2/25 2:15 pm

3rd through 5th grade - Spencer Johnson performing "On the Ball, Spinny"

"Upbeat, dynamic program features fun & amazing basketball skills while teaching the importance of education, respect, goal setting, determination and perseverance." An additional message of "Study hard, respect everyone, refrain from drugs and alcohol & always believe in yourself"

Final All School (K - 5th) Assembly:

March 10, 2:15 pm - Almost Recess - "All About A Cappella"

"Almost Recess is An A Cappella singing group that perform both original songs and remakes. They describe for the students how they make their music, explain their vocal arrangements and discuss the history and types of A Cappella." They also introduce vocal drumming and involve the students in learning to perform. This group is coming from N.C.

Friday, April 23

Head Start - Kindergarten - "Bears! Bears! Bears!" by Puppet Dance Productions

Puppet Dance Productions presents "Bears! Bears! Bears!" and is performed using puppets and involving many of the students to become part of the production. Many of the puppets are fashioned out of recycled materials and the students will have an opportunity to become a part of the production - playing parts of the show.

Michele Parent, Cultural Arts Chair, will attend the MSAC Grant Writing workshop in late February in preparation for selecting an Artist in Residence for next year (2009 - 2010). Preliminary inquiries are being made into artist availability for Cultural Arts Assemblies for the coming school year. Anyone interested in working on the Cultural Arts Committee can contact Michele directly at Michele.parent@verizon.net.



The Members of the Fairland Elementary PTA wish to thank:

*Mr. and Mrs. Johnson (FES Staff Member)
for their volunteer work during the Ice Gardens Fundraiser*

*Mrs. Brown (FES Staff Member)
for her volunteer work during the Ice Gardens Fundraiser*

*Mr. and Mrs. Crotzer
for their volunteer work at the PTA Karaoke Night*

*Mrs. Michele Parent
for her volunteer work during the Artist in Residence experience and
the Loteria Night Celebration*

*Mrs. Marissa Thomas and the Hospitality Committee
for hosting the chocolate lovers luncheon for the FES Teachers and
Staff*

*Kaitlin Ksumpp – PTA Childcare Volunteer - Monthly
Jamie Gibbs – PTA Childcare Volunteer – February 2009*

