



Celebrating our 20th year!

NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF
March 15, 2010

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News and Notes

Come to Science Night Wednesday March 24 7 p.m.

Students are finishing their experiments and working on their final reports. Most of the work, including the experiments themselves, have been done in class. On Science Night each student proudly displays a 2-3 page report, one poster and the experiment set-up, and is ready to present the experiment and the results. It starts promptly, and is over by 7:45 p.m. Pre-school parents can view projects earlier in the day, on Wednesday morning. You don't want to miss it!

Monday April 5 Special Visitors Day

Children are bringing home invitations for grandparents, or a special visitor, to come to school with them. Their visitor will go to All School Sing with them, visit their classroom and meet their teacher. Afterwards, visitors can meet with Rise, who will tell them all about the school.

Auction Update

To inspire thinking about your auction donation, attached is the list of items from last year's auction.

No School This Wednesday for Staff In-Service Day

How to Dress for Recess

With the start of mud season, it's time to switch from snow pants to rain pants. That way your child isn't too warm, but stays dry. Mud boots are essential and children still need slippers for the classroom. Please check that your child has a spare change of clothes at school, in case he or she gets wet. Everyone goes outside for recess, unless it is pouring rain.

Village School Art Show April 11 Save the Date

The Village School Artist Reception opens on Sunday afternoon April 11, at the Gardner Ale House, from 3 to 5 pm. Each student will have art displayed. Attached are three post-card invitations to give or send to friends and family.

Calling All Potential Morris Men

The Millers River Morris Men are looking for young men (ages 13-80) to learn the Morris dancing tradition. It isn't May Day without the Morris Men leaping and pounding the earth, with jingling bells and handkerchiefs fluttering in the air. We will practice the dances at Camp Caravan. If you can walk, you can Morris dance! For more information, ask Rise.

Preschool

Today we walked to the library and looked for signs of spring. This week's story, *Jamie O'Rourke and the Big Potato*, comes from Ireland. In this story, Jamie O'Rourke catches a leprechaun, but instead of getting a pot of gold, Jamie gets the eye of a potato, which the leprechaun promises will grow into a huge potato. We will plant a pot of potatoes this week, to transplant into the garden later in spring. This week the class

gets to play with mud in the media table! We will celebrate St. Patrick's Day on Tuesday by wearing green, by mixing blue and yellow paint and by making potato prints. We will end the week by eating potatoes for snack on Friday.

Attached is a permission slip for our trip to Rise's farm on Tuesday, March 23rd. Reminder: there is no school this Wednesday for Staff In Service Math Day.

| March 2010 | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|--|
| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| <p>15</p> <p>8:45 All School Sing</p> | <p>16</p> <p>8:45 Book Buddies</p> <p>Music Classes</p> | <p>17 St. Patrick's Day</p> <p>NO SCHOOL</p> <p>STAFF INSERVICE</p> <p>DAY</p> | <p>18 Art classes</p> | <p>19 Yoga</p> <p>K-6 Swimming</p> <p>Pickup at YMCA</p> <p>at 3:10</p> |
| <p>22</p> <p>8:45 All School Sing</p> | <p>23 Preschool to Richardson Farm</p> <p>9 am drop off 11:15 pick up</p> <p>Music Classes</p> | <p>24 K-1 to Richardson Farm</p> <p>9 am drop off 11:30 pick up</p> <p>7 pm Science Night</p> | <p>25 Art classes</p> | <p>26 Yoga</p> <p>K-6 Swimming</p> |

Kindergarten—1st Grade

We continue our *Sea Creatures* theme this week with the picture book *Selkie* by Gillian McClure. As with last week's popular tale, *The Seal Wife*, this is a story about selkies, mythical sea creatures who change between being human and seals. In this story, a boy tries to rescue a selkie from a greedy fisherman. We'll be reading, journaling and acting out the story.

Last week's tale was very popular with the class who drew some great journal entries showing their favorite parts of the book. We also used the sea children in the story as inspiration for writing and illustrating songs to the tune of *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush*. Camdyn's song included 'Here we go riding on Orca's back, Orca's back, Orca's back, Here we go riding on Orca's back, Under the ocean.'

In music we're continuing to learn sea songs including *Seaweed Jam* and *Dolphin Drummers*. In All School Sing and at morning meeting we are singing seasonal songs about maple syrup making. The children's favorites are *Bubble, Bubble, Bubble, Bubble, Goes the Pan* and *Three Little Pancakes*.

Last week we had a great nature hike at Camp Caravan. It was a warm sunny day and the children were glad to be out exploring.

2nd - 3rd Grade

Last week, the children shed their coats and enjoyed the delightful sunshine. We saw the return of good weather games such as jump rope, four-square, basketball and playing in sand. On Wednesday we joined the K-1 for a hike at Camp Caravan. We looked for signs of spring, observed birds flying over a field, broke the thin ice on vernal pools and heard the stories *The Tiniest Mermaid* and *I am a Manatee*. It was a beautiful day to be outside, enjoying nature.

In writing the children started writing down notes on note cards. They are using color-coded cards to write down the information they learn about their animal, in order to keep their information organized. The children chose some categories that they thought they'd be able to find information on for any animal; of course, they may find information that is unique about their animal and choose to include that information too.

The K-1 joined us for part of our music class last week. We danced a Native American circle dance and sang some songs that both classes have been working on. For one song, the 2nd and 3rd graders played the big drum while the 1st graders played maracas. We look forward to having them join us again.

The children had fun creating printing block templates out of styro-foam that were used to make prints for the art show invitations. They made a variety of pictures and quickly learned the right technique for making a good print. The prints are beautiful and unique.

In theme, we will make collage representations of the March full moon, The Sap Moon. According to an Algonquian legend, it was said that the Native Americans learned to gather sap from trees by watching squirrels bite into maple bark and then drink the sap.

In science, the children experimented with different powders such as cocoa and salt to see if they would dissolve or suspend in water. The children first made predictions about each powder and then put them to the test. The cocoa was a big hit because of the way it stayed suspended in the water - they were surprised by how it clumped up and made the water completely brown.

On Thursday, April 1, we will go on a field trip to the Pequot museum. Please see the attached permission slip for more details.

Walking along one of the old stone walls, we saw a chipmunk running and hiding in the rocks alongside us. Later we saw a squirrel's nest, a bird's nest, and we watched birds looking for food in the meadow. This week in science we will investigate and draw sea shells.

In art last week we made 3D fish to hang from the ceiling. The room is now starting to look like an aquarium - be sure to take a look.

In math this week, the kindergarten group is exploring combinations that make up a number (e.g., 6 is 3 and 3 and also 5 and 1). 1st graders are continuing work on number combinations and addition and subtraction story problems.

Our visit to Rise's farm is next week, on Wednesday March 24. We meet at the farm at 9:00 am, and pick up is at the farm at 11:30. Please sign and return the attached permission slip.

Reminder: With most of the snow gone, what's left is mud and puddles. Make sure your child has mud boots and rain pants to wear at recess. And slippers for the classroom too!

4th - 6th Grade

Thanks to a grant from the Royalston Cultural Council, the class spent last Monday afternoon taking part in a Greek theater workshop at the Town Hall, run by the legendary Norah Dooley. We were joined by the 2nd-3rd grade class and by the students from the Chicken Coop School. Norah began with a brief history of Greek theater, including how Thespis stepped out of the chorus to act individual roles - a development that is still celebrated in the word 'thespian'. She then gave a brilliant retelling of Sophocles' play, *Antigone*, in which the eponymous heroine buries the body of her brother Polynices, in defiance of a decree by her uncle King Creon. As a result she is condemned to be immured in a cave, with predictably tragic results.

Each member of Norah's audience was assigned the role of a different Greek god, and they were asked to decide - in that role - whether Creon was guilty of murder or some other crime, or wholly innocent. This provoked lively discussion, though in the end our jury of 'gods' did condemn him. The workshop brought alive the whole idea of Greek theater and it will be a major inspiration when we come to work on our own Greek play next month.

In class several of the children have now completed their reports on various aspects of Greek social life and history. In our study of Alexander the Great, we have reached the point at which Alexander finally defeated the Persian emperor Darius III in the battle of Gaugamela. Several of the children were intrigued to discover that the battle took place in what is now Iraq. They were also interested to learn that Darius had his men sweep the battlefield clean of vegetation and obstacles before hostilities began.

This week the class will compose music for the play, with Isaac Richardson, who is studying composition and film scoring at Berkeley College of Music in Boston.

We will visit the MFA in Boston on Thursday April 1st, to see the Greek exhibit and to revisit old favorites at the museum.

5th graders write more interesting story problems than authors of math books! Here are two: From Lila: "17 kids each wanted to divide 301 doughnuts between themselves. If there is a remainder, they will give it to their puppy. How many doughnuts will they each get?" From Ruby: "One day an old man earned enough money to buy some elephants. He bought 301. Each fencing space he bought held 17 elephants. How many fencing spaces did he buy? Will he have to send some to Africa?"