



KANELAND MIDDLE SCHOOL



Parent Newsletter

December

2009

Looking for a New Years' Resolution?

Try Thanksgiving!

Thanksgiving Day in an editorial for the Chicago Tribune, Robert Pagliarini, advocated that people who want to be happier and better able to handle life's stresses should start keeping a *gratitude journal*. Citing research by Dr. Robert Emmons, a professor at the University of California-Davis, Pagliarini says that one of the best ways to increase your happiness and sense of well-being is to express gratitude regularly, not just once a year. The research showed that young people who maintained daily gratitude exercises had higher levels of optimism, alertness, energy, enthusiasm, and determination when compared to peers who did not. Additionally, those who kept a gratitude journal for the two months of this study exercised more regularly, reported fewer physical symptoms, felt better about their lives as a whole, made measurable progress towards important personal goals (academic, interpersonal, and health-based), and were more likely to have helped others suffering from a personal problem.

This list of powerful benefits for keeping a gratitude journal inspired me to begin one myself. I followed Pagliarini's suggestions and got a simple lined spiral notebook and I spend 10 minutes a day writing down anything and everything that I'm grateful for. I have many repeat entries, but I strive to find one new thing each day. I journal in the morning before work because that is the only alone time I have. However, it would be a great exercise to do at the end of the day as well. As I reviewed the past two weeks of entries prior to writing this commentary, I would like to share several entries with you:

Thanksgiving Day – Although all of our family lives either out of state or out of country, we were able to invite a family over who couldn't travel because of a medical issue. We had a terrific day getting to know

another family and learn some of their Philadelphia family traditions and customs.

December 6th – I was grateful for the huge parent turn-out for the HMS holiday concerts. As the crowd continued to swell, I was grateful for the fathers who stepped up and helped move an additional 200 chairs. How terrific to work in a community that is full of people eager to help one another out for the benefit of the students!

December 8th – I was humbled by the generosity of our students, staff, and community collecting clothing, toys, and money to help those in our community who need a helping hand this holiday season. In a few days time, more than \$1,000 and clothing and toys were donated. Looking beyond ourselves at the needs of others is a sign of real character!

One sure-fire path to unhappiness, bitterness, and frustration is to take for granted what we have and what we've accomplished. Even in the midst of our present economic crisis, all of us have things in our lives for which we can feel grateful. For many people middle school memories involved first love, pimples, P.E. and school lunches. For me middle school memories revolve around student academic successes and growth, athletic contest and concerts, the occasional tear and lots of laughter. I hope that you will consider keeping your own gratitude journal. I'd like to thank the Kaneland community for regularly appearing in the pages of my gratitude journal!

Happy Holidays from Rick Burchell and the KHMS Staff !

~ 6th Grade ~

6 Blue Team News:

Science - We have been having a *mummy* of a good time! Students have been recording data on their “mummies” and observing the changes that have taken place. When we return from break we will work on decorating the sarcophagus and adorning the wrappings to send the “mummies” into the afterlife.

In order to “spark” some interest in alternative energy, students are researching some of the different types. Included in the research are solar, hydroelectric, biomass and my personal favorite hydrogen fuel cells. Groups were able to choose their favorite and will design a brochure to persuade people that theirs is the best! Brochures will be displayed outside Mrs. Trembley’s room, come on in and take a look!

6 Blue Language Arts: The students have finished reading **The Egypt Game** by Zilpha Keatley Snyder and they created very colorful poster projects to end the novel. They enjoyed reading a mystery and connecting Egypt in all their classes. They have also been working on adjectives, descriptive writing, and continuing their work on dialogue. It has been a busy November! Grammar work on adjectives, nouns, and verbs will continue through December, as well as lots of work on commas. Miss Countryman’s Reading Workshop is going well and the students are really enjoying their selected novels. Mrs. Ritchie’s students will be working on speech delivery, note taking, and giving speeches in December on biography subjects.

The Challenge Language Arts students have been reading **An Audience for Einstein** by Mark Wakely. The students have been delving deeply into the topic of memory transfer and the ethical implications of scientific experiments. The Word Masters competition is scheduled for December 8, so lots of analogy work has been done using the first set of 25 vocabulary words. Grammar instruction has included pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs. Students will also be discussing conjunction, as well as dependent and independent clauses.

Countryman Math—Surveys, surveys, and more surveys! We started second quarter finishing up our graphing unit. The students made surveys, collected data, created bar and line graphs from the data, and finally analyzed the colorful graphs that were made! The students worked hard and the end products were great. We have now moved on to decimals. The next two chapters we will add, subtract, multiply and divide decimals. We continue to work on math facts, they are improving each week! Keep up the good work!

Math-Ritchie—The students have conquered decimals! This was a challenging chapter for many due to switching to traditional division from partial products. The group has moved onto chapter 5 and will start geometry before holiday break.

Trembley Math— We just finished up dividing with decimals. Decimals were everywhere! On the outside, on the inside, and both! Students had a lot of practice and were also able to earn “money” for their personal checkbook. The checkbook unit is a way to show how decimals are used every day. It also gives the students an incentive to keep up with daily work and effort on tests and quizzes. Currently we are working on surveys. All work will be completed in class. After break we will focus on fractions and reviewing problems for the ISAT tests in March. Time flies!

Social Studies—The Wicknesian Empire just completed their study on Ancient Egypt and will have a brief tour of Ancient China before moving onto Classical Greece and the Age of Mythology. The diorama projects turned out to be a hit! The students thoroughly enjoyed visiting the team room and seeing all of the hard work on display! Excellent job! During their study of Greece the 6 Blue students will delve into the Classical Greek culture by actively working on a webquest focusing on 7 different aspects of the ancient culture, varying from the Olympics to temple design. To see more about the webquest go to the following link:

<http://www.rdsc.vic.edu.au/ag/ag2.htm>

Have a safe and happy holiday season, and we will continue to expand those dendrites upon return in January!

6 White Team News:

Science—Second quarter has been very busy in science! The students started off the quarter exploring how to measure motion. We actively investigated how to measure speed and acceleration by measuring our own movements outside in the parking lot. Newton's Laws of Motion came next, the kids had the opportunity to show me what they had learned through a new website, www.toondoo.com. The students used their creativity to create a comic strip explaining one of Newton's laws. Currently, students are learning about the six simple machines, and how they make our lives easier. We are focusing on using correct terminology such as mechanical advantage and mechanical efficiency. Students are exploring each of the simple machines through daily labs. The labs are designed for students to practice the skills of collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data collected in a real life experiment. We will be having this chapter's test on December 14th.

The mummification is about complete. It is day 34 and counting in our mummification activity. Students have done an excellent job of documenting accurately their observations of their mummifying steak. We will conclude the activity by writing a historically accurate obituary of their fictional character, creating and decorating a sarcophagus, and learning about the final burial process that the ancient Egyptians practiced. Thank you for supporting your son/daughter by supplying the salt and baking soda for this project.

Math - Over the last several weeks, 6W math students completed their study of operations with decimals. They also investigated what the pi represents and applied their discovery in finding the circumference of a circle. Next students enjoyed a unit on statistics and graphs. To culminate this unit, they completed a survey of Mrs. Marcellis's math classes and created and presented graphs that answered questions such as how organized their lockers are, how many states they've visited, how many have done charity work, what color they'd want their zebra to be, and favorite animals, sports, shoes, pies, monsters, and type of chocolate. In conjunction with their unit in social studies, students will be learning how Egyptians used math in comparison to the Mesopotamians and will try their hand at using the Egyptian number system. During the coming weeks students will see plenty of fraction action as we brush up on fraction basics and

learn to complete all operations with fractions. Students are highly encouraged to continue working on improving their multiplication fact fluency by regularly practicing with flash cards or online at www.aplusmath.com.

6th Grade Accelerated Math—Over the last several weeks, the 6th grade accelerated math students completed an algebra unit. During the course of the unit, students learned to formally solve one- and two-step equations and inequalities. They also studied linear equations and tackled slope of a line. After learning to graph equations by hand, students investigated how both linear and non-linear equations are created using a graphing calculator. Next students enjoyed a unit on statistics. To culminate this unit, they completed a survey of Mrs. Marcellis's math classes and created graphs using Excel that answered questions such as what grade they'd give our new school, who they think is Secretary of State, who they would take to the Willy Wonka factory, what role they would like to have in a band, what career they'd like, and favorite book series, Disney Star, type of racing, and hot lunch. Next we will turn to operations with fractions and exploring the relationships among fractions, decimals, and percents (loving called the "mathematical Bermuda triangle").

Language Arts/Communication Skills—The 6 White students are wrapping up work on comprehension, the novel Hatchet, speeches, prepositions, and continuing the writing process. In communication skills, our students did a fantastic job with researching, writing, and giving a speech about a famous artist. We will finish out the week before break with a big preposition test, and the students have been memorizing the list in small chunks. They are becoming more descriptive writers as they are aware of the purpose of prepositions. We will be diving into work with dialogue after break!

In language arts, students just finished reading the novel Hatchet. They are currently reading short stories, summarizing, and showing that they comprehend what they read. We will be starting another novel after break. We will also be encouraging students to read outside of class!

Social Studies—Since the middle of November, the White Team has been studying Ancient Egypt and Nubia. We have learned about the geography of the Nile, rulers of Egypt, religion, and cultures of both Egypt and Nubia. Students created Egyptian Masks which are now on display in the classroom. We will finish this study with group dioramas done in class next week. After Winter Break, we will begin looking at Ancient Greece.

6 Red Team News:

Mrs. Landis' Challenge LA students are busy preparing for the first "Word Masters" competition. It involves the use of 25 words that they have used in vocabulary lessons for a couple months and will be given difficult analogies to complete using these words. They are also divided into 3 novel groups in which they will be independently reading over the next month in preparation for a group web page project after winter break. Before break, they will be working on a computer career project that they will be presenting to the class as their second formal speaking assignment this year.

Landis Math—After a successful unit on decimals, the 3 classes are moving into the wonderful world of fractions! Using manipulatives and various games, the students are getting the hands-on understanding necessary before learning how to add, subtract, multiply and divide them.

Bower Social Studies—Ancient Egypt has been a fun unit in Mr. Bower's social studies class. The kids enjoyed learning details about mummification through an interactive website. The ancient Egyptians have taught us a lot of interesting things in the areas of medicine and astronomy. The kids also had the opportunity to create their own mask and write their names in hieroglyphs.

Next, we will make dioramas of life during that time period. More information will be forthcoming.

Language Arts and Communication Skills

Students have been very busy reading and writing this term. Students have been working on essays plus narrative and descriptive writing activities during Writing Workshop. For some students, the idea that

they can write about a personal topic in a genre other than a personal narrative was a new realization. In addition, students have been digging deeper into grammar skills with nouns, verbs, and descriptive language. An Action Verb "in house" field trip was enjoyed by all! Meanwhile, other classes wrote and presented to their peers about a pest that is roaming the halls of Kaneland Harter Middle School. Spelling and vocabulary studies have also been included in weekly lessons.

In language arts classes, students are currently learning about the different genres of literature while reading a variety of short stories. Also, students recently completed whole class novel studies for the novels *Swindle* and *Eleven*. As a follow up to the novel studies, class projects such as character ties and story maps were created. Students are continuing to apply reading strategies and comprehension skills in their study of the literary elements and during Reading Workshop. Ask your child how many books he/she has read so far this year!! Don't forget, the holiday break is a great opportunity for students to pick up and read a new book!

Science—Second quarter has been very busy in science! The students started off the quarter exploring how to measure motion. Newton's Laws of Motion came next. They were able to show what they've learned about the laws of motion by making a card about Sir Isaac Newton. Creativity positively flowed from the students!

Social Studies—the students have been learning about Egypt, which was a perfect opportunity to see how science and social studies are historically linked! The mummification project has been an ongoing lab that we monitor on a weekly basis. Students have done an excellent job of documenting accurately their observations of their mummifying steak. It is a constant

Then we "worked" on the six simple machines, and how they make our lives easier. We focused on using correct terminology such as mechanical advantage and mechanical efficiency. Students are explored each of the simple machines through a variety of labs. The labs were designed for students to practice the skills of collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data collected in a real life experiment.

At the moment, we are using our research skills to find information about renewable resources. Each group is fine tuning and compiling their individual notes in order to create a presentation to share with the rest of the class.

It has been an exciting start that will continue throughout the rest of the quarter. Have a wonderful winter break and enjoy your holiday.

~ 7 White ~

Literature – Mr. Bellino & Mrs. Richards

The students finished reading S.E. Hinton’s classic novel, The Outsiders, and enjoyed watching the movie after the reading. Over the past several weeks the students have read several short stories and are currently reading Brian’s Song, a buddy story about two Chicago Bears rookies, Gale Sayers and Brian Piccolo. Throughout all readings literary elements are emphasized in a variety of ways.

Science – Mrs. Richards

The 7th grade students have been very busy studying the Geologic Time Scale, noting the changes that the Earth has undergone over billions of years of existence. In conjunction with this the students studied the theory of plate tectonics and the effects these plates have on the Earth. Students conducted several labs including an Archeology and Paleontology lab. These labs assisted students with an understanding of different fields of science. Next week students will begin their dinosaur research. When this research is completed students will begin construction of their dinosaurs.

History – Mr. Bellino

In History, we are continuing to talk about the modernization of our country. Students have completed timelines tracking the advancements of inventions over time. We have also just finished up exploring some tough economic concepts like vertical and horizontal integration. After break, we will begin to talk about U.S. involvement overseas, including the Spanish-American War and World War I.

Literature: Mrs. Fox

After reading Mildred Taylor’s short story, “Song of the Trees”, we moved on to her novel, Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry. Students are reading about the Logan family and their struggle to survive during in Mississippi during the early 1930’s. We have been practicing the application of good reading strategies, especially the making predictions strategy. Non-fiction articles about the Great Depression will supplement our novel study.

Communication Skills – Mrs. Fox

Students recently completed an examination of the five-paragraph essay model and are currently in the middle of writing their first five-paragraph essay with a partner. In addition, students have begun a unit on nouns, and they are now able to identify and describe the differences between common/proper, plurals, and possessives. In January, students will expand their expository writing skills by creating a comparison/contrast essay on two animals.

Math – Mrs. Wilson

We have finished our introduction to solving equations. On Friday, December 18th, we were visited by the architect that helped to design our school, Mr. Woolever. He showed us how important math is in the architecture field. We were amazed at how much he uses the slope of a line in his field. We will finish up 2009 by working on graphing. We will welcome 2010 with a little more graphing followed by a project where we will survey our classmates and graph our findings.

We will head back into the book at the beginning of third quarter to work with fractions, decimals, and percents! Problem of the Week will continue after vacation, and we will begin working writing how we got our answers. This is in preparation for the ISAT tests in March.

Communication Skills – Mrs. Wilson

Our first essay is now finished! We have discovered that writing essays aren't so bad when the whole class works together. Our first essay was about selecting a class pet. We narrowed it down to a

hedgehog, a newt, or a hamster. We are also continuing to fine-tune our writing by learning about nouns, and we will begin working with verbs and adjectives after winter vacation. We will begin writing the first essay on our own in early 2010!

White Team News

The Seventh Grade White Team is in the midst of a supply drive and fundraiser to benefit the animals at the Kane County Humane Society. The students have donated many items that will be dropped off at the Humane Society on Friday, December 18th. The students have been collecting coins for their teachers. They seem to have emptied the change from their piggy banks into Mr. Bellino's bucket. Way to go Mr. Bellino!

~7 Blue~

As part of a community service project for our 7th grade, 7 Blue adopted a family for Christmas. What a great time of year to show support to those less fortunate. We appreciate all the support we received for this project. A special thanks goes out to the families of; Cassidy Reeve, Anna Senese, Kyle Urbanik, Chucky Liss, Joey Lakomek, Kataryna Beatty, Alex Olson, Michael Meisenger, Matt Lyons, Amanda Scarpitti, Jacob Bunce, Kyle Deihl, Ally Martinez-Aviles, Kenny Dybas, Jake Fosnacht, Isabella Brenza, Nick Dwyer, Miguel Sanchez, Michelle McCracken, Rachel Kintz, Mitch Reger, Alex Lopez, Sara Brouch, Nicole McClellan, Amy Croft, Nicole Partipilo, Colleen Schrems, Riley Hannula, Mitch Nelson, and Jason Carlquist.

At the conclusion of 1st term awards were given out to the following students for their display of the six pillars of Character.

Pillar of Respect- Colleen Landers

Pillar of Responsibility- Heather Ortiz

Pillar of Caring- Michael Meisenger

Pillar of Citizenship- Andy Cushna

Pillar of Fairness- Keith Vergara

Pillar of Trustworthiness- Taylor Washlow

Awards were also given out to students for their academic success in each curricular area.

Student of the Term in Math: Ally Martinez-Aviles

Student of the Term in Science: Nick Dwyer

Student of the Term in History: Isabella Brenza

Student of the Term in Literature: Kristin Staub

Student of the Term in Communication Skills: Jarod Erlandson

Students received \$5 gift cards to Borders.

A special note of recognition goes out to Madison Taylor for her efforts over the holidays in helping to support our community. Madison and her sister Danielle were honored as Kids of the Week by WGN radio after they collected food, coats, mittens, hats, and pet food supplies in their "Fill Your Door Step" collection drive in Sugar Grove. Madison, Danielle, and their friend Jessica Kucera (also 7th grade at KHMS) came up with the idea last year after being challenged by their mother, Mrs. Taylor, to give back to their community. We as part of the community can't thank you enough for all your generous support. We are proud to have you on our team.

Language Arts—Mrs. Schertzer's Lit Blitz!

The 2nd quarter has brought great excitement to literature classes. Students finished *Life as We Knew It*, and then began *The Hunger Games*. As part of the novel study, student designed their own costumes for their district tributes (ask them) and competed in a mental Hunger Games. There is only one winner. Who will it be? While reading the science fiction novels students grasped many literary elements such as conflict, flashback, foreshadowing, irony, and symbolism. They also developed a better understanding of the elements of plot. For the third quarter students will read the realistic fiction novel, *Touching Spirit Bear*.

Mrs. Cyr's Language Arts Class will be completing their third novel before winter break in class, *Touching Spirit Bear*. Each novel allows the class to practice reading strategies and examine the literary elements in the text. During our reading students increased knowledge in conflict, flashback, foreshadowing, irony, and symbolism. Also character development and plot are reinforced. After winter break we will begin to read the *Outsiders*.

Communication Skills

Mrs. Cyr and Mrs. Schertzer's the Write Place!

Students in Communication Skills have practiced the research process resulting in an outline, PowerPoint presentation, and Works Cited page. Following the research unit, we delved into descriptive writing by reviewing and learning new figures of speech such as similes, metaphors, alliteration, personification, idioms, hyperbole, and onomatopoeia. We will conclude the 2nd quarter by revisiting essay writing that includes figurative language to improve word choice.

History

In Mr. Gannon's History classes, we started the 2nd quarter working with the "America Works" program from Junior Achievement. The material related directly to what we were covering in class, and students had the experience of working with a professional from the business world in the classroom. A big THANK YOU goes out to Mrs. McClellan for being our presenter. Also in the 2nd quarter, we covered "The Western Frontier", "The Growth of Industry", and "Toward an Urban America". Focusing on this period of history helped us learn of the industry that changed America in the late 1800s and early 1900s. We also learned of the many people that came to the United States during this time and how they experienced/changed America. After break, we will cover "Progressive Reforms", "Overseas Expansion", "World War I", "The Jazz Age", and "The Depression and FDR".

Science

The Seventh Grade students have been learning about biomes and non living components of the biome. They also have been assigned dinosaurs and have begun to start the research process. After completion of the dinosaur research, Power Point presentation, they will begin to construct the dinosaur. Next quarter we will begin to discuss atoms, as well as genetics and the transfer of genes.

Math

Students have been working hard to finish their Algebra Unit this quarter. We have been working on solving all equations in the same format to prepare them for when the algebra equations become much

longer. Students will end the unit when they return from Christmas break by studying slope. Students will also have the opportunity to meet with the architect of the building to discuss how he used math in his design. 2nd hour math class has finally completed their unit on fractions and have moved into Algebra as well. This will take us into third quarter.

~7 Red~

In math class, we are digging deeper into the wonderful world of ALGEBRA! The students are learning how to create equations from a word problem and solve them using addition, subtraction, and division. Many students are very angry with Miss Self because they have to show their work, but they are learning that it helps them understand the concept! By the end of the chapter, they will learn inequalities and how to calculate the slope of a line. Furthermore, we will have the HMS building architect come talk to us about how he used math in the construction of our new school! Lastly, our six pack teams are off to a strong start! Who will take the prize this quarter?

In Accelerated math, students have been climbing Kaneland Mountain, figuring out which car they want to buy some day, according to its gas mileage, and which is the better buy at the grocery store. At the end of the chapter, we will have the HMS building architect come talk to us about how he used math in the construction of our new school! Lastly, our six pack teams are off to a strong start! Who will take the prize this quarter?

In science, we are working on our research for the Dinosaur Project. The students are searching for information concerning their assigned dinosaur, time period it lived, and environment in which it lived. They are using the internet as well as subject-matter books from the library.

Mrs. Cuenot's Language Arts classes are currently in the middle of reading the science fiction thriller, Life As We Knew It. The students are really enjoying this captivating story that shows just how suddenly "ordinary" life can vanish, and how something as

~8 Blue~

harmless as the moon can turn into a terrible danger! As we finish this book in just a couple of short weeks we will have some fun projects on the horizon to wrap up our second novel of the year.

In Ms. Barry's Language Arts class, we have started to read some short stories on Greek Mythology. One of the stories we have read was "Origin of the Seasons." We have learned some of the mythical tales that have stemmed from ancient Greece that explain how things came into existence. After Christmas, we will begin reading the novel Life As We Knew It by Susan Beth Pfeffer.

The Challenge Language Arts class has just finished their second novel of the year, Lord of the Flies. Along with finishing their second novel, students also successfully completed their first essay of the year. We have been busy preparing for our first WordMaster's challenge and as we take a short break from novels, we will explore the interesting history of immigration in our literature book along with History class. Of course, we will also continue to work on the writing process and perfect our writing skills!

In the Communication Skills classes, we have been focusing on the pre-writing stage of the Writing Process. It is just like breakfast: The most important stage, but often skipped and overlooked. We have been practicing how to formulate ideas, and have even observed abstract works of art help to stimulate our minds and form ideas to help us become stronger writers. It is especially important to do this because we can begin to plan out our writing before putting our first sentence on paper.

In History class, we have been passing through the later nineteenth century: we've said goodbye to the rural ways our country once knew and are now examining how we became the modern industrial nation. Included in that study is a look at our own family's past and how each of us came to be here in the USA. We will end December concentrating on the importance of the Statue of Liberty and why it's an icon of the American Dream. Upcoming topics include the Spanish American War and World War One.

American Government / Economics for the BLUE TEAM continues to concentrate on early coverage of the U.S. Constitution, current events related to the U.S. Government, and many items of an introductory nature as we discuss the state of our and the world's economy.

Language Arts students have been working diligently on the Heritage Unit. We read a variety of stories and poems focused on passing down wisdom, culture and life lessons from generation to generation. This provided a literary basis for exploration of their own heritage. Heritage Night was widely regarded as an overwhelming success. Interesting discoveries, creative displays, great food were enjoyed by all! Many thanks to all the parents and family members who assisted the students as they worked on the projects and for showing support at Heritage Night.

Mrs. Reeder's Math classes will be wrapping up Chapter 4 and/or Chapter 10 before Winter Break. When we return from break we will review material from first semester and take a Mid-Term Exam. Make sure you check Konnect after break for the date of the Mid-Term Exam. Following the mid-term exam we will get back to work on the next Chapter in the book and begin preparing for the ISAT Test.

Finally, in science class students have just finished the Electricity and Magnetism textbook and are heading into Matter and the Periodic Table (Miss Bendowski's favorite unit). Happy holidays and enjoy your winter break!

~8 Red~

Second quarter is more than half way over and you should have received a progress report form from your student last week. In an attempt to "Go Green" the eighth grade has decided to send home a checklist as our progress report. Please continue to check Konnect to keep informed about homework and academic progress.

We appreciate all of your generosity and support for our adopted family. They will truly have a brighter holiday this season thanks to you.

Pre-Algebra- Ms. Anderson

Greeting for Red Team Math! The students completed combining like terms and solving multi-step equations. They worked extremely hard to master the concepts. We will continue to review the “red standard” objectives throughout the year. We need to place the concepts into our long-term memory. Our goal is to prepare the students for Algebra I in the high school and these standards are what the high school is asking the eighth grade students to know. Square roots and the Pythagorean Theorem is another standard for the students in the eighth grade. We will be completing this section before the Christmas break and will add more geometry concepts to our arsenal of math concepts after the break

Science- Mrs. Paskus

8 Red Science has had an electrifying time working with electricity! We learned what electricity is all about (electrons) and how to get a current flowing. Then we were attracted to the magnets in our classroom. We found out that magnets and electricity have a lot in common with each other. Did you know the Earth's magnetic south pole is located at the Earth's geographic north pole? That is why a compass points north. We even made our own magnets! Next we will be moving into the amazing world of chemical reactions and looking for the electrons again. It's all about the electrons.

Language Arts – Mrs. Mills & Mrs. Pattermann

We began the quarter reading the novel, Freak the Mighty, by Rodman Philbrick. While reading the novel, students concentrated on reading strategies which included predicting, synthesizing, questioning, and monitoring comprehension. In addition, students have been reviewing literary elements and applying these concepts. They created visual displays of the elements and presented the information to the class. It was time to “zap the generation gap” by connecting our literature to our students’ heritage. Literature collections included short stories such as The Treasure of Lemon Brown, The Medicine Bag, and A Smart Cookie. These stories inspired our students to explore, “the exchange of information and values between young people and members of older generations.” Next, we will begin reading and performing the play,

“A Christmas Carol.” In Mrs. Mills’ classes, we will begin a mini- adventure unit. Students will select one of the following novels to read: The Call of the Wild, Lord of the Flies, City of Beasts, Captain Courageous, Stormbreaker, and Samuel Blink & the Forbidden Forest. Upon completion of the unit, students will create their own adventure book.

Communication Skills –

Mrs. Mills & Mrs. Pattermann

Students were working hard researching their families’ heritage. Thanks to all of the parents and students who made Heritage Night such a wonderful success! Students are reflecting on their experiences, and they will have the opportunity to provide feedback on how to improve this project in the future. Students are continuing to learn the building blocks of better spelling and vocabulary through the exploration of root words. They are also learning about various formats, styles, and types of business and technical writing. After the winter break, students will be introduced to persuasion.

Civics- Mrs. Hogan

Currently Mr. Hogan’s 8th grade Government class is discussing the roots of American democracy. Within this unit we are talking about the origins, structure and meaning of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution. In Washington D.C. news; Mr. Hogan’s May trip to the nation’s capitol is full and we are not taking any more reservations. Mr. McCormick’s trip, however, still has several slots available. If you are interested in having your child participate, please contact Mr. McCormick Brendan.McCormick@kaneland.org or ex. 77732.

Wishing you a safe and happy winter break!

~8 White~

White Team Quest

For our service projects, we are collecting donations. Donations may include money to purchase fleece to make no sew blankets for children who are hospitalized during the holiday at Children's Memorial; travel toilettes for baskets to be used at Ronald McDonald houses, or card supplies to make cards for various groups including troops, nursing home residents, and children in the hospital. Supplies to support these activities would be welcome donations.

The White Team Language Arts classes recently completed their heritage unit with a wonderfully attended Heritage Night. Students have had an opportunity to give teachers feedback that will be considered for improvement in the future. Our appreciation is extended to all of the parents and family members who attend the evening. As teachers, it is a pleasure to work with our students, but the heritage project allowed us the opportunity to become more acquainted with our students—what a treasure. Prior to the holiday break, vocabulary/word study and writing a parody are planned in communication skills. After the break we will begin working on persuasive writing. In the literature classes, we are reading a script version of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and will be incorporating play and dramatic elements. Students will have a book report due after the holiday break.

Mrs. Heinberg's math classes have just finished the study of equations. Ask your child to solve $2x - 3 = 8x + 15$ and explain the steps to finding the answer. With their knowledge about solving equations, we moved into chapter 3 to study squares, square roots and the Pythagorean Theorem. We will spend the three weeks between Thanksgiving Break and Winter Break on this chapter. Once we return from Winter Break, we will begin studying ratios and rates in chapter 4.

Mr. McCormick's Civics classes just finished Unit 3: The Roots of American Democracy about the ideas and events that led up to the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Next will be Creating the Constitution, about the "Crisis" period of 1776-1787, and the road towards the Constitutional Convention. Look for more projects to come after winter break.

Science—We are just about to wrap up our electricity and magnetism unit in science. Our next unit will be Interactions of Matter which will focus on basic chemistry. We will have fun learning about the periodic table, elements, chemical properties, ionic and covalent bonds, and balancing equations. We will begin this unit the week before winter break and continue through the end of 2nd term.

Just a reminder, your student needs to continue to maintain their daily work, labs and notes in their science notebook throughout the year. Over break please ask to see the condition of your student's science notebook. If it is falling apart or has very few remaining pages, they may be in need of a new one for 2nd semester. The Mead brand works great since they are just a little larger than the other brands and seems to hold the papers well. Also, our Holt science books can be seen online at <http://my.hrw.com>. This is useful if your student ever forgets their book at school. To access the science textbooks, please use the following: Login : sciencekms and password: science .

Mr. Reinhard's Challenge Math classes—

My algebra classes have just finished the chapter on relations, functions and graphing linear equations. Ask your student to map a relation or explain the vertical line test to tell if a relation is a function. They know their stuff!

Geometry students will have visions of centroids dancing in their heads this holiday season. We are studying relationships in triangles. Terms like circumcenter, incenter, centroid, and orthocenter are hard to keep straight, let alone find their coordinates. Indirect proofs are also confusing because the students where just starting to feel comfortable with direct proofs.

Algebra II is studying quadratic equations and functions. Properties of parabolas and factoring quadratics are just a sample of the fun in store for my students.

~Library News~

The big event in the library recently has been book fair. Twenty-six volunteers did a great job of keeping everything organized. A big THANK YOU to all of them! All proceeds from the book fair are used to help us purchase more books for the library. If you missed it, you can shop all year at www.abcfairs.com. Just look for our school and start shopping. The online fair is available until June.

November saw the beginning of our Mock Newberry Book Club. The club met during lunch time two times each month and will meet again in January. Participants receive exclusive check-out rights to the list titles. The Mock Newberry List is composed by Anderson's Books and is a fun way for students to read great new fiction. Students discuss what makes the books great and will ultimately decide which book they think is the best written. We'll update you on the winner after the vote in January. More lunch book clubs are planned, so remind your student to listen for announcements.

Did you know that your student can search for books and place holds from home? It is also possible to review current checkouts, due dates and accrued fines by logging into the catalog. Just go to our library website* and select resources, then library catalog. Students also have access to pre-screened and reviewed websites through the catalog by using webpath express to search the catalog. Other resources are also available off site through the library website.

Books purchased through the Gift Book Program offered with your registration packet have arrived and are on the shelf being enjoyed by the students. This program gives families an opportunity to honor someone by placing a book in the library. If you are interested in participating, the form is available through the library website*. Thank you to all who participated and helped our collection to grow.

*To access our library website, start at the main Kane-land page, select schools, Harter Middle School, then select the library link on the right.

~Office Notes~

ID's—Remind your student to bring their student ID to school every day. ID's are required to be worn during the school day. Students without their ID will be sent to the office to purchase a temporary ID for 50 cents.

Temporary ID fines are accumulating quickly! Don't let your student's fine turn into a detention. If in doubt, check with Mrs. Theis in the main office.



With winter weather upon us, please be aware that the school is not open to students until 7:15 am. If you are dropping your student off before 7:15 am, they will have to wait outside.



Lost & Found—Lost & Found items are located on a table outside the main office door. If your student is missing something, please have them check it out! There are lots of coats, sweatshirts, jackets, etc. to be found. All items are donated to goodwill at the end of each quarter.



~Girls Basketball~

Basketball tryouts for the 7th and 8th grade girls will be held on the dates listed below. You must attend all tryouts. Your physical and insurance waiver forms must be on file with Mr. Dalton before you can attend tryouts. If you need any forms, see Mr. Dalton right away. Those individuals who make the team will be required to pay an \$80 participation fee. This fee must be turned in to Mr. Dalton.

If you have any questions, see Mr. Dalton, Mr. Huels, Ms. Countryman or Ms. Frankel.

7th Grade

Tuesday January 5th 2:25 – 4:50 p.m.

Wednesday January 6th 2:25 – 4:50 p.m.

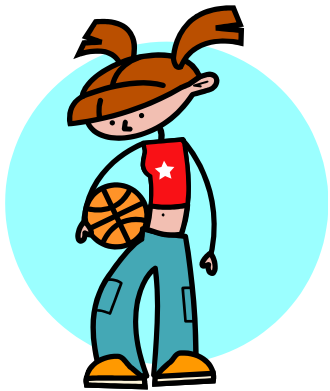
8th Grade

Monday January 4th 2:25 – 4:50 p.m.

Tuesday January 5th 2:25 – 4:50 p.m.

The activity bus routes are available on the district transportation website.

If you have any questions, please call Mr. Dalton at 630-466-8400 ext. 77507.



The first girls basketball game is January 21st!

~Kaneland Sports Boosters~

Show your support for Kaneland Athletes by becoming a member of the Kaneland Sports Boosters. All supporters of the Knights are considered Boosters. The purpose of the organization is to provide our athletes and coaches with the “extras” that the school budget cannot fund. Each year, the Boosters provide between \$20,000 and \$30,000 of raised funds to enhance our sports programs at the middle school and the high school. Funds are raised through concessions, raffles, the “Castle Bank Spirit Challenge” and the Trivia Night fundraisers. The Boosters also provide an annual \$1,000 donation to Special Olympics, four \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors and sponsor the senior athletic awards/banquet.

The boosters have provided several items for the middle school in the last few years which include a wrestling mat, track equipment and footballs/volleyballs/basketballs.

Please visit our website www.kanelandsportsboosters.com to request a membership form. Upcoming meeting information is also on the website. All are welcome at the meetings! Go Knights!!!

~Student Council Notes ~

The 2009-2010 HMS Student Council has gotten off to a busy start this year! In September we welcomed our new students to the district with an ice cream social. October brought Red Ribbon Week in conjunction with the guidance department, where student council members sponsored a spirit week where an average of 658 students participated in the daily spirit activities! \$600 was also raised through the sale of red ribbons and donations that week, which was donated to the Lazarus House homeless shelter. In November, nearly 300 items were collected during the week of Veteran’s Day to send to our brave soldiers overseas. The supplies, along with a \$250 donation from money collected at the dance and private contributions, have been given to **Operation Support Our Troops Illinois**, an organization that sends cartons of supplies from home to our men and women overseas. Thank you to all who contributed! The first dance ever in our new school had a great turn-out! Between kids breaking it down in the dance gym and some serious hoops next door, a great time was had by all. Congratulations to all Student Council members on a job well done!



KANELAND COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #302

Business Office

47W326 Keslinger Road
Maple Park, Illinois 60151
Phone: (630) 365-4119
Fax: (630) 365-9428

December 14, 2009

Kaneland Parents:

It is difficult to imagine with the beautiful weather we have experienced this fall that winter is indeed just around the corner. Kaneland C.U.S.D. #302 is preparing our procedures for school cancellation due to snow and/or cold, and we want to let the public know what to expect when the weather makes travel difficult.

Our first statement, as always, is that we are inclined to have school in session if at all possible. It is less disruptive for students, teachers and parents if classes are held as normal. If the weather is so bad as to make it dangerous to transport students in our buses, we will not put students and drivers at risk.

As has been the case the past few years, the time of decision will be 5:30 a.m. If the decision is made to cancel school, our new Connect ED* system will be put in motion, including calls to local and Chicago radio/television stations. Information will be available almost immediately on the Kaneland Website. Locally, the following radio stations are contacted directly: WBIG 1280 AM; WLBK 1360 AM; WDEK 92.5 FM; WKKD 1580 AM/95.9 FM; WSPY 107.1 FM; WDKB 94.9 FM; WNIJ 89.5 FM; and WNIU 90.5 FM. The Kaneland website and these stations are your best sources for school closing information, as they deal with a smaller area and have fewer schools on their cancellation lists.

The interval between the 5:30 a.m. decision and 3:35 p.m. when the elementary schools dismiss is a long time for weather conditions to change in northern Illinois. The open, rural nature and sheer size of this district present hazards for both our buses and for the many high school students who drive to school each day. Conditions after 5:30 a.m. could deteriorate beyond earlier predictions, and force us to consider closing school early. This is not a choice we make lightly, understanding that many students might arrive home to a locked house. It is imperative that parents instruct their children carefully on what to do and where to go if school closes early. We plan to dismiss the middle and high schools first, so an older brother or sister will arrive home before the younger children do. Again, we will notify everyone via the Connect ED system, as well as notify local and Chicago radio and television stations.

We prefer not to cancel school, and earnestly hope not to have to send students home early. Nevertheless, we are enlisting your help in preparing your children for this possibility, keeping them as safe as possible in case bad weather comes.

***Connect Ed** - Kaneland has in place a phone messaging system throughout the District called Connect-Ed. The Connect-Ed system allows District personnel to send personalized voice messages to your family's home, work or cell phones. We are able to reach everyone in the district within minutes. With this system, **it is extremely important that all of your contact information is updated and correct.** Please contact your child's school office if you have any changes.

Dr. Julie-Ann Fuchs
Assistant Superintendent of Business

Harter Middle School PTO News

December, 2009



As this busy time of year quickly approaches, we'd like to take a moment to wish all of you a safe and magical holiday season. During the holidays, the PTO turns its time, energy and resources into sponsored events which reach out to our HMS community. In doing so, these programs reflect the mood of the season, as well as reinforce community service and good will. Please take a moment to review some of the opportunities available to our HMS community.

- **Box Top\$ for Education** is an easy way to earn money for our school. Please remember to clip and save your General Mills Box Top\$. Monthly drawings will be held. Students can earn a \$10 iTunes gift card simply by turning in a Ziploc bag of Box Top\$!!!
- **Butter Braid & Coffee Sales** – This delicious pastry and gourmet coffee were sold in November. What a great treat it will be to have on a cold winter morning! Butter Braid will be offered again in the spring.
- **Fall Play Concessions** were at the HMS performance of "Anchors Aweigh." Profit from the concessions was split between the PTO and the HMS Drama Department.
- **Hospitality** wishes to thank the many parents who donated food for the HMS Parent/Teacher Conference Dinner. Without wonderful parents like you, our dinner would not have been a success.
- **Jewel Shop and Share** – upcoming dates are December 28, 29 and 30. A coupon will be sent via e-mail to parents.
- The fall **Kaneland Spirit Wear** sale was a success. An additional sale will be held in the spring.
- Put your everyday shopping dollars to work. Earn money for our school without spending anything additional. Simply purchase gift cards from stores that participate in **The Manna Group** program! Grocery, gasoline, clothing, entertainment, and household goods can be purchased.
- **Market Day** continues to be a great program for HMS families! Orders can be placed online using our ID 10729.
- **Recycling** – Save the earth by recycling your old ink cartridges and old cell phones AND the PTO earns money.
- **The HMS School Directory** was distributed to families this fall.
- **Smencils & Lollipop Sales** continue to be a hit with students! Smencils will be sold at various times during the school year. Lollipops are sold at after school sporting events.
- **"My Child is an Honor Roll Student at Kaneland Middle School" Window Clings** can be purchased through the PTO for \$3.00. Please send an e-mail to kms_pto@yahoo.com if you are interested in ordering a window cling.

If you'd like to be added to our PTO e-mail distribution list, please send an e-mail to kms_pto@yahoo.com.

Upcoming Meeting Dates are:

- Thursday, January 21, 2010
- Thursday, February 18, 2010
- Thursday, March 18, 2010
- Thursday, April 15, 2010
- Thursday, May 20, 2010

KANELAND HARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Calendar of Events – January/February 2010

F	January 1	No School – Winter Break
M	January 4	School Resumes
W	January 13	1:25 Dismissal
TH	January 14	1:25 Dismissal End of 2 nd Quarter
F	January 15	No School – School Improvement Day
M	January 18	No School – Martin Luther King Day
W	January 20	6:00 – 6:45 Market Day & Manna
TH	January 21	GB: 4:15 7 th vs Yorkville 4:15 8 th at Yorkville 7:00 HMS PTO Meeting
M	January 25	GB: 4:00 7 th at Sycamore 4:00 8 th vs Sycamore
TU	January 26	GB: 4:15 7 th vs Oswego Thompson 4:15 8 th at Oswego Thompson
F	January 29	GB: 8 th at Waubensee Tourney
SA	January 30	GB: 8 th at Waubensee Tourney
M	February 1	GB: 4:00 7 th at DeKalb Huntley 4:00 8 th vs DeKalb Huntley
TU	February 2	GB: 4:15 7 th vs Sandwich 4:15 8 th at Sandwich
TH	February 4	GB: 4:15 7 th at Aurora Washington 4:15 8 th vs Aurora Washington

F	February 5	GB: 7 th at Waubensee Tourney
SA	February 6	GB: 8 th at Waubensee Tourney GB: 7 th at Yorkville Tourney – B Team
M	February 8	GB: 4:15 7 th vs Aurora Christian 4:15 8 th at Aurora Christian
TU	February 9	GB: 4:15 7 th vs Somonauk 4:15 8 th at Somonauk
TH	February 11	GB: 4:15 7 th vs Geneva North 4:15 8 th at Geneva North
F	February 12	7 th & 8 th Winter Dance
M	February 15	No School – Presidents’ Day
TU	February 16	GB: 4:15 7 th at Batavia 4:15 8 th vs Batavia
W	February 17	6:00 – 6:45 Market Day & Manna
TH	February 18	GB: 4:00 7 th & 8 th at Hinckley-Big Rock 7:00 HMS PTO Meeting
SA	February 20	GB: 8 th at Yorkville Tourney – B Team
M	February 22	GB: 7 th vs St Charles Wredling 8 th at St Charles Wredling
F	February 26	No School – Teacher Institute Day