

# PAW PRINTS



Web-Version

Volume 2 Issue 11

February 5, 2009

Rock Creek Forest Elementary School

Mr. David Chia, Principal

Mrs. Stacy Ashton, Assistant Principal

## Principal's Update

Dear Parents & Guardians,



We are off to a snowy start during the second semester of this school year. Despite the weather delays and interruptions (which I'm sure our children enjoy), teachers are working with diligence each day to provide quality learning for your child. As I walk through classes, I see students actively engaged in the learning process. Questions are asked, projects are completed, read alouds in the primary classes and literature discussions groups in the intermediate classes are occurring, and there is a strong feeling of purpose and direction by students and staff as we work and learn each day.

We have also enjoyed some terrific school events for our students such as the Reading Rocks Day where guest readers read to all students and our annual family event with Multicultural Night. A special thanks goes to **Ms. Julie Drizin** and **Mrs. Ashton** for coordinating a fun-filled Multicultural Night.

As we begin February, we are excited about the Student Government Association activities that include **Operation Haiti** where students are collecting items for a school in need and a February Fundraiser with **Valentine Notes and Pencils**. February will be an exciting of learning with events to create memories for our students.

*Mr. Chia  
Principal*

## School News

### Student News



We celebrate with our fifth grader students who represent Rock Creek Forest in the County Honors Chorus!

### Staff Update

We welcome **Mr. Daman Harris** back to RCF as he returns from long-term leave. We thank **Ms. Stephanie Herndon** who has been our long-term substitute while Mr. Harris was on leave. We also welcome **Mr. Jacob Johnson** back as he returns from long-term leave. We are grateful to **Mrs. Brenda Holandes** who has worked as our substitute manager while Mr. Johnson was on leave.

### Valentines Day Parties- Friday, Feb. 13, 2009



Valentines Day parties will begin after 2:00 pm in homeroom classes on Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. Your homeroom teacher will communicate specific party time and activities. All parents and visitors are required to sign-in at the main office before proceeding to classrooms. Thanks for your cooperation.

### School Meals Reminder

As a reminder, students can apply for the free and reduced-price meal program at any time during the school year. If your family experiences a decline in household income and you qualify for meal benefits, please consider applying for free or reduced price meals. Applications, in multiple languages, are available on the Division of Food and Nutrition Service webpage or by contact Mrs. Flores, cafeteria manager, at 301.650.6410.

### Discipline Policy Review

Every three years, local MCPS schools review the discipline policy and make adjustments based on data and feedback. A parent survey will soon be sent to parents for feedback. If you are interested in being part of the workgroup that reviews the RCF Discipline Policy and Bee-Bavior Program, please contact Mr. Chia at 301.650.6410. The first of two meetings will be

held once the surveys to students, parents and staff have been completed.

### Our PTA at Work



What does the RCF-PTA do for our students? With a focus of integrating technology into our instruction and through the generous support of our parents, we have been able to raise enough funds to purchase and install a Promethean Board! This tool is similar to a Smart Board. There will be many learning activities for our classes once the board is installed in our media center later this month.

### New Parent Resource Room

We have created a new parent resource room that will allow more space for small groups of parents to meet. This room also allows for individual student testing when needed. We created this room by moving our IDA, currently Mrs. Willet, to the administrative office. The old parent resource room next to the cafeteria is now the PTA mailroom where our second copier and PTA mailboxes are located.

### Frederick Keys for Reading

Rock Creek Forest Elementary School will participate in the "Frederick Keys for Reading" program. In order for your child to receive a free ticket to the April 18, 2009 baseball game they must fill out the orange "Keys for Reading" bookmark, have a parent/guardian sign the bookmark, and return it to the designated basket in the Media Center. The flyer from the Frederick Keys gives additional important information. Your child has to read four books to qualify for the baseball ticket. Please feel free to contact Mrs. Clara Register, reading specialist, at 301.650.6410 or via email with any questions.

### Class News

**Kindergarten** - This year has flown by! It is hard to believe we have completed half of the school year. We want to let you know the topics we will be covering in the third quarter of the school year. This will enable you to support our program at home, which will help your child succeed at school. In **reading**



**and language arts** this quarter, we will be continuing to read Folk Tales, engaging students in discussions of books, and helping students make connections. There will be an increased focus on reading comprehension as well as retelling stories. Students will continue to receive small group reading instruction for independent reading. We will put an emphasis on our high frequency words and writing will be based on our word wall. This quarter's writing intent is "Writing to Persuade." In **mathematics** this quarter, we will be working on estimating, measuring, and weighing objects. We will also be examining three-dimensional figures. We will talk about before and after as well as different times of the day as a precursor to telling time. In **social studies** and **science**, we will continue studying "Myself and Others" and communities. We will continue to talk about seasons as well as living things. We are also planning our third field trip of this year. More details will follow! For our **Valentine's Day** parties on Friday, February 13, 2009, each teacher will work with their room parents to organize a simple party. Each teacher is creating a Valentine's making center to tie in with our handwriting objectives. Children will be making Valentine's cards at school for friends in our centers. However, children are also encouraged to work on their Valentine's cards at home if they wish to bring them on Valentine's Day.

*The Kindergarten Team - Isa Barnet, Silvia Goncalves, Veronica Lay, Brooke Mayhew and Dolly Xeron*

**First Grade** - The First Grade Team hopes that you are keeping warm this chilly winter! In February, to start off the third marking quarter, we will continue to practice our basic addition and subtraction facts in math. During language arts, we will be reading folktales and fairy tales for literary experience! *Please make sure your child continues to reads every night.* Maybe we will have some more snowy days to cuddle up and read together! We will continue to explore how to build, during our Constructions Unit during science this month. Moreover, we will focus on Economics in social studies to identify goods and

services in our communities. On Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, we will be celebrating **Valentine's Day** in our classrooms; more details will be sent home at a later date. On February 19<sup>th</sup> we will be taking a field trip to the **Imagination Stage** in Bethesda to see *Zomo the Rabbit*; more information and permission slips will follow. Thank you for all the ways you help our children and Rock Creek Forest.

*The First Grade Team - Olga Allen, Debbie Cunningham, Nancy Morgan and Melissa Sanders*

**Second Grade** - Exciting things continue to happen in our second grade classes! In **science** we will begin our unit of *Balancing and Weighing*. Children explore the relationship between balance and weight and learn strategies for making comparisons. In **math**, we will continue to study two and three digit computation. Please continue to practice basic facts flashcards at home. We will also be beginning unit 4a which involves expressing the relationship between a part and a whole. We will model, read, and write numerals that represent fractions. In **social studies** we will move from examining the relationship among wants, goods, and services to the economic decision making process and its consequences. In writing, students will focus on writing to persuade. The goal of persuasive writing is to convince someone to think the way you do. In reading, students will read for literary experience and read to be informed. Students will practice strategies for taking tests. This will include multiple choice answers to a given question. **Please continue to read with your child every night for 20 minutes!** 😊

*The Second Grade Team - Lyndsay Fetrow, Erin Lisa, Yamalis Nieves and Eva Pacheco*

**Third Grade** - The third grade will be very active during the cold month of February. In math, we will begin our fourth unit, which deals with geometry concepts, which includes lines, angles, polygons, symmetry, congruence, and transformations. In reading, we will focus on reading for literary experience, which includes units on alliteration, personification, simile, and metaphors. In addition, we will be teaching test-taking strategies and will introduce the students

to MSA Vocabulary that the students need to be aware of as we get closer to the MSA test in March. In writing, the students will be writing to persuade, as they will take a stance on an issue, and try to convince someone else to their own beliefs. In social studies, we will begin working on transportation systems, and how it has an impact on the community. And finally in science, we will continue to work on chromatography and crime lab chemistry.

*The Third Grade Team - Nicole Cohen, Rodrigo Godinez, Veronica Kheradmand and Matt Rosenthal*

**Fourth Grade** - As we move into the third quarter of this school year, we will work on the following topics for the month of February.



In **math**, we will focus on the topics of common fractions, mixed numbers, adding and subtracting fractions and mixed numbers, finding equivalent fractions and decimals to the thousandths place. Also we will continue to work to build proficiency with basic facts. Additionally we will be practicing problem-solving skills. In **reading**, we will work on different genres of literature during February. The children will read plays and autobiographies. They will "act out" plays with "Reader's Theater." They will be reading independently and in small groups. Every student will also interact with a variety of texts for the purpose of reading to be informed. In **writing**, we will work on grammar lessons and students will publish a piece of persuasive writing. They will develop their compositions through the writing process, which includes prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. The students will have the opportunity to look at the "pros and cons" of a topic, to consider different solutions, and, additionally, to prepare an oral presentation. Teachers will evaluate student work based on their ideas, organization, word choice, grammar and fluency. In **science**, students will move into the chemistry science unit. Students will observe liquids, solids, and gases and experiment with the effects of temperature on matter. These investigations will lead the students to an understanding of how matter changes states.

Students will also examine the most common example of changes of state by observing the weather and specifically the water cycle. In **social studies**, we will use a variety of texts and other materials to develop student understanding of immigration, with a concentration on immigrants who came to Maryland. Additionally, the students will read about and discuss the contributions of many African-Americans to our society as we celebrate "African-American History Month."

*The Fourth Grade Team - Jan Bloom, Maria Garcia and Laura Perez*

**Fifth Grade** - Our fifth grade students are quickly approaching the end of their Rock Creek Forest experience as we begin our third quarter. In **reading** and **language arts** this quarter, we focus on developing strategies related to both reading for literary experience and reading to be informed. The former topic exposes our students to literary plays and science fiction while the latter presents them with the ability to use comprehension strategies when confronted with various types of written media by focusing specifically on their text features. Our writing tasks will revolve around the dual themes of writing to inform and writing to persuade.

Our **Math 5** students will be finalizing their third unit of study dedicated to the application of the four mathematical operations to fractions, decimals and percentages. They have also honed their skill in converting numerical units from one form of expression to an equivalent representation in another.

Our **Math 6** students have recently completed their 2CD end-of-unit assessment related to fractions, decimals and percentages. They are currently initiating their study of geometry in unit 3 where they will be measuring angles and applying formulas to calculate the area and volume of various geometric figures.

As we move into the third unit of study in social studies, students will be reading maps and familiarizing themselves with our country's geography. Historically, they will focus on the evolution of our form of government and the

confrontation of ideas that produced our sense of nationality.

During **science**, fifth graders are finalizing the unit related to magnetism and electricity. Students will be administered an end-of-unit assessment related to the concepts and applications practiced during our recent investigations on this matter.

*The Fifth Grade Team - Mary Crilley, Marvin Kopit, Eric McDonald and Ivelisse Yordan-Torres*

### Community News

#### Homework Hotline Live

MCPS Instructional Television produces Homework Hotline Live which allows students to call into the program with questions about homework. If your child would like some homework support, they may want to check out the show on MCPS TV.



### Calendar



- Feb. 10 - 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School!
- Feb. 12 - Cultural Arts Assembly (Grades 2, 3, 4)  
"How Old is a Hero"
- Feb. 13 - Valentine's Day Parties (2:00 pm)
- Feb. 16 - **President's Day (NO SCHOOL)**
- Feb. 25 - B-CC Jazz Ensemble (All Grades)

### Kindergarten Orientation Thursday, May 21, 2009

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*Paw Prints is published on the first and third Thursday of each month with school information for parents. The first Thursday edition (odd issue numbers) includes grade level news and the third Thursday edition (even issue numbers) includes teacher specialist news. The web-version is modified from the hard copy version that you receive in Backpack Thursday.*

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