

# ***Holland Brook Happenings***

October 2007

## *Thoughts from the Principal...*

Dear Bobcats,

I am pleased to report that the 2007 / 2008 school year is off to a fantastic start. I have visited all classrooms on multiple occasions and witnessed our Bobcats involved in innovative and engaging lessons. Holland Brook teachers are effectively challenging their students to reach for the stars academically and also to learn and practice great habits of mind and body.

Students are not only engaged in awesome classroom based activities, they also had the opportunity to enroll in our music programs or in an extracurricular club. The response to this year's club and music offerings was overwhelming. The following chart details the number of students currently enrolled in our clubs and programs. As you can see, we offer a variety of choices and the demand for clubs is significant. For instance, 79% of our fifth grade class is enrolled in our instrumental program, led by Mr. Schwam. Please encourage your children to take advantage of the great programs offered at Holland Brook School.

Sincerely,

Mr. Llano  
Principal

<b>Clubs 2007-2008</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>	<b>Total</b>
Amateur Astronomers	55	14	69
Animals in Science	67	7	74
Art	37		37
Authors	26		26
Band		152	152
Battle of Books	12	12	24
Chorus		86	86
Conversational French	13	4	17
CSI: Forensic		73	73
Destination Imagination		21	21
Drama		36	36
Environmental	14	8	22
Expressing Ideas in Art	14		14
Family Math	9		9
Family Science		9	9
Family Tools		4	4
Globe Trek	21	5	26
Instrumental		198	198
Jr. Recorder	16		16
Keyboard		22	22
Knitting		11	11
Literary Magazine	7		7
Mysterious Writing	29	9	38
Newspaper		20	20
Orchestra		46	46
Quilting	17	2	19
Rocketry		50	50
Scrapbooking	44	6	50
Seeing Art		12	12
SWAT		30	30
World Games	45		45
Yearbook		28	28
<b>Totals</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>1291</b>



### Fabulous Fourth Grade

Our fourth graders have been hard at work in science class. We have been learning about how clouds are formed, weather patterns, and various types of weather that impact our environment. With this unit of study, we have also been performing many types of experiments to help us better understand how weather impacts our world each and every day. Keep an eye out for more weather information in the upcoming weeks. Soon, we will be leaving weather and entering the electrifying world of electricity!!

In social studies, the students have been discussing the formation of our country's government, in addition to the three branches of government. Ask them to explain them to you! Additionally, students have continued to study the five regions of the United States, and are beginning to understand each region's history, culture, land formations, and people. Our first unit of study begins in the Northeast Region. Stay with us as we journey across the United States!

In math, students have been exploring those multiplication facts!! We have been playing games, and participating in many other activities to help us better grasp our

multiplication and division facts. In addition, fourth graders have been continuing to explore mean, median, mode, and range when collecting and arranging data in tables. We are quite the mathematicians!

The fourth graders have been so busy during language arts! We have been reading stories such as "Night of the Pufflings", "The Emperor and the Kite", and "The Baker's Neighbor". With these stories, the students have been exploring how to summarize information within texts, and identifying the narrative elements within fictional stories. In writing workshop, students have been hard at work learning our routines and procedures for writing workshop, and getting into writing personal narratives. They are becoming quite the budding authors!





### **Fantastic Fifth Grade**

We would like to thank all the parents that were able to join us for Back-to-School night. We enjoyed sharing the exciting activities and curriculum that we have planned for your children this year.

The fifth graders had a fabulous day investigating and experimenting at the Science Festival. Learning about penguins was really cool! Dissecting a real cow's eye was amazing!! Being a detective and fingerprinting was awesome. Investigating invertebrates gave the students the opportunity to hold a starfish, a sea urchin, and a horseshoe crab. Ask why the special ability of canines was explosive! The fifth graders would like to thank Mrs. Sepesi for providing such a wonderful Science Festival.

### **Science**

During our science unit on Mixtures and Solutions, our fifth grade chemists have created various mixtures and solutions using different solids and water. To separate the mixtures and solutions, they utilized screen filters, paper filters, and evaporation. They are very busy investigating the answers to questions about saturation, solubility, and concentration. The

students were amazed while observing and comparing the crystals that formed after the water had evaporated from the saturated salt solution and the saturated citric acid solution. They are looking forward to the Kool-aid experiments where they will use their sense of taste, touch, and sight to discover which one is more concentrated and which one is the least concentrated.

### **Language Arts**

In language arts, the students have read many stories from the anthology including, The Hot and Cold Summer, Sees Behind Trees, Yang the Third, and Her Impossible Dream, Dear Mrs. Parks, and Elena. The stories in this theme are realistic fiction and historical fiction. Throughout this theme, entitled "Look Inside," the students learned about young people who discover their strengths and abilities. As the students read, they were able to make and confirm predictions, create mental images of the characters involved in different situations, and discuss narrative elements of the story. The students are able to identify the main problem or conflict of the plot and how it is resolved. Our next theme is entitled "Team Work." In this theme, the students will discover the importance of working together to accomplish their goals.

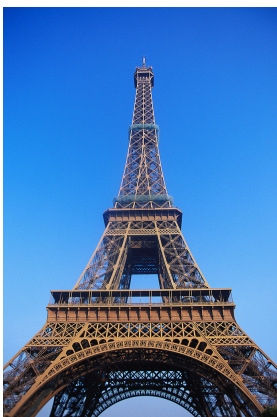
### **Social Studies**

As the marking period comes to a close, fifth grade classes are wrapping up their study of the five Themes of Geography. Through our study, students become familiar with using an atlas, reading maps, finding places in the world, figuring out how humans adapt to and interact with their environment, how information, goods and people move and how the world is made up of many regions.

The next unit we will study is on early European explorers. We will look at the impact early exploration had on North and South America.

## **Math**

We began the school year exploring factors and products of numbers. Students learned how to test for divisibility, how to draw an array to model multiplication and how to classify whole numbers as prime or composite. Next, we learned algorithms for addition, subtraction and multiplication of whole and decimal numbers. Students learned the importance of making estimates as a means of checking whether an answer to a computational problem is reasonable. As the marking period comes to a close, students are reviewing division algorithms for whole and decimal numbers.



## **World Language**

The Aristobobcats are making fantastique progres en francais!

Fourth graders are writing stories about their animals friends! Your children know many animal, colors and adjectives in French. Ask

them to share a few of the words with you. Over the next few weeks, we will be sharing out our stories in class. When the stories do come home, please take some time to enjoy your child's story with him/her. You will surely be impressed with their efforts.

Fifth graders have been enjoying our unit on clothing and have created some very interesting posters which are on display in the hallway by the cafeteria. Please stop by and enjoy their hard work!

If you would like copies of the vocabulary your child is learning please send me an e-mail and I will send information to you. Practice at home makes progress!

I encourage you to explore language learning at home with your child. A helpful website is <http://french.about.com/library/begin/> Click around for interesting information about the French language, French speakers around the world and *la francophonie*. This site also offers the opportunity for audio to help with pronunciation.

*Merci beaucoup, Madame Baldwin*



## **Physical Education**

The Holland Brook School "Bobcat Hall of Fame" is on display in the east corridor outside of the gymnasium. The display lists the Presidential Record Holders for the various components of the Presidential Physical Fitness Challenge. A boy and a girl are listed for each event in all grade levels. The components of the Presidential Physical

Fitness test are Pull-Ups, Bent Arm Hang, Curl-Ups, Shuttle Run, ½ mile or mile Run-Jog-Walk and Sit and Reach.

Judging by the outstanding effort our Bobcats are making during our physical education classes we are very confident that there will be some Holland Brook School world records broken this year. Good Luck, Bobcats!

Mr. D'Alonzo and Mr. Lillia



All About Art

The fourth graders are finishing up their Keith Haring figure designs and they look awesome! They learned about Pop Art and about the history of Mr. Haring. They will next be learning about symmetry and using warm and cool colors. The fifth graders are finishing their abstract portraits based upon Pablo Picasso and cubism. The next project will focus on complimentary pairs of colors. The Bobcats are proving to be great artists and I am sure that Van Gogh would be proud!!

Ms. Coyle

Georges Seurat  
"The Drawings"  
28 October 2007 - 07 January 2008

The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art  
Exhibition Galleries, sixth floor



## Musical Notes

Notes from the music room...

Throughout the month of October the music room has been filled with the sounds of note reading and rhythm practice. Our fourth grade musicians are learning new recorder fingerings and getting ready to play music in two parts. They are dividing music into measures, playing and singing with attention to dynamics and tempo, and identifying rhythmic patterns through notation and sound.

Our fifth graders have started to build chords and chord progressions for playing and improvising music. We had an all-class ensemble of xylophones, metalophones and keyboards and recorders in our first exploration of 12-bar blues. Thanks to our new ipod, many classes were able to record our finished products and listen to them over the sound system in the music room.

We are beginning work on our holiday concerts. Don't forget to highlight the dates and times in your calendars.

4<sup>th</sup> grade .....December 18

9:30 and 2:00

5<sup>th</sup> grade.....December 19

9:30 and 2:00



### **Media Center**

November 13<sup>th</sup> is National Young Reader's Day; so why not celebrate by taking your young reader to the library! Especially given that 4<sup>th</sup> grade will be spending the next few weeks exploring literary elements such as plot, conflict, character traits, points of view, and setting.

While fourth grade is delving into the inner workings of literature; 5<sup>th</sup> grade will be investigating the available reference resources available at our library. We will be doing this in preparation for learning the research process. We will begin by reexamining the World Almanac and I'm sure we will have several exciting rounds of World Almanac. This is a game very much like *Jeopardy* where teams of students

compete against each other answering questions from the World Almanac. From the almanac we will continue to review library reference materials with a lesson on and student demonstrations of periodicals.

Mrs. Berkin, Librarian

### **Chorus**

The Holland Brook Chorus is off to a great start! We are meeting every Tuesday morning in the music room. We are having a wonderful time learning to stretch our voices and sing in various styles. Our first school performance will be at the HBS spirit assembly on November 2. We can hardly wait!



### **Instrumental Music**

After 6 weeks of lessons, all students have learned how to put together and take care of their instruments, and learned their first 5 notes. With these notes there are quite a few simple and recognizable melodies such as "Hot Cross Buns", "Mary Had a Little Lamb", and "Lightly Row" that they have begun learning. Many students have earned their white belts for performing are well-practiced, selected exercise. These performances were



digitally recorded and will be the second track on the audio portfolio CD I will be compiling for each student throughout the year. Please make a note of your child's lesson day, as the schedule might get tricky with all of the days off in November. Day 5 is not always going on Tuesday anymore! Also, please remember that all students need to get their practice log initialed by a parent every week.

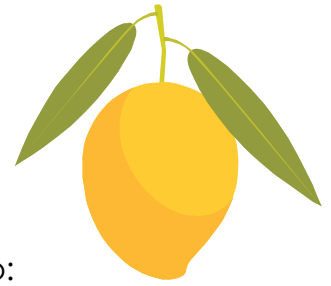


### **Science News**

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Lab:

In fourth grade, we will continue to learn about the 6 simple machines. We learned about the wheel and axle by designing and making spinning tops. Check out the science lab portion of the HBS website for some photos of our spinning tops. Our highest record was 37 seconds.

Our next machine will be the lever and how they help us in our everyday life. We will also learn about how ancient civilizations used levers to build many wonders of the world. We will build our own levers and attempt to balance the 2 loads. Our second activity will be to design and build a mini catapult.

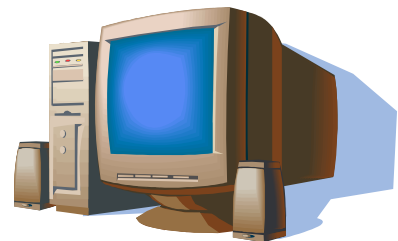


#### 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Lab:

In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, we continue our unit on Food and Nutrition. The students are using various indicators to help us learn what is in different food items. Students used a natural indicator, red cabbage juice, and pH strips to determine whether liquids were acid, base, or neutral. In part 2 of the acid test, we learned how to measure the amount of acid in liquids by using baking soda as an indicator. The results are in. We tested 5 different drinks: lemon, lime, orange, citrus, and sprite. Our 5<sup>th</sup> grade scientists proved with 99% accuracy that lemon juice contained the most acid with lime coming in a close second. The students indicated for a carbohydrate, starch, in several food items using iodine. Our next set of tests will determine which drink has the most vitamin C. We will be using indophenol as an indicator. Stay tuned for the results of this experiment in the next Holland Brook Happenings.

Ms. Woolley

**Science Fact of the Month:** NASA finds Saturn's Moons may be creating new rings.



### **Computer Technology Classes**

This year computer class is slightly different. Students come to the computer lab with their classroom teachers and work

on curriculum related projects. Mrs. Donna Ray, the computer teacher, and the classroom teachers are working together to come up with integrated projects. All activities are curriculum related while incorporating the technology benchmarks for the Readington School District. Students learn how to save their work on their own personal drive, better known as the P-drive. Students will create folders for different subjects and save their work in the appropriate folders on their P-drives. Many fourth and fifth grade classes wrote Back-To-School Night letters using Microsoft Word 2003. Using these letters and other writing projects, students are learning the mechanics of Microsoft Word and the computer. Some skills that will be covered are copy/cut/paste, setting margins, find/replace, paragraph formatting, working with clipart and word art, and adding borders. Please don't forget to ask your children to explain and demonstrate these new found skills. They should be very willing to help you write your reports and letters, and organize your computer files!

Fifth graders have begun working on their Major League Baseball Averages of their favorite players. They typed their data into Microsoft Excel Spreadsheets and then created colorful Line Graphs showing the progress of their players. Fourth graders also began working on Microsoft Excel by creating weather charts for state capitals. They will use their monthly data to create graphs and then PowerPoint presentations to demonstrate their understanding of weather terms.

Mrs. Donna Ray



## **Enrichment News**

### **Invention Convention**

Students participating in the Invention Convention should submit their ideas to Mrs. Sepesi as soon as possible. After submitting their ideas, students will receive a notice telling them to begin work on their invention. A brief **journal** must accompany the invention.

### **National Geography Bee**

In the near future, all fifth grade students will participate in the National Geographic Society Geography Bee. Class winners will be recognized with a certificate and will compete against other class winners until a Holland Brook School National Geography Bee winner is found. This school winner will complete a difficult written geography test which will be submitted to the Geographic Society. If the school winner qualifies, he/she will then compete against students from other school districts.

### **Math Problems of the Week**

Math Problems of the Week continue and are available when there is a full week of school. Students who complete 80 % of the Math Problems of the Week will receive a certificate at the end of the year from the Enrichment teacher for their efforts.

### **Science Fest**

The Science Fest was a huge success thanks to our presenters who shared their science expertise with our 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Many thanks to Mrs. Duprey, Mr. Taylor, Dr. Sirota, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Tarantiles

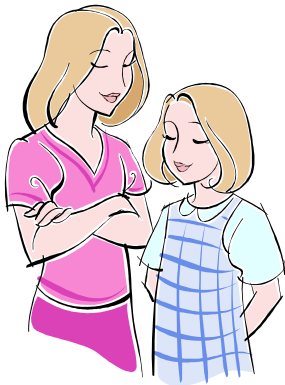


and Mr. Vitez, parents of Readington Township students. All 5<sup>th</sup> grade students should be commended for their outstanding behavior on this special day.

### **Jeopardy**

Which ocean is the world's largest? What type of animals are Chip and Dale? These are some of the questions that 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students have been answering during lunch while playing Jeopardy in the Enrichment classroom. Jeopardy is now officially over for the year. Keep watching those Enrichment bulletin boards to see what lunchtime activity will be offered next!

We are always looking to enhance our Enrichment program by sharing knowledge that community members have with our students. If you have knowledge in a particular subject and are interested in sharing your knowledge with a group of students, please contact us at ext. 636. As always, we look forward to working with your children this year.



### **Guidance**

During the month of October the school celebrated Red Ribbon week. Each student was given a red ribbon to wear to promote being drug free. During the course of the week I went into various classes and taught students the history of Red Ribbon week. For the students it was great because not only were they able to learn about how Red Ribbon week began but they were also able to have an open discussion about tobacco products, alcohol, and different illegal drugs that are out there.

The students benefited from this because they learned about the negative effects of doing drugs. The issues that were mentioned were how it can affect your personal appearance, the influence that you have on friends and family especially if you have a younger sibling because they look up to you. Another key issue was making the right decision. It was discussed that the decision that you make is based entirely on you the individual and no one else. You will have to take full responsibility so it is important to think about the consequences before you take an action.

Mr. Skowronek  
Guidance Counselor

### **Spelling Strategies**

Studying weekly spelling words may seem like a boring task, but this doesn't have to be the case. Below are several suggestions to add a little fun to this necessary chore.

- The first night, have your child look at the word and dictate each letter to you and then have your child check your work. (Make a few errors on purpose for great proofreading practice.) This will provide auditory and visual practice without the pressure of remembering the spelling right off the bat. (Or you can dictate to your child.)
- Have your child practice 3-5 words each day. This is great to do orally or on a whiteboard in the car on the way to the grocery store or soccer practice.
- Write list words and box smaller words and common letter patterns within words.
- Most children would not fuss if they were asked to "write" spelling words one at a time in shaving cream on a cookie sheet.
- Have children spell the words using different tones and voices. For example: w-i-D-t-h or l-e-n-G-t-h to help your child remember the silent letters.
- Have your child choose a special whiteboard and marker set that is only to be used to practice words. Use different colored markers for patterns.

By combining auditory, visual, kinesthetic, and tactile activities, your child can develop memory skills by using his/her preferred mode in addition to exercising the others. It is important to remember that while you are practicing spelling words, you are helping your child to develop study skills that can enhance independence learning in all areas.

Ms. Longo

### **Student Leadership Club**

Holland Brook's Student Leadership Club election was held on October 4, 2007. We would like to thank all HBS 5<sup>th</sup> graders who took part in the elections and congratulate our new 2007-2008 Student Leaders.

Michael Adams  
Anna Bambaci  
Taylor Barrett  
Holly Christensen  
Bobby Cole  
Riley Coopersmith  
Jamie Gentile  
Emily Glauber  
Andrew Hunt  
Juliana Irwin  
Madison Hill  
Kathleen Jaeger  
Rachel Landau  
Carly Mastrogiacomo  
Brandon Zarzecki  
Ryan McDyer

Amy Napoli  
Samantha Painter  
Daniel Prager  
Courtney Price  
Lizzie Ryan  
Joey Schnur  
Themi Sfondouris  
Christine Tack  
Patrick Tohme  
Erin Vecchio  
James Vorwick  
Grant Weed  
Mark Wimsatt  
Karissa Zubulake

### **Drama Club**

Talent was bursting at the Drama Club meeting. The students arrived to the meeting eager to find out this year's play. We will be performing *Oliver Twist*. We discussed the story line of *Oliver Twist* and encouraged the members to rent the movie and read the book to become familiar with the story line. The fifth grade actors are going to be great!

Be sure to take notice of the Drama Club meeting dates and times. Don't be late; we have a lot to practice! It is going to be a great performance! Auditions will be taking place on October 26<sup>th</sup> and November 2<sup>nd</sup> during our meeting times. Practice your script!

### **Scrapbooking Club**

Everyone in the Session 1 Scrapbook club has been having a wonderful time. The children are learning how to make pages about themselves and their family members. In the weeks to come they will be learning about journaling, sticker placement, the use of color and how to enhance their pages. They are very proud of their work so please ask them to show off their books!

### **Important dates to Remember**

November 6 Early Dismissal 1:20pm  
Parent Conferences  
November 7 Early Dismissal 1:20pm  
Parent Conferences  
November 8 School Closed  
November 9 School Closed  
November 14 Invite Your Parents to School  
9:05am – 10:05am Grade 5  
1:05pm – 2:05pm Grade 4  
November 21 Early Dismissal 1:20pm  
November 22 School Closed  
November 23 School Closed  
November 27 Board of Ed Meeting  
November 28 H S A Meeting 7:00pm (RMS)

#### **HOLLAND BROOK SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

Adopted by HBS Core Committee,  
June 1999

*The Mission for Holland Brook School is to provide a nurturing and challenging environment with high student and staff expectations.*

*Our school community will become life-long learners and foster respect for diversity.*