



GHR NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2008



From the Principal~ Mr. Dave Petrone

Dear Families,

Now that summer has officially ended, I hope that this letter finds you well rested after what many of the children have told me was a wonderful summer filled with great trips and lots of family recreation. Things are up and running here at school, and students and teachers alike are establishing routines for their school day.

Many different after school programs are being offered this fall and many have already begun. I was happy to see so many children take advantage of these exciting and educational programs. We are delighted again this year to offer such a wonderful range of programs to meet the variety of interests and needs. Again this year, we will be continuing our partnership with the University of Connecticut and offering the Expanding Horizons after school reading program

In the past we were able to offer this program free of charge due to funding from a grant. Last year we decided that this program has become such a vital part of our extended learning at GHR that we decided to continue to offer it for a small fee of \$100.00.

I'm happy to announce that again this year we are able to offer the program for the same low fee. This minimal fee is only possible due to the support of the district and PTO, which is funding a large portion of the costs. We will also be offering our science based after school program, Camp Ventures, as well as a variety of art and sport-based programs. A new addition this year to our extended programming is our Rising Stars before-school math program, which is an excellent accompaniment to our Rising Stars reading program.

As you know, extended day programs are an outstanding way to capitalize on a child's strength or a special area of interest.

As I walk around the school it is such a great feeling to see how all the children have already adjusted to the new school year and are excited about all the new experiences they will have as the year progresses. I look forward to seeing you when you join your child for lunch, on a field trip or when you just stop in for a visit. Should you have any questions regarding any before or after school activities or general concerns please feel free to call me at

860-742-7341 or contact me via email dpetrone@coventryct.org.

Cordially,

David Petrone



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Columbus



It's hard to imagine that a month of school is already behind us! Our third graders are settling into a comfortable routine. They are now familiar with the layout of the school building, the expectations in the classroom, and the consistency in our daily schedules. That sense of comfort lends itself to a more productive working atmosphere and a more confident learner.

The month of October is filled with some exciting events and memorable learning opportunities. Mark your calendars for our first field trip! **Field trip** permission forms for Mystic Aquarium, scheduled for Friday, October 31st, have been sent home. On that day, we will be visiting the museum as a culminating activity for our Animal Adaptations Unit. Students will have an opportunity to observe predator/prey relationships and survival techniques of creatures that live in the ocean habitat. Third graders do not celebrate Halloween in school; we will be taking our trip in lieu of any celebration.



Students have been walking, jogging, sauntering, strolling, running, sprinting, and dashing around the perimeter of the playground. The **Mileage Club** has begun and the third graders are determined to add as many feet to their necklaces as they can! .

If you ask your child how many miles he or she has completed during recess time, you might be surprised!

The **agenda books** are expected to be returned to school each day. They serve as a tool in helping students become organized and responsible, as they are used for recording homework and other school related events. Please be sure to check the agenda books for nightly homework assignments and longer range tasks.



Our **Everyday Mathematics** program promotes parent involvement by providing home activities in which parents and children work together. Throughout the month of October your child will be introduced to a variety of methods for solving addition and subtraction problems with two and three digits. While these strategies for adding and subtracting may differ from traditional methods, your child may be able to teach you a few new algorithms for adding and subtracting! Practicing basic facts at home will help your child gain confidence, speed, and accuracy with adding and subtracting larger numbers.

If you have not yet set aside a time to meet with your child's teacher during November **conferences**, please call the main office to sign up for a time

Sincerely,

Heidi Bosco, Erin Brown, Anne Burke, Ronnie Giana, Donna Gwozdz, Jennifer Emerson, Jan Spangle, Gail Sroka, and Katie Stiles

News from Grade 4

Jerry Craig, Mike Daigneau, Jim Dzwonchyk, Janine Goldsnider, Erin Hazzard, Nora Jones, Michelle Santese, , Barbara Timberman

We would like to thank all the parents for visiting their child's classroom during the open house in September. It was wonderful to meet with each of you, and we look forward to working with you and their child throughout the year.

We look forward to many exciting events planned in the fourth grade during the next several weeks. First, we are proud to bring back our Native American friend, Clint Chartier to the school. On November 5th and 6th, Mr. Chartier will meet with each fourth grade class. During his presentation, he will share with the students his captivating stories of the Native American way of life.



He will also have on display many authentic Native American artifacts such as jewelry made from shells, deerskin clothing, and a buffalo hide.

In addition, the fourth grade students are once again participating in our annual UNICEF campaign. At the end of October, we will participate in our annual Walk - A - Thon to raise money for this worthwhile cause. This fundraising activity provides students the opportunity to help others who are less fortunate while having fun. More information will follow soon.

What's for homework???

Students will have between thirty and forty minutes of homework each night. Homework assignments may include reading



comprehension activities, a reading log, math practice pages, spelling activities, or science/social studies projects. If your child has no written homework assignment for the night, he or she can review spelling words, practice math facts, or read twenty minutes on their own.

Now that fall is upon us and the cooler weather is setting in, please have your child dress accordingly. Students are encouraged to bring a light jacket or sweatshirt out to recess. Please be mindful of the snacks your child brings into school. Snack is a time for refueling the body with healthy foods. Some healthy choices include fruits and vegetables, raisins, trail mix, crackers, pretzels, and granola bars. Refrain from bringing in snacks such as soda, cookies, cake, candy, and chips.

The students and teachers are settling back in at GHRIS after four wonderful days at Nature's Classroom and a trip to Trail Wood Sanctuary. The students had a great time exploring the outdoors and doing many exciting activities.

Here is what some of our students had to say about their experiences at Nature's Classroom and Trail Wood Sanctuary:

"I liked the walk around the lake because it was an awesome experience and we learned about different plants and animals."

"Predator/Prey was a fun way to learn about the food chain."

"I liked the hot air balloons because we really made them fly."

"The night hike was fun because we did cool experiments that show how our eyes work in the dark."

"The IALAC beads were special because I saw everyone being nice to each other."

"Taking pictures at Trail Wood was interesting because I learned about nature."

"I learned that Edwin Way Teale and Nelly wrote four books about the American seasons—spring, summer, fall and winter."

"I would like to be a naturalist someday!"



Many, many thanks to the parents who chaperoned Nature's Classroom – Mr. Coulombe, Mr. Joslin, Mr. LaBrec, Mr. Mariasi, and Mr. Martin. If your child did not return with all the items he/she took to Nature's Classroom, please check the lost and found area near the gym.

Being organized in fifth grade is very important. Changing classes, keeping a locker clean, and using an assignment pad can be very challenging. Each 5th grade student has a green homework folder. Please check your child's assignment pad, green folder, and binder daily to ensure homework completion and to help keep your child organized.

Gr 5 – Mrs. Bernier, Mr. Carlson, Mrs. Piteo, Ms. Steeves, Ms. Silvernail, Mrs. Sandberg, Mr. Spivey, Ms Woodin

From the Reading Room ~ Mrs. Sue Hansen

Reading aloud to children is such an important activity in helping them become readers and writers. Reading aloud to children should begin when they are infants and should continue throughout their school years.

Here are some reasons why reading aloud to children is so important:

- It improves their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and attitudes about reading.
- It builds comprehension.
- Reading aloud to children helps them to learn about their world and increases their vocabulary.
- The more children read, the better readers they become. When you read aloud, you model this skill for children.



Reading aloud is like a commercial for reading. Every time you read aloud to your children, you are sending a pleasure message to their brains. They will associate books with enjoyment.

Keep advertising the joy of reading with your children by reading aloud to them even as they get older.

MATH MATTERS- Kim Licata ASSIST Teacher

The National Mathematics Advisory Panel has just released its final report, Foundations for Success, with recommendations to improve the learning of mathematics in kindergarten through 8th grade. The report focuses on curricular content, teachers and teacher education, instructional practices and materials, and learning processes and assessments.

It is reported that students in Elementary School should be proficient with whole numbers. This would include counting, place value, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Students should be able to solve problems involving perimeter and area of 2-dimensional shapes.

A positive attitude and a child's goals for and beliefs about learning are directly related to a child's performance in math. This is a direct statement from the report. "Students who believe that their hard work makes them 'smarter' are more likely to try harder in mathematics, and their efforts result in better performance."

One of the recommendations from this report for parents is to talk about math and involve your child in activities that incorporate basic concepts such as asking your child to estimate and then calculate the amount of change he or she should receive from the cashier. Use real-life examples to give your child an opportunity to enforce his or her math skills.

To view this report on line, please visit www.ed.gov or call 1-800-USA-LEARN.



Greetings From the Media Center!

Greeting! It was so nice to see many parents visiting our media/library during open house. I heard many complimentary statements. Thank you so much.

Our graphic novels have been introduced to the students and they seem to enjoy them very much. In the next couple of weeks our new fiction and nonfiction books will be introduced to the students.

Again, for our 4th and 5th grade readers, please stay tuned for upcoming information about the 2009 Nutmeg Award books. We discussed them briefly last spring and will spend more time on them in October. If you would like to learn more about them, please visit <http://www.nutmegaward.org>.

We are looking for volunteers, so please, if you are interested, call Mr. Lowman or Mrs. Russell at 742-7341 X123



TECHNOLOGY



The Coventry Public School District has begun the process of reviewing and revising our state-mandated 3-year Educational Technology Plan. We would like to invite all those interested to submit comments or suggestions regarding the direction for technology in the district to Kathy Zanotti at kzanotti@coventryct.org from 10/1/08 through 1/5/09. We appreciate your input during this process. Thank you.

Superintendent's Corner



DONUTS WITH DONNA:

The Superintendent of Schools is available for casual conversations with community members during the school year. "Donuts with Donna" is a way for you to greet your school Superintendent, ask questions, and keep informed about education in our town. Please feel free to stop by, where there will be an informal atmosphere with an open dialogue and no set agenda. The next session of "Donuts with Donna" is scheduled for Wednesday, November 12 from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. at The Knitting Nook, 3466 Main Street.

SDE Notification—Parent-Public Information

State Department of Education Notification – Parent/Public Information: Connecticut Complaint Resolution Procedure – Elementary and Secondary Education Act 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 299(10)(a)

Connecticut school districts, who receive Federal funds (Coventry does), are required to disseminate information about federal program complaint procedures to teachers, staff, and parents. The State of Connecticut has adopted written procedures for the receipt and resolution of any complaint which alleges that the state education agency has violated a federal statute or regulation that applies to specific federal programs. If you would like further information, regarding these procedures, please contact the Superintendent's Office (860) 742-7317.



Nurse's Notes ~ Therese McKeever 742-4529

A little word about head lice:

Like the common cold, head lice can be spread when children come in close contact with each other in activities such as sports, sleepovers, or even at school. Since it can be an occasional problem at school for children and their families, now would be a good time to review the basics:

- Head lice are **not a health hazard** and are not responsible for the spread of disease.
- They are **not a sign of uncleanliness** – they actually stick to clean hair better.
- The most common symptoms are an **itchy scalp** and nits that stick to the hair shaft.
- **No product will kill all nits** (lice eggs)... they must **all be removed** by hand, before they hatch and start the cycle again.
- There is **no reliable prevention** at this time.
- Parents are encouraged to **regularly check** their children's scalp and hair at home.
- Children should **not share personnel items** such as combs, brushes, scarves, hats, etc.

Please contact me at 742-4529 if you have any questions or you discover your child has head lice. I can provide you with additional information and assistance.

Thanks,
Therese McKeever

From the Band Room: Mrs. Gould



Group lessons are beginning this week for those students who have brought in their permission slips.

We are working hard on developing a nice embouchure by using only the mouthpieces. Students need to be looking in a mirror to check that they are doing what is needed for a correct embouchure. Ask your child what an embouchure is!! We are also working on beat and beginning rhythms. Next we will be playing our "Fun Songs" which help with the coordination for fingering the instruments in relation to a particular note name. After this, we begin our lesson books with notation and rhythm combined.

We are using our lesson books along with CD's that provide an accompanying part while your child plays along. It helps with keeping a steady beat and is gratifying as well since the sound of what they are doing is greatly enhanced!

We will also work on the computer with another CD that reveals various details of your child's performance including mistakes! A great learning tool!

This provides great feedback for the kids along with lots of fun.

Students need to check the schedule in their classrooms for lesson times.

Make-up times are built in the schedule for those students that missed their lesson during the one originally scheduled. Consistency in regards to attendance is really important to show progress that is being made.

I look forward to working with the up and coming GHR Band!

Please call if you have questions regarding the band program.

BROADWAY MUSICAL TRIP FOR GRADE
5 "WICKED"

Those students and parents who have returned forms expressing an interest in seeing the Broadway Musical "WICKED," on May 13, 2009 will receive a letter with detailed information concerning payment as well a general itinerary for the day. There are a few seats left for those who may not have sent in a form. We are looking forward to this exciting and entertaining event. If you have questions, please call Carol Gould at ext. 173.

Sincerely,

Carol Gould, GHR Band



"Just a Note!" From the Music Room ~ Mrs. Labelle

The students have done a good job learning their patriotic songs and are now adding instruments to some of their class songs.

They will be studying notes and rests to combine into various rhythms. These rhythms will be used in songs and on the classroom instruments.

Mrs. LaBelle





The G. H. Robertson Intermediate School and Capt. Nathan Hale Middle School Ski Club in Coventry will be having a joint ski and snowboard fundraiser sale. New England Ski and Scuba of Vernon, Connecticut, will be supplying brand new equipment including: adult and child skis, snowboards, helmets, boots, gloves, and hats. This is an excellent opportunity to purchase equipment at a reduced price and in return, the CNHMS/GHR Ski Club will make a profit. This event will take place on Thursday, October 16, 2008, in the Capt. Nathan Hale Middle School Cafeteria from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at 1776 Main Street, Coventry, Connecticut. Please call Carla Kennedy at (860) 742-7334, Ext. 279 with any questions.

Coventry Human Services and Coventry Youth Services

Dear Friends:

Coventry Human Services and Coventry Youth Services would like to extend an invitation to all Coventry families to attend the eighth annual Community Health and Wellness Fair and Flu Shot Clinic to be held on Saturday, October 25, 2008 from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. at Coventry High School. This event is FREE and appropriate for all age groups.

Last year's Health Fair was successful with over 350 people attending. This year we will have many of our traditional exhibitors as well as many new vendors, demonstrations, hands on workshops and information. The Visiting Nurse and Health Services of Connecticut, Inc. will hold their annual flu clinic at this time. They will also offer free blood pressure screening and blood sugar screening.

Please stop in to enjoy a pancake breakfast for \$4 (all proceeds benefit the Coventry High School FCCLA program) and then check out the moon bounce with your kids, watch dance demonstrations and take a mini workshop. Other highlights include healthy cooking demonstrations, a new child id program (done on sight), bicycle helmet give away, door and raffle prizes and much, much more. If you have never attended this event, or have been to the Health Fair in past years, this year is one you won't want to miss.

We hope to see you in October!

GHR PTO News

The Fall Fundraiser has finished and the orders are being tallied up. The PTO uses this money to help purchase and fund things that are not in the budget. This ranges from in-school assemblies to whiteboard in our classrooms. What follows is what we were able to accomplish last year: RIF, Paper Cutter, Mileage Club, Kids Fun Fair, Painting for signs, Recess Equipment, Staff Appreciation, Water - Walk a thon, Field Trip Allocations, RAH - Reading Program, Walkie Talkies (2 sets), Birthday Bulletin Board, 4th Grade Math Trophies, Coping supplies for school, School Store Seed Money, Landscaping G.H. Robertson (has not started yet), Whiteboard - 3rd & 4th grades (15), Conference Tables for School (10), 5th Grade Photo Album & Tee Shirt, Library Reading Furniture - Couches & Chairs, Donation to Connecticut Children's Hospital of \$2875.00, and School Assemblies - Wingmaster, Keith Johnson Amazing American Program, Meet the Musician. It is important for all of us to understand this. Upcoming events are the book sale taking place October 2 - October 8. The next PTO meeting is October 14. We invite all of you to join us, and we thank you for your continued support.

**Next PTO
Meetings! :
Tuesdays
10/14
@ 7pm!**