



NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF November 23, 2009

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News and Notes

Food, Books, and Toys for Families in Need

Food drive

A few weeks ago, a major from the Athol Salvation Army visited All School Sing and spoke to the whole school about hungry families in the Athol-Orange area. The students want to help out. Baskets will be set up in each classroom for food donations of canned goods and food (that won't spoil) from home. The Salvation Army will give the food to needy families for the December holidays. The drive ends December 16.

Book Drive for Native American Children

New books, suitable for grades K-12 are welcome. There is a collection box in each classroom. Books can be dropped off until Nov. 30.

Toy Drive - leave items such as unwrapped new or gently used toys, books, puzzles, and games in the hallway box before Thanksgiving.

About the Chicken Coop School

The Chicken Coop School is a full-time 7th & 8th grade for 14 children, located at Maggie's Farm in No. Orange. It is set up as a home school cooperative, and guided by the intention to create a just and kind society, function in a democracy, and live in a world that resonates with joy. Potential families are invited to meet with the teacher, Theresa, about the next school year. Village School families are given preference, but spaces are limited. If you would like to know more about the Chicken Coop, please contact Theresa at 978-248-9426 or at theresa@farmschool.org by January 8.

K-6th Parents: Please Send in Pie Plates

Please send in a glass pie plate with your child's name on the bottom, for your child's individual winter garden by next Monday.

Thanksgiving Thoughts

from the Thanksgiving Address, Six Nations Indian Museum Tracking Project

It is fitting this week to look at the Thanksgiving Address used by the Six Nations or Haudenosaunee (also known as the *Iroquois*). It is "based on the belief that the world cannot be taken for granted, that the communication of thankfulness and acknowledgment of all living beings must be given to align the minds and hearts of the people with Nature" (*John Stokes*). In its various forms, it is over 1000 years old. The address begins by giving thanks for the different elements of the earth, and slowly moves from the earth to the stars, to the sun and beyond. Here is a segment of it:

The Earth Mother *We are all thankful to our Mother, the Earth, for she gives us all that we need for life. She supports our feet as we walk upon her. It gives us joy that she continues to care for us as she has from the beginning of time. To our Mother, we send greetings and thanks. Now our minds are one.*

The People *Today we have gathered and we see that the cycles of life continue. We have been given the duty to live in balance and harmony with each other and all living things. So now, we bring our minds together as one as we give greetings and thanks to each other as People. Now our minds are one.*


From all of the staff at the school: we wish everyone a heart-warming Thanksgiving. May our minds be one.

Preschool

We had a wonderful trip to the Shea Theater last Tuesday. First we had the fun bumpy bus ride. Then we watched the marionette performance of *The Dragon King*. We were enthralled by this great story with Chinese style music, beautiful sets and truly lifelike marionettes. When the characters were under water, it really felt like they were swimming. Thank you to the parents who came along. We hope to go back next year for another performance. During this two-day week we will take the cran-

berry sauce that the class made on Friday and pack it in birch bark baskets ready to go home on Tuesday. We will be talking about thankfulness and writing down what each preschooler is thankful for. In Spanish class the preschoolers are learning animal and fruit names: el gato (cat), el perro (dog), el pato (duck), el cerdo (pig), el caballo (horse), la manzana (apple), la pera (pear), la naranja (orange), la fresa (strawberry), and la ciruela (plum).

November - December 2009

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
23 T shirt orders due BOOK FAIR begins in upstairs and downstairs hallways	24 8:45 Book Buddies 2nd-3rd field trip Holiday Coffee gift orders due Music	25 NO SCHOOL	26 	27 NO SCHOOL
30 8:45 All School Sing BOOK FAIR All Week (Book drive ends at 5 pm)	1 8:45 Book Buddies Winter Gardens begin Music	2 Parent Group Meeting 11:45 2nd-6th sing for elders at Town Hall Pick up at Town Hall	3 8:30 a.m. 4th-6th Publishing Party All Parents Welcome	4 Yoga Soccer Regular Coffee orders due BOOK FAIR ends

Kindergarten—1st Grade

With Martin away this week, Rise sat down with the children on Friday afternoon, and asked them what they wanted to report in the newsletter this week. Here it is, in their words:

“We had a good All School Sing- it was good because everyone sang nice and loud. We made Thanksgiving surprises (we can’t tell parents yet). Using our fingertips dipped in fingerpaint, we painted Indian corn in art. We listened to the *Roxaboxen* story, and made Roxaboxen buildings out of boxes and blocks, each of us made our own building. One was a grocery store, one was a candy store, and one was a post office. In science, we made marble shoots, and we got to take them home, and keep the marbles! Our new letters this week are ‘U’ and ‘V.’ We went to Sweetwater Farm, saw the cows, a bull and the

sheep, watched them trim a sheep’s hooves, and watched them tag a lamb’s ear. We all carried wood, brought it in and stacked it. We went on a big yellow school bus to the marionette show, *The Dragon King*, about a grandmother who goes to find the Dragon King at the bottom of the sea, to get him to bring the rains back to earth. The jellyfish were cool. It was also cool when the dragon came into the audience and squirted water at us! The kindergarteners were thrilled to have their first recorder class on Tuesday. The 1st graders worked on the November calendar in math. They also learned about reptiles, snakes and turtles. The kindergarten wrote down everyone’s names in math, and circled the longest names.” There you have it, direct from the children.

2nd - 3rd Grade

Last Wednesday we enjoyed a beautiful sunny day at Sweetwater Farm. We joined the K-1 and we helped with feeding the cows, moving wood, watering the winter rye in the hoop house, shoveling compost and scrubbing carrots. We finished the day with a nice walk up the road. Everyone had a wonderful time.

On Thursday, we saw a delightful marionette show, *The Dragon King*. It was a great story about a grandmother who goes on an adventure to find the dragon king and have the rains return to her village and break the drought. The puppets were beautiful and we even got to see how the puppeteers control the marionettes.

We joined the 4th-6th for Art. Renee set up a beautiful display of pumpkins, flowers, gourds and apples in the center of the room and the children worked on creating a still-life using chalk, pencil and charcoal. The children worked on shading techniques and on making their drawings look round.

We learned about and drew local reptiles. The children enthusiastically asked many questions about reptiles and had stories to share. Come check out the display in our classroom.

During reading, we finished looking at setting by focusing on mood. When we get back from the Thanksgiving break we will work in a literature circle. We’ll all read the same book and discuss it together. We’ll also carefully look at the structure of the story and think about elements such as rising action and theme.

Our memoir writing is coming along. We have been looking closely at memoirs to see how authors have written the stories. The children will experiment with some of the different craft moves the writers use in their memoirs. For example, after seeing how two stories used flashback, Nora decided that would work to tie two similar events together in her memoir.

Tomorrow, Bill Sullivan will visit us. He is a local expert on Native American sites. He will come into the classroom and talk to us about sites in the area; then we will go visit a special local place.

Please don’t forget, if you’d like to donate a new children’s book to the Assiniboin tribe, please bring one in by Monday, November 30.

Needed

- 1/2 gallon cardboard milk or juice cartons for science, please leave in the office.
- Baby food jars and lids for class projects. Please leave them in the Preschool.

4th - 6th Grade

The memoir-writing project is nearly complete and the children will finish their final drafts before the holiday. They have worked in class with wonderful concentration and everyone has produced an interested and extensive piece. Many of the children had adopted the idea of focusing on a particular incident within a larger story, and sketching in the background in a concise introduction. We plan to have a memoir publishing party at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday December 3rd, the first Thursday after the holiday. Everyone is very welcome.

This week we continue to read about the twelve labors of Heracles and next week each child will illustrate one of the labors for a class display. Since Heracles took time off to join Jason and the Argonauts, his story gives a natural segue into the story of the Golden Fleece.

The last art project before Thanksgiving was a still-life on an autumnal theme. Renée piled pumpkins, melons, corn-husks and flowers on a table in the middle of the classroom and the children sat in a circle around the display and drew it with charcoal and pastels. The result was another collection of beautiful artwork, which will be on display after Thanksgiving.

In science last week the children did an experiment to demonstrate the greenhouse effect and, by extension, the way global warming is affected by atmospheric changes. Working in pairs, they shone lights on two pots of soil, one with a transparent plastic cover and the other uncovered. They measured the temperature above each soil sample at five-minute intervals. Although the results weren’t dramatic within the time-span of a single lesson, it was clear that the temperature rose further and faster under the plastic.

In math, 5th graders made models of pairs of prisms and pyramids. The students measured each member of the pair. After testing several pairs, the class decided that if the height and base of the pair are the same, the volume of the prism is three times that of the pyramid.

The 6th-grade math group has been investigating the angles of regular and irregular polygons. They measured the angles of a number of polygons and worked out a formula for an n-sided polygon: $[(n-2) \times 180] \div n$. They used this to work out the internal angle of a number of improbable polygons, including one with 360 sides.

If your child has not yet brought in a pie plate for his or her winter garden, please make sure the pie plate is here for our return to school on November 30th when the gardens begin.

