

# Holland Brook Happenings

February 2009



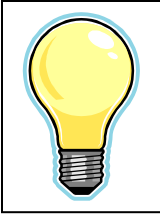
## The Fabulous Fourth Grade

In writer's workshop our fourth graders have been busy learning how to write personal narratives. In the coming weeks we will be focusing on how to write persuasive letters.

### Math

Diving deeper into math! This winter, we explored geometry. Students studied quadrilaterals and found the perimeter and area of regular and irregular polygons. Our students are continuing to take leadership roles during daily routines. Continuing into unit three, we are discovering various addition and subtraction methods. We are studying place value, using basic algebraic equations, and comparing numbers. When solving word problems, students set up simple algebraic equations and sometimes have two-steps.

At home, continue to practice your math facts for mastery and use your activity books as a guide for extra support.



### Super Scientists

Our fourth grade weather unit has come to an end. We are beginning to explore electricity. Throughout this unit students will be investigating some amazing things about the properties of magnets and circuits. We will be creating static electricity in the classroom, which is always a shocking experience! Our classrooms will be brighter as students begin to learn the basic circuitry needed for lighting a light bulb. Students will continue practicing building circuits, introduce switches to their projects, and then work on building an "electricity house" with a cooperative group. The "electricity house" will have working circuits and switches built by students. There will be lights, fans and even more! The houses will be completed in the spring and will be on display for all to admire.



## The Fantastic Fifth Grade

Fifth graders are having a fabulous February! In social studies, we are wrapping up our study of the Age of Exploration and diving into our study of the Southern colonies. Students are working diligently on learning the importance of trade, the influence of other cultures, and the results of European exploration. In science, our hardworking Bobcats are learning about environments, particularly classification and living versus nonliving characteristics. Try asking your child why a flower that has been cut is still considered a living thing. This may lead to an informative discussion!

In math, students have been plugging away, working with decimals in Math Expressions. Students are becoming quite adept in *math talk*, as we're constantly talking about our methods and reasoning. In Everyday Math, fifth graders are concluding their unit in geometry. Give your child a quick quiz by asking about the properties of polygons. In language arts, many of our students are reading about a "changing planet," with a focus on nonfiction text. We are analyzing texts for main ideas and supporting details, as well as the sequence of events. In reading, we've been discussing the usefulness of graphic aids in understanding informational texts as well as various reading comprehension strategies. In writing workshop, students have been perfecting the five-paragraph persuasive essay. Did you know how persuasive your child can be? Ask about their favorite persuasive writing strategies. They've had a fantastic first half of the year, and we're looking forward to a super second half!



## **Musical Notes**

The musicians at HBS are busy at both grade levels. Our fourth graders have spent the month of January looking at the instruments of the orchestra and identifying them by sight and sound. I am hoping to better inform their choices, if they decide to begin instrumental studies in the fall at HBS. There are many helpful websites to learn more. Visit my website and you will find examples there.

Our fifth grade students are building major scales and using them to write melodies and choral accompaniments. From here, we will explore the bass clef and blues form, ending by mixing our own blues pieces, using garage band loops and bass patterns played into the laptops from our keyboards.



## **Chorus**

The chorus, band and orchestra performed in an evening concert on February 5, 2009 at 7 p.m. Great job everyone! Thanks so much for your hard work and commitment. Our next big performance is "Tom Sawyer," this year's musical at Holland Brook. That performance will take place on the evening of Wednesday, March 25, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.



## Science Lab Bits and Bytes

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

In fourth grade, we are completing our unit on Simple Machines. Each student is completing 8 stations around the science lab. Each station focuses on a simple machine or the invention process. They will demonstrate the knowledge they learned during the Simple Machine Unit.

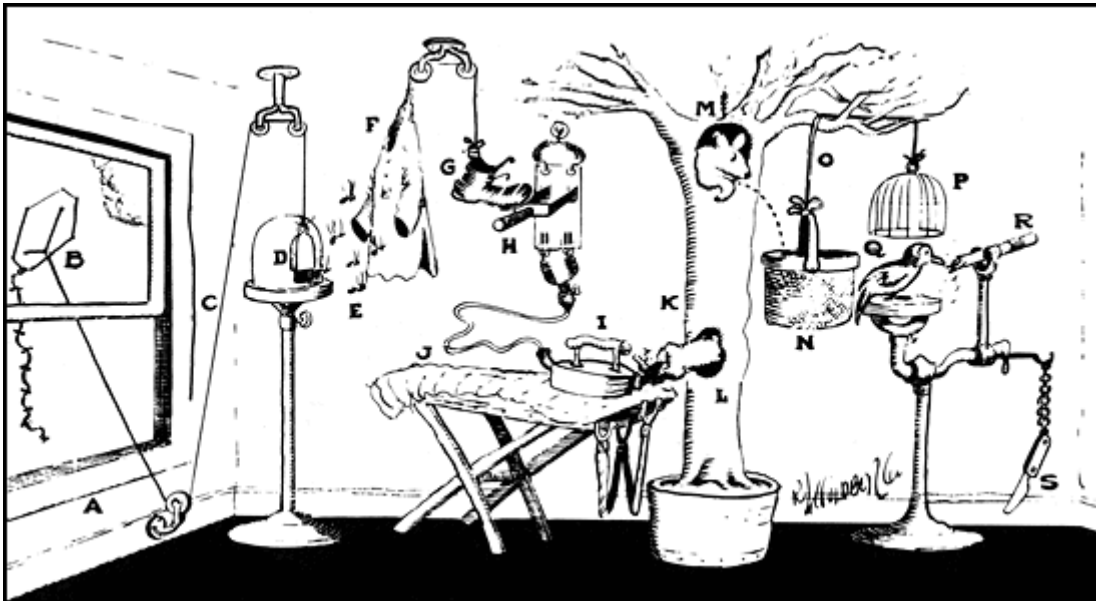
The students will also complete an internet scavenger hunt. Students will investigate inventions that were discovered by mistake. The students will learn about inventions like silly putty which was invented as a synthetic rubber during WWII. Students will also learn about the artist Rube Goldberg. He is an artist who utilizes simple machines to make easy tasks hard. To learn more about this artist, visit [www.rubegoldberg.com](http://www.rubegoldberg.com)

### Simplified Pencil Sharpener

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Rube Goldberg gets his think-tank working and evolves the simplified pencil-sharpener.

Open window (A) and fly kite (B). String (C) lifts small door (D) allowing moths (E) to escape and eat red flannel shirt (F). As weight of shirt becomes less, shoe (G) steps on switch (H) which heats electric iron (I) and burns hole in pants (J). Smoke (K) enters hole in tree (L), smoking out opossum (M) which jumps into basket (N), pulling rope (O) and lifting cage (P), allowing woodpecker (Q) to chew wood from pencil (R), exposing lead. Emergency knife (S) is always handy in case opossum or the woodpecker gets sick and can't work.

Our next unit is Astronomy. Students will learn about the solar system, our Earth, and stars including the sun. It is sure to be a galactic experience.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

In fifth grade, we are finishing our Food and Nutrition Unit. At the end of the unit, students worked in pairs or groups to complete a Fast Food Web Quest. Please visit the science lab part of the school's website for more information.

Our last activity will be a performance assessment. The HBS cafeteria found some mysterious food items in the refrigerators. Students will use tests (for example, starch test) that they learned in science lab to determine the ingredients of each mystery item.



## Instrumental Music

Congratulations to all 5<sup>th</sup> grade band and orchestra students who participated in the Winter Concert. They worked hard and did an excellent job! At lessons we will now be returning to our method books, and I will hand out music for the Spring Concert in May. Morning band and orchestra club rehearsals will not meet for the next several weeks, and will begin again in the first week of March.

The 5th grade lesson groups and schedule changed recently, in order to accommodate the new 4th grade strings program. Please visit the HBS Instrumental Music website (Classrooms --> Instrumental Music) to confirm any changes to your schedule or group.

Thank you!  
Mr. Hasselbring

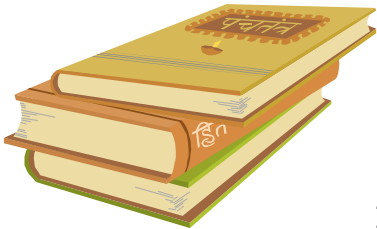


## Physical Education

Yes, the weather outside is frightful, but the Gym is so delightful! Our Bobcats have been working hard and having fun this month with an assortment of games, challenges, and cooperative activities. These activities are developing our Bobcat's strength, endurance, agility, and flexibility while emphasizing teamwork, respect and sportsmanship.

A variety of tag games have been offered including elbow tag, triangle tag, 15 second tag and round up tag.

Our cooperative activities include the group juggle, speed pass juggle, and tarp and cage ball challenges.



## Media Center

Here is what 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades will be working on in upcoming months:

4<sup>th</sup> Grade is going to start "A Passport to Genre." The unit will include: Humor, Newberry, Adventure, Biography, Fantasy, Historical, Mystery, Realistic and Science Fiction. Every week students will visit a different genre in the library. Their final project will be the production of a travel brochure. As a reading incentive each student will receive a passport to keep in their library folder; however, participation in the passport segment is strictly voluntary. To receive a stamp in their passport, students will need to 1) choose a book from a genre and get my approval. 2) Read the book 3) completes a Genre Work Sheet. As students get stamps in their passports, they win a small prize.

5<sup>th</sup> Grade has spent the last few weeks exploring the resources available for research and is now ready to begin learning the Big6 research skills. The six steps are (1) Task Definition, (2) Information Seeking Strategies, (3) Location and Access, (4) Use of Information, (5) Synthesis, and (6) Evaluation. Students will be researching a topic of their choosing and each week will examine one of the six steps in the research process. Students who use their time wisely will find

that all work can be completed during library class. Their final projects will be due just before spring break. To learn more about the Big6 model visit their website at [www.big6.com](http://www.big6.com).

### Enrichment News

#### Knowledge Masters Team places first in New Jersey

Thirteen 5<sup>th</sup> graders have been meeting since November during lunch and recess to prepare for an online academic competition. Their efforts paid off as they ranked first in New Jersey out of 15 schools and seventh nationwide out of 225 schools. Members of the Knowledge Masters team are: Tess Barrett, Chandni Khawaja, Sammi Triolo, Matt Guliano, Sam Weber, Dilan Sishta, Tom Auriemma, Ryan Van Doren and Stephen Boylan,

The team will again compete in March. Good luck Knowledge Masters and congratulations for a job well done.

Wow, do they know their geography!

Finding a Holland Brook School National Geography Bee Winner was difficult this year! Frank Toresco and Alex Cicala certainly impressed all of us with their extensive geography knowledge. After several rounds of advanced questions, Frank was named the winner and Alex the runner-up. Congratulations to both boys for an excellent competition!

#### Spelling Bee

All 5<sup>th</sup> grade students participated in the Spelling Bee. After the written round, class winners met in the enrichment classroom to continue the Bee. Stephen Boylan and Maggie Meiman were both such amazing spellers that we thought we would never have a champion. As the words became more difficult, both students rose to the occasion and continued spelling really difficult words. Congratulations to Maggie for being the school winner and Stephen for being the runner-up. Maggie will compete in the next level of the competition in February at Northhampton Community College. Good luck, Maggie!

#### The Pringle Project?

Students were asked to design a container for shipping a single Pringles potato chip, via the US Postal Service to students in Shawnee, Kansas. Students in our partner school completed the same challenge and sent their packages to HBS.



To make this activity even more challenging, students packages needed to have the smallest volume and smallest mass that would protect the chip and allow the Pringle to arrive safely at its destination undamaged.

Upon arrival the packages were evaluated and scored using a specific format and equation. Congratulations to Christina Pierson who engineered the smallest, lightest package and was the overall winner in both schools. Mark Lalor's package was awarded the third place overall rating. Both students received a package of Pringles for their success!

## World Language

What wonderful learning is going on in French class?

5th grade is enjoying la cuisine francaise. Your child has created a menu of delicious Plat du jours, desserts et boissons. Ask about what's on your child's menu! We will also experience a real French Creperie in our classroom. Thank you to all our parents who will be contributing to this delicious event! For dates and times, please refer to the calendar on this site! Bon Appetit!

4th grade is studying weather. We have learned all the cardinal directions and basic weather terms in French. Your child is creating a weather map and will be reporting the weather to the class, in French, of course! We had some fun watching France 2 News television and listening to the weatherperson. WOW! They speak so quickly but many students were able to understand many weather terms used. Bravo! If you want to check the weather with your child go to: [www. france2meteo.com](http://www.france2meteo.com).

## Student Leadership

The Student Leadership Club would like to thank our Bobcat families for their continued community support.

On January 8<sup>th</sup>, the Student Leadership Club welcomed over 300 grandparents to our annual Holiday Celebration. Throughout the celebration, grandparents were able to share stories about their past school experiences, and grandchildren made connections and comparisons between school today and school yesterday. Grandparents were then invited to watch as the HBS Student Leaders performed skits, a small group of instrumentalists played, and the chorus sang a selection of holiday songs. HBS students had

a wonderful day with their grandparents! Student Leaders would like to thank families, teachers, and the HSA for making this wonderful event possible.

Holland Brook's "Giving Tree," located in the main concourse during this holiday season, was crammed with mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks which we will be donating to the Starfish Foundation and Flemington Food Pantry. Holland Brook Bobcats decorated the tree with 257 donations! Thank you for helping less fortunate children stay warm this winter!

Coming Attractions.....

February 3 <sup>rd</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup>	Sweet Message Project
February 12 <sup>th</sup>	Sweet Message Delivery
February 20 <sup>th</sup>	Math-A-Thon Assembly

## **HSA Updates**

### **Past Events:**

Holiday Shop gave the kids a great opportunity to buy gifts for family and friends. Thanks to Angie Gibble and Michele Lazarczyk for all their hard work in running the shop.

Grandparent Day was a great success. Thanks to all the HR Reps for coordinating snacks and drinks for everyone! The Teacher Gift Collection went well again with the help of our HR Reps.

### **Upcoming Events:**

Casino Night is March 7<sup>th</sup>. Tickets on sale 2/6.

Bingo Night coming up on March 12<sup>th</sup>.

Book Fair is March 9 - 13<sup>th</sup>.

Field Day T-shirts will be for sale in February.

**Cultural Arts:**

Ball In The House on December 11th got rave reviews Kids loved it!  
Rock Roots Performance was a great success. Thank you to Kelley  
Dameo and Megan Atlasman for arranging these events.

**Box Tops:**

A check coming in the amount of \$726 from Box Tops!!  
Our new goal is to use Box Top money towards playground  
updates/equipment. Thank you to Vicki Grimes and Jen Crisci.  
The school is looking for parents interested in heading a committee to  
aid in playground development.

**HBS School Store:**

The store will be open for business once again. We look forward to  
some fun shopping! See you this spring. Chairpersons to be announced.  
Volunteers will be needed.