



NESKOWIN VALLEY SCHOOL¹ VOICE



Volume XVIII, No. 2 September 23, 2009

Sept	Wed	23	Fall Equinox / Labyrinth Walk
	Fri	25	Fall Revival / Spring Clean-up
	Mon	28	NO SCHOOL – Staff Planning Day
Oct	Wed	7	Pet Blessing
	Fri	9	NO SCHOOL –Inservice Day
	Sat	10	HARVEST FESTIVAL

Gather'rounds are every Wednesday 11:30-11:50am unless noted differently.
Morning Music is every Monday 8:30-8:45am, or Tuesday on weeks when there is no school on Monday.
You are welcome to join us!!

HEAD OF SCHOOL Notes

This week I had the pleasure of talking with the Middles at the end of their day Monday. They were happily winded from an enjoyable P.E. class with the Olders, and they expressed excitement about their first day of choir. Choir is optional this year, but the entire Middles class and many of the Olders have chosen to take their lunch in the gym with Eric, then practice rather than go out to recess. The Middles were clearly delighted both with the changes this year has brought and with the familiar routines that have stayed the same. Being able to talk with students is one of my favorite perks of the job.

Friday will mark our Neskowin Beach Clean-up, when we collect trash from the beach and streets of our namesake town. It's one way we show our appreciation for the Neskowin Community Association, which grants us money each year to support the school. Our wonderful Orff instruments for music classes resulted from the grant this year. The Clean-up will take place first thing in the morning; our bus driver Woody will drive students to the beach just after the arrival at school about 8:30. Your carpool can also meet us at the Neskowin Wayside beginning at 8:40, across the street from the Hawk Creek Café. We need chaperones. Parents who can stay for an hour are welcome to help shepherd student groups through town as they collect trash, then drive students back to school. Everybody will be back in time for recess and popsicles at 10.

HARVEST FESTIVAL - Bakery Café

The Bakery/Café needs everyone's help this year to make it successful. Every year there are delicious baked goods that parents and friends of NVS donate to the **Bakery Café**. We are hoping that you all can help make this year's **Bakery Café** as delicious as ever.

We would appreciate your help in any way that you can. We are looking for volunteers to pick up donations from restaurants the day before, work a shift the day of the event, and donate as many baked goods as possible!

Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board in the entry hall, as well as ingredient cards to be included with your baked goods. So look through your recipe books and show off your favorite baked goods at this year's **Neskowin Valley School Harvest Festival**.

Here is a suggested list of items that have sold well in the past, as well as items we would like to see this year. Please bake goods from scratch; we prefer no store-bought items.

Suggestions of baked goods we would like to offer at the Bakery Café.

Layer Cakes	Breads
Pies	Scones
Large Cinnamon Rolls	Bundt Cakes
Large Decorative Cookies	Pound Cakes
Rum Cakes	Chocolates
Cup Cakes	Brownies
Large Muffins	Tarts
Cookies	Fudge
Shortbreads	Cobblers
Candies	Bar Cookies

Whole pies and cakes sold very well last year and we would love to see more! So if you have a favorite pie or cake you like to make, we would love it for the Bakery Café.

Due to health regulations we cannot accept cream pies, cheesecakes, custards, or uncooked cream frostings.

Thank you so much for your help and support.

If you have any questions or would like to volunteer to work a 2-hour shift the day of the event, please contact Mason McMullin. 541-921-3420 or masonmc@earthlink.net

BEGINNERS' CLASS Notes

What a fun, busy, curious, learning, giggling, clapping, jumping, wondering time we're having! We've been delving into sweet potatoes, which started with poking them with toothpicks and sitting them in water; last week, we took them out and looked at them, and found some things that made us wonder about them: white, stringy things coming off them, foggy water... Our conversations included comments about tasting them, so we did an experiment with eating them: raw (YUM!), cooked with paprika (some YUM!, some not-so-YUM), and cooked with cinnamon (YUM!). This week, we're making sweet potato bread.

Now that they know the basics of playground equipment, I've seen each of them experiment in various way with swings, merry-go-round, monkey bars/climbing structure, etc. All is done safely, all is quite fun to watch, and it all looks like great fun to be doing.

ASK ME:

- ◆ about the castle-and-stop-sign-building and singing while we built it
- ◆ about painting pots for plants
- ◆ about my new reading word(s)
- ◆ Slide-Show Lunch
- ◆ about Sudoku

Kate

EXPLORERS CLASS Notes

Today at recess I was admiring the kind gestures and enjoying the thoughtful words shared between the children in our class. They are starting to become more familiar with each other and school expectations, and our environment is becoming more harmonious.

Speaking of routines, next Monday the children will have a new morning “warm-up” folder. Instead of the folder, they will have a bound journal in which they may do a drawing in. If they’d like to include something written, they may either do their own writing or dictate something about their story which can be written on the bottom of the page. On Friday we’ll show the class the new journals so they’ll be familiar with them (and I’m sure they’d love to explain how they work!).

This Friday, September 25th, is our Neskowin Clean-Up day. Our class will meet at NVS at 8:30 to drop-off backpacks and personal items, and then *ride the bus to the Neskowin Wayside* where we will divide into small groups and clean-up our community. We’ll provide gloves and careful supervision as to what is being handled. After we’re done (around 9:30-10:00) we will ride the bus back to school. Kate, the Beginner’s teacher, will be with our class to help, and we welcome parents to come as well. If you have any questions let me know! Thanks.

This Friday is also Sharing Day and it is group #2’s turn. Those who will be sharing are: **Kees, Evan, Chase and Jeffrey**. It is also **Aleah’s** sharing day as she was absent last Friday.

Thanks to those of you who have returned your child’s information sheets and, for afternoon students, **snack fees**. If you need another copy of these forms please let me know.

Ask Me’s...

- ...to sing the Apple Song for you
- ...to read my Apple book with you
- ...what is our letter of the week?
- ...what do you call people who write books? (afternoon students)
- ...who is my buddy(s)?
- ...to remember to return my library books *tomorrow*
- ...what we baked Tuesday
- ...what we made with Marissa Wednesday
- ...to read with you 20 minutes each day

I hope you all have a great week!

Jenny

YOUNGERS’ CLASS Notes

This year we haven't had to wait at all to begin celebrating class birthdays. Hunter turned 7 last week and Chechio will be 6 this Saturday. One of the school's traditions has been for families to commemorate a child's birthday by donating a well-loved book to the NVS library. The Kimbroughs have sent one of Hunter's favorites for Linda Link to add to the collection. Years from now, children and their families will find the bookplate with Hunter's name in the front of *The Rainbow Goblin*.

I hope the homework experience was helpful for students and parents this week. Reactions to the very idea of homework are always interesting. Please let me know how it's going. Again this week I'll send lettering practice and the reading assignment for every school night (weekend nights are a bonus). Reading is never out of style; the other homework will take different forms as the school year progresses.

After lunch recess each day, Kate works with Youngers students on focused reading. Each student is reading a book within his or her developmental zone and keeping track of words that are unfamiliar. Kate conferences with

the students individually and together they create a sight-word pack for practicing. This pack of words will soon come home for additional practice, and so that you can see for yourselves the early progress students are making.

At our class meeting on Tuesday, students voted for their top two special classes so far. Going to Linda's library topped the charts, and every other outside-the-classroom offering--art, drama and music--received votes. Thanks to Karen, Sue and Eric for their work in those classes. I forgot to tell students they could vote for P.E., which would have been equally popular, I think, based on the happy sounds I heard from the field last Friday when Amy was leading our class. We are fortunate to have such good teachers in such an array of subject areas.

Conversation starters this week:

What does a t-chart look like?

Can you show me how to use one?

What sounds do these letters make: b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k?

Which of these letters make two sounds instead of just one?

How do you tell how many parts a word has?

What can you do with your hand and your chin to help figure that out?

How does that help you spell the word?

What's in your journal this week?

Friday's beach cleanup will begin at 8:40 at the Neskowin Wayside. Students who carpool can be delivered directly to the wayside that morning. We'll pick up litter on village streets and return to school in parent volunteers' cars by 10 a.m. If you'd like to help us that morning, please let the school office know by Thursday. Thanks.

Best wishes for the week ahead. Enjoy these first days of fall.

John

YOUNGERS' AFTERNOON NOTES

As John mentioned before, we do an afternoon meeting together as a 'tag-you're-it' transition, which works for all of us (children and teachers). It's been great partnering with John to work with the Youngers, and I'm enjoying my afternoons immensely!

Focused Reading is an activity that we do every afternoon. During this time, the children pick a book that has words that are both challenging and known, and while they're reading to themselves, they're writing down those that are hard. When they read to me, I write down words that they either know or successfully sound out; these are their sight words. It seems to me that each of them is pretty pleased with seeing the number of words that they know and/or are learning. We had a conversation about being more comfortable while reading, and we're going to experiment with doing it in the Beginners' Room (I'm good friends with the teacher)! They've picked the places they want to be for the next week; our experiment starts TODAY! Look for a list coming home on Thursdays with your child's sight words.

We met Katie on Monday (she's the new Garden and Grounds teacher), and the kids were pretty impressed with the ability to come out of a specials' class with something to eat. They've already asked how often they have G&G; I think they want more herbs.

Please bring library books back on Thursday. They'll be with Linda Thursday afternoon, and be able to check out more when the others are returned.

ASK ME:

- ◆ which herb (mint or chives) I liked the best
- ◆ about classroom clean-up jobs and which one I'm doing this week
- ◆ about reading in the Beginners' classroom

Kate

MIDDLES' CLASS Notes

Thank you so very, very much to the many parents who made the sleepover a success. Thank you, Aston Case, for sleeping over as the boys' chaperone. I hope you were able to catch up on your sleep during the weekend. Thank you, Linda, Sharon, Danyel, Karen, and Mary for helping with the meals. Thank you, Amy for guiding the students through games and reflection. Thank you, Karen White, for the great art project. The goals of the sleepover, bringing students together to form positive working relationships, were well met, thanks to all the help we received from so many supportive adults.

I'll be out of school this week due to a case of the flu (which is not H1N1). The students have enjoyed their time with other teachers and the teachers who have been filling in for me have given good reports about your children. They have enjoyed the students' enthusiasm and cooperation. Because I have been spending 20 plus hours a day in bed, my notes are short this week and the students will not be getting a new homework page. I hope to be back in the flow Thursday, but it depends on what the doctor has to say.

Jackie

What's New?

- Mira joins Middles
- States of matter
- Marissa, Sherry, and Kate substitute for Jackie

September Events

- ★ **Sept. 23** Autumnal Equinox—Labyrinth Walk
- ★ **Sept. 25** Fall Revival, Beach Cleanup

OLDERS' CLASS Notes

The sunny weather has invited us outside every day this week. On Monday we were treated to an extra PE with the Middles class and bonded over games of Hospital Tag and Fishy-Fishy. I've been getting my daily workouts by participating in these activities, and am always amazed by the endurance of the students. It's clear that we have an active student body. In the Olders' class 8 out of 9 students participate in an afterschool sport and 100% of our students have hobbies they practice regularly, ranging from guitar practice to reading. An active life also often means a busy life, and as school has begun, I've noticed that students are sometimes a bit weary in the morning as they are adjusting to their new schedules. It's great for me to hear back from parents and students about how homework, school, extracurricular activities, and family life are meshing. We are all going through a process of adjustment right now, and regular communication at home and school will help keep life smooth.

Speaking of **transitions**, the Olders are getting daily practice at moving from one class period to the next. Often this switch in subjects involves a series of oral directions that help students prepare for their next task. As a group, we've been learning a great deal about ourselves through the process. For example, it's not difficult for us to use up over 20 minutes of our day in this transition time. Interestingly, we've increased our efficiency by employing new strategies for giving and receiving directions such as writing information on the board, asking students to give or repeat directions in their own words, physically demonstrating what needs to get done, and timing and observing our switches.

Dinner Table Discussion

- What is your family's energy level like when you get home from school/work?
- What routines at home help you to relax, enjoy each other, and wind down at the end of the day?
- What does it mean to analyze the results of an experiment? How did we analyze our Playground Physics experiments this week?
- What goals (behavior and academic) are you setting for yourself this year?

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This week students turned in their first chunk of **homework assignments**. I was pleased; seven of the nine students had completed 100% of their work. Those who weren't quite done happily completed the rest of their work over recess. It is important for each of the Olders to have an early sense of their ability to succeed in homework completion, so let's keep the lines of communication open as a way of encouraging each other and watching out for weak spots.

Finally, I've been energized this week to see the variety of **goals** students are setting for themselves. They are often very accurate in analyzing their strengths and areas for growth. As students looked at their math assessments this week, they pledged to practice such skills as subtraction and addition of fractions, long division, finding the area of a triangle, taking more time in problem-solving, and getting better at storytelling. Overall, their goals were clear and specific. Reading and literacy goals ranged from finishing 80 pages in one week to reading out loud in class. I hope you get the chance to discuss these goals with your child at home. We create these to become excited and inspired about learning, and to give ourselves benchmarks to reach for along the way.

Enjoy your week!

Amy

COMMUNITY NEWS

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