

Little Cardinal Press

Earlham Elementary

April Newsletter

Hello parents/guardians,

It's hard to believe that we are in the month of April now! The weather makes it feel like summer vacation is upon us but I'm sure we will get back to reality with cooler temperatures. The warm weather is great for getting the kids outdoors. Make sure that school is a priority and that homework gets completed on time. It's easy to stay outdoors until much later hours and run out of time to complete school work. Also make sure to go over severe weather procedures at home. We will be doing our severe weather and fire drills this month at school. We will also be conducting bus drills as field trips will be starting up. Have a great Easter and the month of April!

Sincerely,
Jason Hammen
Pk-6 Principal

2012-2013 Kindergarten Screening

This is a reminder to all parents of kindergarten students for the 2012-2013 school year that we will be inviting your son or daughter to school for a half day either in the morning or afternoon on April 26th and 27th. You will be mailed a letter at the beginning of April explaining when your child will be attending. If you were not at the parent meeting in February and have not filled out paper work for your child please call the school (758-2213) to get a packet of information.

No School for our Current Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Students

Due to the kindergarten screening process that we will be performing with the incoming kindergarten students, we will not hold class for our current preschool, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students for two days. **There will be no school for the preschool, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students on April 26, and April 27.** Again, if you have any questions please feel free to call your child's teacher or the district office. Thanks!

PIE

PIE is excited to announce we had our most profitable Carnival ever with over \$6000 raised - thanks for all the support! We are purchasing more ipads for the elementary and will keep you posted on other items purchased as they are requested.

We are thankful again for everyone's generous contributions toward Conference Suppers this past week for the Middle School and High School staff.

Next on our agenda is the **Lifetouch Photos on April 5th**. All students and teachers are requested to get their pictures taken as PIE earns money for each, no purchase is

required. We are **still looking for 2 volunteers** to help with the task of getting students to/from the pictures that morning, so please contact Jen Caskey at 971-3341 if you are interested.

Pre-k/Kindergarten News

Spring Break adventures are helping kindergarteners “spring” into narrative writing! An Iowa Core outcome for kindergarten is to be able to write a narrative telling the events in order and providing a reaction to what happened. Students will be writing many personal narratives making sure to include a beginning, middle, and end, as well as their reaction to the event. They will add a detailed illustration which will strengthen their writing piece. A highlight of this unit will be the presentation of a writing piece via an author’s chair. An author’s chair allows students to share their writing in a comfortable atmosphere with positive feedback provided by their peers.

March has provided many examples of the weather that we are learning about in science. We have gone from snowy days to 82 degrees. It is interesting to learn what causes all of these weather changes. Unfortunately the changing weather makes it hard for students to be prepared for recess. Please help your child come to school with appropriate gear for the weather. Happy Spring!

First Grade

The first graders have been working hard on their habitats and reports. They are excited about sharing their reports and habitats with their classmates. The children have had a great time working on these and will be very prepared for our field trip to Keuhn in May.

We have been working on adjectives, verbs and nouns in Language. We also have been working on syllables and understanding that every syllable needs a vowel. Bossy E words and short vowels are skills we have been working on as well. Comparing and contrasting has been the focus in whole group reading. Vocabulary, comprehension strategies and story elements are reading skills we have reviewed, too.

Second Grade

Where in the world is Stanley Lambchop? The second graders have been reading Flat Stanley by Jeff Brown. The students created their own Flat Stanley to attend school with them and go home with them each night. Students were required to keep a journal of the activities they did with Stanley. After spending a week with Stanley, the students mailed him to a friend or relative who was willing to include him in their lives for a few days. The host family will send Stanley back with details and pictures of his adventure. Last year we had Stanley go to eleven different states and one different country. We are waiting for Stanley to come back from his travels this year. It is fun to hear what the host families did with Stanley. We can't wait until he gets back!

In reading, our Lead 21 unit was called Growing Up. Our theme question was, "How do living things grow and change?" We read about plant and animal life cycles, recognized what all living things have in common, and considered what animals learn as they grow. It was a great review of the animal groups we studied in science at the beginning of second grade.

In math, second graders went on a measurement quest. They learned how to use a ruler and a yardstick. Students practiced estimating and measuring objects to the nearest inch. They solved word problems comparing different lengths of objects.

Students learned about healthy eating from Little D the Five-Food Group Dragon and his Royal Food Family friends. Fun, interactive stories had students enjoying lessons taught by Queen Anna

Banana, King Henry the Egg, and other family members. The second graders learned what nutrient, in each food group, provides for a healthy body. They also learned the importance of getting exercise every day.

Mrs. Schmidt, Mrs. Burrig, and Mrs. Schnell/Ms. Carter

News from the Portable Press

How can simple machines make your lives easier? Third graders discovered the six simple machines which are the basics to all machinery. Is pushing on a wall an example of the scientific definition of work? Our students would ask you if the wall moved, because with work you have to move the object by the force of a push or a pull. We are excited to explore how plants and animals grow and change. Students will learn about life cycles of plants and animals. This is a great time of the year for this unit since there are so many changes during this season.

Students will determine the important information about how ordinary and extraordinary citizens can influence their communities in our LEAD 21 Unit "Making a Difference". We will talk about how people long ago have impacted our lives today, how people can change their communities, how ordinary people make everyday differences, and how we can transform ideas into actions to make a difference.

We are wrapping up our fractions unit in math. Our next unit planned is time and measurement. Encourage your child to practice telling time for your daily activities. The fraction unit helped us jump start the measurement unit. We are looking forward to applying the newly gained knowledge towards our measurement unit.

We have been busy discussing and writing personal narratives which are part of third grade Iowa Core writing standards. In order to engage our students we have shared examples of award-winning personal narratives in the form of children's literature. Students have used the criterion based off the Iowa Core to write their own personal narrative.

The five regions of the United States have really been fun to teach. Students enjoyed sharing background knowledge of our nation's rich geography and natural landmarks. Students will be able to identify state abbreviations, bodies of water, and landforms for each of the five regions.

Save the date please for May 9th as we will be taking a trip to the rain forest at the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Nebraska. There will be more information to come!

Fourth Grade

Fourth Graders make awesome business owners. Congratulations! We would like to say, "Thank you" to all our parents, grandparents, and other classes who visited us and bought our merchandise. For the rest of the year, we will be having auctions so that our money is still valuable. Students are very proud of their accomplishments and their profit from their stores.

Math classes are working on fractions including mixed numbers and improper fractions. The classes battled equivalent fractions and are now trying to simplify fractions to their lowest terms. We will finish up by adding, subtracting and multiplying fractions

We completed a unit on the Underground Railroad. Students created a brochure using the mac lab. They inserted pictures of the famous leaders of the Underground Railroad to enhance their brochure. They really enjoyed this project! Now we are moving into a unit about the Civil War.

Weather was our focus in Science. We kept a weather journal for 5 days using information from weatherchannel.com. We created an illustration of the water cycle, angle of the sun in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, and illustrated different types of clouds. We also discussed the great weather that we are having in March.

5th Grade Newsletter

Coming Soon - New Blog Assignment!

Students have been very busy finishing our Kingdom of Green Reading unit by writing an informational paper on a plant of their choice. After teacher modeling, students completed their research using power notes and transferred this information into an informational paper. We hope to have these papers on our 5th Grade blogs soon for all to read. We hope to hear your comments!

6th Grade

Math

Wow! Has time flown since spring break! In math, I am excited to share that we are moving through the 6th grade curriculum quite well and I believe that having students show their work on paper has been a real benefit for them. I have been able to catch errors more efficiently and have seen great progress with the 6th grade as a whole. Our next unit of study is integers (-4, +4) and how to solve equations with integers in them. Please continue to check over your child's work and encourage them to study for tests and practice even when there isn't a test. I have seen great growth and want to continue that!

Reading and Language

Right after spring break we worked on the skill of generalizing a story and have figured out the difference between a generalization, a summary, and a judgement. These are sometimes confusing but overall the students have done a nice job. We have also seen a great increase in the student's Skills Iowa tests and want to continue this trend through the end of the school year.

In language, we have really been working on applying our writing skills (elaboration, revision, and editing) to increase the quality of our writing along with organizing our ideas in the narrative, persuasive, and informative forms. Students have used technology to evaluate their writing and they are surprised to find out how much they can change to improve their first draft. It is amazing to see the changes!

Science:

We have been utilizing two great websites, www.discoveryeducation.com and www.neok12.com to do some interactive activities and view short video clips about climate and the water cycle. Students have been comparing and contrasting The Sahara Desert and Antarctica. We'll soon move on to Earth's weather patterns and storm safety. Prepare yourselves for students to lead their families in developing or reviewing your family's severe weather safety plans. Students are busy putting the finishing touches on their science fair projects. The fair will be held Friday, April 13, from 1:00-3:00 in the competition gym. Please come and support the students.

Social Studies:

We have finished learning about the early Arab civilizations. In this study, we also studied the Muslim faith--how it was started, how it compares to the Christian faith, and what are its basic beliefs. These chapters should help them make a connection with this area if they hear about it in the news,

Computers by Ms. Waugh

Kindergarten continues to stay busy in the computer lab! They have been using a couple new sites, <http://www.cookie.com/kids/games/viewallgames.html> and <http://pbskids.org/lions/>. I have also been working on putting together a small project for them to work on in Microsoft Word. I am excited to see their creativity put to use.

The 1st Grader's Wordle projects turned out great! They really enjoyed creating a colorful poster about themselves. Our next project will be starting soon. Each student will use Paint to create an image of their forest animal. After they create their image, they will type one fact about their animal. We will then use iMovie to put all of the images together with a recording of each student reading their fact.

2nd Grade finished their moon movies! They had a lot of fun putting the movies together. On April 10th, we will be taking their movies to Iowa State University to compete in ITEC's Technology Fair. It will be fun to compete and see all of the other technology projects that students have created.

The 3rd Graders continue to work on their keyboarding skills with a variety of keyboarding games. We also practice multiplication facts with a class favorite, Sketch's World. Sketch's World can be found at <http://www.multiplication.com/flashgames/sketchPlatform/sketcher.htm>.

4th Grade will soon be starting an iMovie project. They are currently working on their state reports and finding images to use in their iMovies. Once all of the images are collected, the students will begin putting their projects together.

5th Grade and 6th Grade students have started or will soon be starting an infomercial project. The students will be working in groups to create an infomercial of their own, using "products" I found around my room (an old keyboard, an old mouse, floppy disks, mouse pads, and old headphones). Each group will have to figure out a fun way to market their product so that people will no longer think of these items as "junk". This project requires a lot of imagination and creativity. I am really excited to see what they come up with!

** I am not able to post all projects, but if you would like to see a few student projects check out <http://misswaughstechnologywebsite.weebly.com/student-work.htm>

Physical Education

This past month our 2nd-6th graders participated in Jump Rope for Heart. Students raised money for the American Heart Association while learning about their hearts and how to keep their heart healthy. They also learned a variety of jump roping skills they can use to exercise and strengthen their heart and other muscles. They learned and practiced individual, partner, and long rope skills. Individual skills include the basic forward and backward jump, side swings, front cross, skier, bell, etc. The 2 in 1 and side by side skills are skills that can be done with a partner. Students learned a variety of long rope games and activities that can be done with a group of 3 or more. One of the days, students in grades 4-6 attempted to set their own and school records in a variety of categories. It was great to see the students set a goal and achieve it with hard work.

K-1st graders also learned basic jump roping skills and played whole class long rope games. They have also been getting acquainted with some of the equipment used in Physical Education, such as noodles and the tug of war rope. They have been a very busy bunch and it is great to see them exercise and have tons of fun while doing it!

4th-6th graders will be doing their Spring Fitness Testing so I hope to see individual improvement in all of the tests. Students will be tested in the areas of flexibility (sit and reach), muscular strength and endurance (sit-ups, pushups), cardiovascular endurance (PACER test) and speed and agility (shuttle run test). Encourage your students to practice and develop themselves in these areas so they can improve on their test scores from the Fall.

Mr. Johnson

Guidance News

Kindergarten just finished up their career unit. We learned about all kinds of careers and what tools those careers would use. We are now starting our bullying unit. We learned that bullying is a behavior that is repeatedly done on purpose to any student or adult to hurt feelings or hurt physically. Then we defined the words: behavior, repeatedly, purpose, feelings, and physically. We will now begin working on what bullying looks like and sounds like using books provided to the elementary guidance department by our wonderful parent organization PIE.

First Grade is deep into their bullying unit. We defined bullying and worked on what to do if you are being bullied. Next we will cover what to do if you see someone being bullied and who you should tell if you are being bullied or see someone else being bullied. Thank you again to PIE for providing our wonderful books to help enhance our curriculum.

Second Grade is finishing up their making good decisions unit. We are building a problem solving lagoon where Freddie the Frog is teaching his friends what to do when they have a problem. Freddie gets lots of helpful advice from Kermit and Jeremiah to help improve his problem solving lagoon. Look for the Problem Solving Lagoon soon and ask you second grader to teach you to play.

Third Grade is deep into our problem solving unit. We worked on tone and body language, stress, anger, and ways to get our anger and stress out in healthy ways. Ask you third grader to show you relaxation techniques, maybe they will come in handy for you as well. We will finish up the unit by talking about anger in the people around us and how to handle those situations in a helpful way.

Fourth Grade just finished up our tolerance unit. We learned all about Rosa Parks and her bus movement. The students were very excited about this topic and they challenged me with my knowledge of the topic. Sadly I had to end our unit with many unanswered questions,

what a great opportunity to visit the library this summer and learn more with your student. We will now begin our bullying unit which will focus on what you can do to be active in helping yourself and others to stop bullying. PIE has graciously purchased many materials to help me teach this lesson to your fourth graders.

Fifth Grade has finished up their alcohol packet and we have moved on to drugs. This packet always brings a lot of questions, most of which I have to research. Please take time to talk to your student about drugs and making choices. After the completion of the drug packet we will be learning about crimes and kids.

Sixth Graders are learning about how they think. They are logical, musical, spatial, linguistic, or kinesthetic. We then brain stormed study habits that would help them learn material and also be able to recall it when they take the test. Now we are talking about the 6 career paths and we will soon discover which path they may take. After the career unit we will begin to discuss their up coming move to Junior High.

Important Dates coming up:

Friday, April 6 – no school – Teacher comp day

Monday, April 9 – no school for students – Teacher Professional Development

Thursday & Friday, April 26 & 27 – no school for Pk, Kindergarten & the 3 year old preschoolers due to Kindergarten screening for the incoming 2012 students.



Music News

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 2ND
SCICDA 5TH & 6TH HONOR CHOIR

APRIL 19TH
KINDERGARTEN & FIRST GRADE CONCERT

Stay tuned for more information!

MAY 15TH
5-8 CONCERT

5th & 6th Grade Band join forces with the MS Band & Choir for the final performance of the year!

Kindergarten students are continuing work on their concert "Welcome to Our Neighborhood" a musical created by and featuring Mister Rogers!

First Grade students have recently begun preparations for a miniature version of the Broadway musical, "A Year With Frog and Toad Junior".

2nd Graders have finished a unit where they learned about time signatures and the strong and weak beats within them. A favorite activity in this lesson was the African egg passing game in which students sang in Swahili while trying to pass a pile of eggs around our circle!

3rd Graders have recently begun a unit called "Music on the Go!". In this unit students will learn a number of songs that have to

do with going places. Students will continue to learn about phrases. We are also going to see how simple songs can be made more elaborate.

4th Graders enjoyed their field trip to the Des Moines Youth Symphony Orchestra in early March. Students had many complimentary things to say and showed excellent concert etiquette.

In 5th Grade students are continuing their studies of composers with Iowa connections. We are currently studying Iowa born and raised composer Meredith Willson and his most famous work "The Music Man". After studying the basic concepts of musicals and learning the songs of the musical students will watch the video.

ART

Ballerina Figure
by Dani Genesar



ELEMENTARY ART

Kindergarten—is learning all about the color wheel and how primary colors mix to make secondary colors. They are having fun mixing the paint in their hands and making hand prints!

1st Grade—is just getting on the final touches on their Castle Collage with glitter and sequins.

2nd Grade—has been making Stained Glass Flowers out of construction

3rd Grade—had a blast making their Fantasy Fish out of clay. They are waiting for them to be fired in the kiln so that they can be glazed (painted).

4th Grade—is working on their zebra drawing skills. This unique collage requires students to draw and paint on newspaper.

5th Grade—is reviewing color theory in preparation for a new painting project.

6th Grade—has really enjoyed working with the plaster cloth and wire. They are putting the final painting touches.

Artist of the Month

Nic Swalla-2nd Grade

Dani Genesar-6th Grade