



Pelham Press

Vol. 21, No. 19, January 28, 2011

<http://pe.arps.org>



Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, February 1

Wednesday, February 2

Thursday, February 3

Thursday, February 3

Friday, February 4

Monday, February 7

Wednesday, February 9

MLK Assembly – 9 am

Groundhog Day

School Council Meeting- 7:30 am

School Committee- 6 pm Community Room

Report Cards

PTO Meeting- 6pm School Faculty Room

Joint Pelham/Shutesbury Visioning Group Meeting



Dear Pelham School Families,

We are all hoping that the groundhog does not see his shadow on Wednesday, February 2, Groundhog Day. Most of us have had our fill of winter! Despite the cold and snowy weather, we try to get our students outside for recess every day, as much as the weather permits. Students have been coming well-prepared with snow pants, boots, gloves, and hats. The 'snow mountain' in the parking lot is a child's fantasy playground in itself, and we monitor this winter play structure very carefully to ensure everyone is playing safely.

Winter weather has been a deciding factor in many of our events and activities. We were able to reschedule the Movie Night to last evening, and it was enjoyed by everyone. We thank the PTO for hosting this fun family event. Despite the delay on Thursday morning, with some last minute bus juggling, fifth and sixth grade students were able to attend Bale Folclorico Da Bahia, an esteemed traditional dance company from Brazil at the UMass Fine Arts Center. Both teachers and students pronounced it a terrific performance, and it was highly enjoyed by all. Finally, our Martin Luther King school assembly has been rescheduled to this coming Tuesday morning. Each classroom has been preparing a presentation for this event which will be enriched by music under the guidance of Agnes Zsigmondi. Parents are welcome to visit this 9 am performance.

At Pelham School we are committed to a literacy rich learning environment and I would like to share two new initiatives. The first initiative is Lexia Reading, a powerful reading skills software program proven to enhance reading proficiency by supporting teacher instruction. Through this program, students learn and practice phonological awareness skills, phonics, sight word practice, comprehension, and word structural analysis. Students in grades 1-6 have been using it in computer class, and we hope to add on Kindergarten soon. As an additional learning resource beyond school hours, we have begun to distribute information that explains how students may access this online learning program from home. Once you receive this information, please contact the school with any questions you might have. This reading program has the capability for teachers to access the students' responses and determine where they might have specific areas of difficulty that will inform instruction and determine teacher intervention. The second initiative is the Teacher's College Reading Workshop model, which teachers have received some training in this past summer and have visited some 'lab sites' within the district this year. One critical component needed to support this particular reading workshop model is a leveled classroom library. At this time, we are looking for donations of books, both fiction and non-fiction at the elementary school level. This would be a great time to clean out some of those bookshelves and support Pelham School at the same time!

First term report cards will be distributed next Friday, February 5th. They will arrive home with children in envelopes that we ask you to sign and return to ensure parent receipt. We don't want them lost in backpacks! Parents are encouraged to process the information contained within and focus, most importantly, on the positive. Although it is important to address areas of needed improvement, it is crucial that children feel supported and encouraged. This measure of academic progress is only one of several avenues to inform parents/guardians as conferences and on-going communication continue throughout the year. Frequent and collaborative home-school communication is critical to your child's successful school experience and we ask you to please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns related to the report card.

Sincerely,

Lisa Desjarlais

Schedule for Superintendent Finalist Visit

Maria Geryk is scheduled for Tuesday, February 2.

8:00 am to 9:00 am - Coffee with parents/community in the ARMS cafeteria

9:00 am to 9:30 am - Central office welcome and quick tour

9:30 am to 10:30 am - Administrators/Superintendent's Council

10:30 am to noon - Tour of ARMS/ARHS (by principals)

Noon to 1:00 pm - lunch with chairs of Pelham and Amherst School Committees

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm - Tour of elementary schools

2:30 pm to 3:30 pm - Reception with parents/community members at Wildwood

3:45 pm to 4:45 pm - Meeting with teachers at ARMS Library

4:45 pm to 5:45 pm - Dinner

6:00 pm to 8:00 pm - School Committee interview (ARHS Library)

As many of you are aware, a superintendent search is underplace and three finalists have been announced: Maria Geryk, John Bayless, and Gerald Kohn. As part of their interview and selection process, they have been meeting with the community as well as staff within the district. John Bayless met with school and community groups on January 18th, and Gerald Kohn completed his visits on January 19th. For your convenience, I have posted the schedule for this third finalist visit above, and more information may be accessed at this link:

<http://www.arps.org/node/2623>

I strongly encourage parents to attend any of these meetings on Tuesday to provide some feedback for the search committee. Although the visits for families and community members are at Amherst sites, each time slot/location is intended for parents of any age children as well as members of the community from all four towns. It is a critical time for you to have input in sharing your thoughts and opinions about this important selection process.

Hello families,

Welcome to winter ! I certainly hope that all of you are finding some warmth within this cold. Whether it's warmth in your family, or warmth from having some wonderful walks or cross country skiing outdoors.

Since it is my Pelham Press day today.. I thought I would just go over some ideas that I think about when dealing with children. Each school year children go from the norms for behavior at home to the group and individual norms of the bus, the class, and the school. Parents and teachers are always emphasizing the need for children to "get along." Children can be more successful at this task when they learn to identify their feelings and the feelings of others. Young children are just beginning to learn about their own feelings, and we help them identify these feelings. We also need to teach children that other people have feelings too. It is very important for children at an early age to begin the process of developing empathy, which means to know and care about other people's feelings.

Here are some basic lessons for children in emotional awareness and empathy:

1. Be an attentive parent. Respond to your child's emotions.
2. Label your children's feelings. Say, "It's nice to see you so happy" during smiling moments, or "Oh, that's frustrating" when a child seems frazzled.
3. Label your own feelings. Say, "I feel sad," when your child is hurt or "That hurts my feelings," when a child says unkind words to you.
4. Validate feelings. As in "I can see why you're angry. You wanted to keep playing, but now it's time to go inside." This shows that you can see the world from your child's eyes.
5. Stop aggressive behavior and let your child know how you feel about it. When your child hits another child say, "You may not do that. That hurts Susan and we don't hurt people in our family." Young children may not yet understand how others feel when they are hit or pushed, but they do understand when parents strongly disapprove of their behavior... and they can begin to see the disapproval is linked to their hurtful behavior towards others.
6. Teach your child to see things through other people's eyes. When your child hits someone, say "How do you think Susan feels when you hit her?" or "How would you feel if Susan hit you?" Try and ask these questions with empathy towards the aggressor as well as the victim. Each child needs compassion at that moment. When a child is aggressive, their behavior is expressing their feelings at the moment. Remember there is always a reason for behavior. It does not just happen.
7. Care for victims. When a child is hurt by another child, immediately stop the aggressive behavior and attend to the "victim". This shows caring and concern. It is also a good way of modeling empathy. Console the victim first rather than giving attention and scolding the child who has hit.
8. Teach through play. Playing with dolls or stuffed animals is a great way for children to learn about caring for others. Caring for others can also be taught and encouraged in the context of many types of play.

By offering our children empathic language, we can move them along and give them crucial life lessons. Please call me if you would like more information about any of these ideas.

Deb King

News from Pelham Kindergarten

January is usually such a long month, but this year it seems even shorter than February. With all the snow days we have had, it has slowed our progress of learning just a little. We are taking advantage of the snow to help strengthen our fine motor and large motor skills. Walking through all this snow at five and six years old is quite a task for the children's hips and leg muscles. Digging and making snow structures is strengthening our hand and finger muscles. Our overall body endurance and breathing are getting much stronger with all these cold temperatures!

Inside the classroom we have been reading about snow in fiction and non-fiction literature. One of my favorite books, "Snowballs" by Lois Ehlert is represented on one of our bulletin boards. We worked cooperatively in small groups to bring to life the snow family characters of this book. Come by and see it!

Our writing workshops are continuing to focus on 'small moments', things that we have done. Instead of writing in whole thoughts, we are making lists of key words that tell us about the small moment. Making lists is giving us the opportunity to stretch out unfamiliar words, sounding out individual letters to spell a word. We are getting really good at it.

We are continuing our math measuring and counting unit. We just finished looking at the number six, and the many ways that we can make that number. This is preparing us for addition and subtraction concepts.

Our class voted on their idea for the MLK assembly next week. The children wanted to put pictures of MLK's face all around the school with a message that would "help us remember how we need to be" in school. I instructed the children in an art lesson on making portraits. They came out so beautiful, they looked much better than my demonstration. Take a look around for this stunning art work, and the special message attached to it.

Happy Upcoming February to everyone!

Debbie Jacque

Dear Pelham School Community,

Please join us for the February PTO meeting on Monday, February 7th, at 6:00 p.m. in the school teacher's lounge.

The PTO has moved the PTO meeting from 7:00p.m. to 6:00p.m. in hopes that more parents/guardians will be available to attend. The PTO will also provide childcare for the March PTO meeting. More information regarding this will follow.

The agenda for the February meeting is outlined below. Please feel free to contact me if you have a topic to add to the agenda. Refreshments will be served. Thank you.

Regards,
Ruth Carolan
rdcarolan@charter.net

PTO Agenda – Monday, February 7th

Welcome

- Introductions

Updates

- Principal's report – Lisa
- Treasurer's report – Diana
- School Committee Report – Kathy or Lisa

Old Business

- Outstanding Items on teacher's wish lists
- Movie Night - Friday, January 27th
- School Dance, February 18th
-

New and Ongoing Business

- Funding for Artist-in-Residence Program – Lisa/Paul
- Child care arrangements - Ruth
- Update on purchasing new curtains for stage – Lisa
- Update on 6th grade fundraising reorganization – Tracy/Ruth/Lisa
- Dean Beans - Amy
- New fundraiser for May – recycled clothing to Fashion Republic - Ruth
- Possible purchase of school storage shed – Diana
- Refreshments - Ruth

New Business

- Teacher's appreciation luncheon in May – Amy
- Variety Show in March? – Tracy/Leni
- Select date for next PTO meeting in March

Community Notes

**For Immediate Release:
LSSE Director**

Contact:Linda Chalfant ,

Phone: 413.259.3065

**WINTER FEST 11
Amherst, MA Jan. 26, 2011**

Chili and hot chocolate to keep warm and snow to keep it cool. Those are some of the ingredients for the third annual Winter Fest 2011 that kicks off at noon Feb. 12 at the Cherry Hill Golf Course in Amherst that is sponsored by Amherst Leisure Services, the Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce and Friends of Amherst Recreation. And the major ingredient is snow. "Mother Nature has done her job. The snow this year has exceeded our expectations," said Barbara Bilz, LSSE Assistant Director and General Manager of Cherry Hill Golf Course. This contrasts with last year when snow had to be made for the festival. "The super pipe sledding hill is the biggest it's ever been," according to Bilz. Winter Fest features more than 15 indoor and outdoor activities for all ages including sledding, cross country ski lessons, horse wagon rides, a family sculpture contest, the Classic Cardboard Box Race, and winter bird watching Brings sleds or tubes to ride down the sledding hill or skis to travel the trails. Marla BB of Hilltown Wilderness Adventures will offer a sled dog demonstration from 2 to 4 p.m. A Frosty Fun Kids Carnival is set from 1 to 3 p.m. Meanwhile the adults can enjoy a wine and cheese tasting at 4:30 p.m. Atkins Farms Country market will staff the food court and Berkshire Brewing Company will serve handcrafted beers throughout the afternoon. Wildcat O'Halloran will perform as well as other bands in the Peter Pan Futurliner, a new venue. Bilz said the Futurliner is a big bus that opens up to a big stage. Also new is a visit from UMass Sam the Minuteman as well as Eric Carle's Creepy Crawly Caterpillar. The Chili Cook-off also returns with restaurants vying for the Winter Fest Chili Bowl Trophy. Residents can vote for their favorite. Trophies will also be awarded for the sculpture contest. The day ends with fireworks at 6 p.m. "It's fun for the whole family. There is something for everyone," Bilz said. Winter Fest is also reaching out to those in need. Residents who bring nonperishable food to the event for the Amherst Survival Center will be entered in the raffle. The Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for children and \$20 for a family of three or more and are available at the LSSE office in the Bangs Center or at Hastings. For information and a complete schedule visit: www.winterfestamherst.com.

####



Do you drink coffee???
 Have you tried Dean's Beans??
 It's locally roasted, fair trade,
 organic, kosher and tastes
 great!

More importantly, your purchase helps fund the staff appreciation lunch in March.

Student Name _____

Phone Number _____

Teacher _____

Item	Unit Price	x	Quantity	=	Total
Sumatra FR (dark) Whole Bean	\$9.00				
Sumatra FR (dark) Ground	\$9.00				
Moka Sumatra (medium) Whole Bean	\$9.00				
Moka Sumatra (medium) Ground	\$9.00				
Decaf Peruvian (dark) Whole Bean	\$10.00				
Decaf Peruvian (dark) Ground	\$10.00				
Decaf Liberation (medium) Whole Bean	\$10.00				
Decaf Liberation (medium) Ground	\$10.00				
Hot Chocolate, 12 ounce	\$4.50				
Java Drops, Milk Chocolate	\$8.50				
Java Drops, Dark chocolate	\$8.50				
 Pelham Coffee Mug	\$10.00				
2 Pelham Coffee Mugs	\$15.00				
Grand Total					

*All coffee and Java Drops are 16 ounce bags. Decaf is Swiss Water Process.

All orders are due at the last day of the month (except December)
 and usually arrive within 2 weeks.

Please make checks payable to: **Pelham Elementary PTO**

Please return this form to the school. Thank You!!

Any questions: Amy Wasserman 253-4664, amy@cutnpaced.com