

Heron Pond Elementary Matters

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From the Principal

One of our most important duties here at Heron Pond Elementary School is to maintain a safe environment for the students, staff, and visitors. Part of that safe environment includes the Internet. The school district abides by the requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) of 2000. In addition, we take other measures to increase our Internet safety. When it comes to posting information about children, we apply even greater controls.

You may have noticed that we have a new Heron Pond Elementary School web site this year. Though it is still under construction, it currently offers the public access to information such as the school calendar, lunch menu, and staff e-mails. We are constantly looking for ways in which we can improve and expand the offerings available through our site. One way to make it look better is to use student photographs. This creates a potential safety concern for us. **Please note that at no time would we use student names in our web pages.**

In an effort to make the use of student photographs a safer process, we will be adding the following language to our 2007-2008 Parent Handbook.

Occasionally, photographs of students taken at school or at school sponsored events may be used in a number of ways. These may include, but not be limited to; a classroom display, use during Open Houses as a display or presentation, possible newspaper submission, and possible Heron Pond Elementary School web site publication.

Because this is the first time we want to use students' photographs in our web page, I ask that any parents or guardians who do not want us to use their child's photograph, please send me a brief note stating that fact. Please send me this note by Friday, January 5, 2007. We would like to add student photographs to our web site beginning in January.

Please check out our web site at www.milfordschools.net.

In closing, I wish everyone the best during this festive holiday season. Thank you

Dress Right, Please!

Just a reminder that the cold weather will eventually be upon us! The days of shorts and tank tops are over! Recesses are now 25 minutes once a day for grades 3-5. Recesses are still 15 minutes twice a day for grade 2. Please make sure that students have coats, hats, mittens, snow pants and boots as we go outside daily. Extra socks would be great as well for wet, cold feet!

Grade 5 News

Greetings from the fifth grade classes! The weather has turned, but the learning continues. Everyone seems rested from a well-deserved break, and we are all ready to get back to work. In math, we are all moving along in Unit 4 which has taught us about division and fractions. These lessons and concepts can be challenging, so homework and practice are of utmost importance.

In reading, we are well into Theme 3, which is "A Changing Planet." We have had the opportunity to learn about the Everglades and forest fires. In addition, we continue our work with nouns and pronouns. Overall, we are pleased with the work that the students have been putting forth and producing as part of the new reading series.

Finally, we would like to let you all know that this year we will be releasing Progress Reports for each child. These very brief forms will be sent home in mid-January and will allow you to get a sense of your child's progress at the mid-way point of the second trimester. It is our hope that these reports will act as another form of communication pertaining to your child's work.

So from the fifth grade, we hope you all have wonderful and merry holidays. We thank all of those that helped our classroom parties be such successes. We encourage you to continue to work on math facts with your child and keep warm during these cold winter months.

Submitted by the Grade 5 Teachers

Grade 4 News

Fourth grade students have been busy learning extended multiplication facts, partial products and lattice multiplication methods. We would like to remind parents to continue to practice multiplication facts with their child.

In reading, we are finishing the third theme of the Harcourt Reading Program. The title of this theme is "Make Yourself at Home." As a class novel study, many classes have been reading the novels *Sarah, Plain and Tall* by Patricia MacLachlan, *The Cricket In Times Square* by George Selden and/or *Family Under the Bridge* by Natalie Savage Carlson. These titles complement the theme "Make Yourself at Home." When we return in January, we will begin theme four, which is "Creative Minds."

We would like to welcome Meg Peterson back to her fourth grade classroom following maternity leave. Congratulations to Paula Salemi, fourth grade shared associate, who recently gave birth to twin girls!

All fourth grade teachers and support staff would like to wish everyone a very happy holiday season and a happy healthy new year! We will see you in 2007!

Submitted by Grade 4 Teachers

Grade 3 News

We have begun learning about multiplication and division in math. You will find some wonderful games in the back of the Student Reference Book to play as a family. They will help to reinforce the multiplication facts. Our new theme in reading is friendship. We have been talking about being good friends and making new friends. We hope you have a wonderful holiday season with your family and friends. See you in 2007!

Submitted by the Grade 3 Teachers

Grade 2 News

Happy New Year! The children have returned from the holiday break very eager and excited about learning to write in cursive. In math, the children have been busy learning partial sums algorithm, trading, ballpark estimating and geometry. Thank you for supporting your child with the Home Links. The month of January brings the study of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ruby Bridges. We have discussed what make someone a "hero" and that a hero can be a family member, friend, historic figure or current figure in the news. We have made class booklets about how we are more alike than different. The cold weather is upon us; please dress your child in warm snow clothing. An extra change of pants and socks would be appreciated. Thank you!

Submitted by the Grade 2 Teachers

Monarch News

Grade three Talent Pool students have been practicing verbal logic by solving a wide variety of word puzzles. Next, students will be creating their own puzzles for placement in a group created logic puzzle book. Grade four Talent Pool students are writing similes to practice their communication skills as part of the Talents Unlimited model. Grade five Talent Pool students are discussing such philosophical questions as, "Are numbers and people equally real?" and "Does anything depend on everything?"

Third grade math enrichment students are developing the ability to choose the best strategies to solve word problems. Geometry, perimeter and area were all important in determining how to double and triple a figure. Fourth grade math enrichment students are in the middle of redecorating their bedrooms with a blank checkbook and a "pretend" thousand dollar budget. What decision making is going on! Fifth grade students have been asked to create a *lifestyle wish list*. Tempered by the work they expect to be doing as adults with real life budgets, they have been adjusting which homes, cars, and vacations might realistically fit their budget. Perhaps it is worth going to school for a few more years after all . . .

Third grade writing students are studying various forms of poetry to "publish" in their poetry books. After learning about poetry, students will be encouraged to enter a poem in the New England regional contest. Fourth graders are learning that research writing can be challenging. While it takes a bit of practice to write a bibliography, it **is** fun to choose the topic you want to explore. Fifth grade writers are in the throes of their realistic fiction. Having researched the time period and locations, created character sketches, and dialogue, students are now telling the stories of World War II, coming to America, settling the West and many others. I'm excited by the depth and understanding of their work.

Submitted by Kathy Melconian

Title 1 News

On Tuesday, January 9th, Title I will host a Parent Discussion Group. We will meet in the Heron Pond Library from 6:30-7:30 pm. A PBS special hosted by Al Roker called "Empowering Parents" will set the stage for our conversation. This program offers ideas to help families identify early signs of reading problems and find ideas for getting their children the help and support they need to succeed at reading. The five "big ideas" of reading will also be outlined and reviewed. Participants will receive a Reading Rockets Parent Guide of support materials. All parents are invited to attend. Please RSVP by calling Chantal Alcox, Title I Coordinator, at 673-1811, ext. 2420. Babysitting services will be provided.

Parenting Talk at Milford Middle School

Parent-to-Parent presents the third of a series of five parent-planned interactive talks for parents of elementary and middle school students. The talk, *Listening to Your Adolescents: Maintaining the Connection* by Judith Orme, will be held at the Milford Middle School on Wednesday, January 17, from 6:30 to 8:00 PM. She will cover such issues as avoiding conflict, staying connected with expectations and responding versus reacting to situations. Judith is a licensed clinical social worker with 24 years of experience providing psychological services to children, couples, and families. Her professional background includes school consultations, clinical mental health services, her own private practice, child custody evaluations for the courts, and specialized divorce services. As a parent educator for over 26 years and child development specialist, she facilitates educational and support groups, lectures, consults, and counsels parents. She also writes a regular column for the *Amherst Citizen* addressing parenting issues. There is no fee for the talk. “Games Galore,” a recreational program for students aged 3-14 will be held at the same time as the talk. (“Games Galore” students will be divided into two to three age groups and will have the opportunity to play candy bar bingo, bowling, ping pong, foosball and supervised free time, and snack is included.) “Games Galore” is free if a parent attends the talk. Parent-to-Parent is sponsored by: NH Children’s Trust Fund, CAST, MMS Enrichment, The Youth Council, Nashua, Amherst Junior Women’s Club; Brookline Lions Club; Engine Car Care; MMS PTO; MES PTO; Milford Rotary; Millipore; Unitarian Church; and individual donations. For questions contact Libby Anderson at mmsenrich@charter.net or 672-9876.

From the Nurse

We frequently receive phone calls from parents asking, “What is going around?” So far, we have the usual array of colds, but during the last weeks have seen chicken pox and the “stomach flu.” In fact, we have been notified by the Public Health Department that we are officially having outbreaks of viral gastroenteritis that may be related to the Noro/Norwalk Virus. This can be spread by direct contact and through food and drinks. Symptoms are headache, nausea and vomiting, stomach cramps and diarrhea. Here are the recommendations to protect you and your family:

- Eat well and get plenty of rest.
- Wash hands frequently and practice safe food preparation by keeping all surfaces clean.

If you or your child does get sick, you should follow the recommendations of your doctor. These could include:

Have nothing by mouth for at least one hour after vomiting or diarrhea. Then start with small sips of water or clear liquids. Continue clear liquids for 24 hours after vomiting stops. Then gradually introduce food by starting with the “BRAT” diet: bananas, rice, applesauce and toast. Continue to introduce foods, adding dairy last. Call your doctor if vomiting and diarrhea are severe or if fever is very high.

Children and adults with any symptoms should stay home from school or work until fully recovered, generally at least 24 hour after all symptoms stop. We very frequently see children come back too soon and then find we are calling parents out of work because their child needs to go home.

I hope that these recommendations help you and your family have a healthy holiday season.
Submitted by Donna Kemp, RN

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!