

# Wolf Times

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May, 2013



## From The Desk of Jacqueline Norcel...

Dear Frenchtown Families,

Our May theme at Frenchtown School will be “Celebrate a Decade of Learning” and will be a great time for us to see and be seen. Every grade level has chosen a country to study and share their celebrations. To excite and support the children with the week’s theme, we have hired Dave Giardina’s Fiesta del Norte to open our Family Week. The show features a Mexican/South American mariachi band. Our special show will be seen by Kindergarten, grades 1, 2 and at 1:00 p.m., and by grades 3, 4, 5 at 2:00 p.m. Our theme will allow our “specialists” Mrs. Hawkins, Ms. Nuzzi, Ms. Dean, Mrs. Grabinski, Mr. Turechek, Ms. Karlan, Mr. Bourque, Mr. Strychalsky and Ms. Albro along with our classroom teachers, to present our children with a fresh approach to integrating the Arts with all the other curriculum areas. Family Week will be May 13 through May 17, and will celebrate families, our students, and the culmination of another outstanding and productive school year.

During May students in Grades K through 5 will be presenting class projects and Grade 5 will do individual experiments at the Science Fair on Thursday, May 23, 2013 from 7:00 pm-8:00 pm., and Friday, May 24, 2013 from 9:00 am to noon, with additional viewing for parents and students. Our goals for conducting a Science Fair include the following:

- To demonstrate and evaluate student understanding of science concepts.
- To encourage creativity in the area of science.
- To involve families in the study of science.
- To stimulate scientific inquiry.
- To enable students to feel pride in their science skills and level of understanding.
- To help students get “hooked” on science.

This activity is one way for us to bring science to life at Frenchtown.

Other activities for the month of May will help to develop poise and confidence in our children. The joy and fun associated with music participation is obvious to all of us. Our second and fifth grades will present their concert on Tuesday, May 14, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. for families and for our student body on Friday, May 17 at 2:00 p.m.



There are many well-documented reasons for incorporating the Arts –including the visual arts, poetry, dance, and theater- in students’ learning programs. To quote Ernest L. Boyer, past president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, “During the past quarter century, literally thousands of school-based programs have demonstrated beyond question that the arts cannot only bring coherence to our fragmented academic world, but through the arts, students’ performances in other academic disciplines can be enhanced as well.” The teamwork needed to produce our activities will also develop and spotlight individual growth. These activities will help develop your child’s talent abilities and unearth undiscovered talents. These “special happenings” make for good teaching and meaningful learning.

Our annual lunch in a bag picnic will be on Wednesday, May 15 from 11:00 to 1:35 during student lunch shifts. Schedules will be sent home.

Parents are invited to join us. The PTA Book Fair will be held on Tuesday, May 14 through Thursday, May 16. Students who have completed their F.R.E.E. reading calendar contract for the year will receive a certificate for a free book.

In May and June, our children will be learning the history and customs of Mother's Day, Flag Day, Father's Day and Memorial Day. These are American holidays. In 1915, Congress proclaimed Mother's Day to be an annual observance on the second Sunday in May, this year to be celebrated on May 12, 2013. Father's Day is observed on the third Sunday in June, this year to be celebrated on June 16, 2013.



Memorial Day was established to honor the Civil War dead. Today, all the war dead are honored on this day. Since the end of World War I, Poppy Day has been observed in the United States on Memorial Day. On

this day, ex-servicemen sell poppies to aid disabled veterans. Poppies are a symbol of the tragedy of war since they bloomed on many World War I battlefields. Memorial Day is officially May 30, but is celebrated on the last Monday in May, this year May 27, 2012. As a school community we will once again be marching in our town's Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 27 at 10:00 a.m. Our students will be submitting our suggested names for the parade's theme. Perhaps a Frenchtown students name will be chosen again.

Watch for more information. June 14, 2013 is Flag Day. The Fourth of July was traditionally celebrated as America's birthday, but the idea of an annual day specifically celebrating the flag is believed to have first originated in 1885. We look forward to our third grade presentation celebrating the flag on Friday, June 14 at 10:00 a.m.



Character  
Corner—  
Social Worker  
David Weitzman  
*Fairness*

Make a list of some of your family rules and the consequences of not following them. Ask children what their rules would be if they were in charge of making them. List these next to the actual rules.

Discuss the rules one by one. Ask, "Is this fair? Why or why not? What would happen if we adopted this rule?" Compare these to the first list in terms of fairness. Decide what will happen if the rules are broken. Consider revising some of the current rules if youth can show how their suggestions are more fair.

Children reflect on the issue of fairness in journal writing exercises and family discussions about what they have written. Have children make journal entries about fairness with sentence stems like the following examples:

- I am treated fairly when...
- Everyone deserves...
- It's important to play by the rules because...
- The way older people are treated is...
- People are not treated fairly when...



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

Our grade level Spelling Bee was held on April 24<sup>th</sup>. The winners are:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place- Shane Paolozzi – Mrs. Carley's class  
2<sup>nd</sup> place- Jaclyn Irazarry – Miss Caravetta's class  
3<sup>rd</sup> place- Tanvika Vegiraju – Ms. Demshak's class

Congratulations to our fantastic spellers!



Thank you for clipping and sending to school all of your Box Tops. We just received a check and have ordered two iPad with covers and more books for our classrooms.

## Kindergarten News...

**Mrs. Alves, Mrs. Buswell,  
Mrs. Capone, Mrs. Crawford**



Spring is in the air and we couldn't be happier. We are looking forward to suiting up in our lab coats

and venturing outside for our spring walk. We are so excited to become scientists again and observe spring happening all around us.

April was a big month for reading! We had a visit from Farmer Minor and Daisy the Pig and talked all about the importance of reading. We learned about how Daisy likes to have stories read to her and how she loves to travel and teach children to read, read, read! The children got a kick out of hearing Daisy snort and loved giving her a hug and a little kiss! We also had Read Aloud Day! We were so lucky to have a guest reader come into our class and read a story about the invention of bubble gum! Boy did we love that! We even got to keep the book for our classroom library.

In our Foundations program we have learned all about digraphs. Digraphs are two letters that "stick together" to form one sound. The digraphs that we have covered are wh, ch, sh, th, and ck. Encourage your child to be a digraph detective at home! They are everywhere just waiting for you to discover them! Please continue to review the letters, their sounds and the sight words. The more practice and review the better. We continue to focus on tapping out sounds to blend, read, and write words. We have been using our white boards to write three letter words and words with digraphs in them. The children really enjoy doing this skill and it helps them to practice their letter formation as well. This would be a great skill to practice to home too.

Our writing is in full bloom! Your little one is becoming quite the author and illustrator. They continue to write great sentences and continue to add many details to their pictures and writing pieces. We continue to work on three important elements of our sentences, starting our sentences with uppercase letters, including spaces between our words and using end marks when our sentence is complete. Have your little one keep a journal to practice these elements at home.

The children continue to work really hard in their reading groups and I am seeing such great progress from all of them! We are so proud of them and love to hear them read their books to us. Encourage your little one to revisit the stories they have read throughout the year and help them to conquer new stories too! It is important for your little one to become fluent in their sight words so that their reading is less choppy. The more they practice reading their stories to you at home the more confident they will become as little readers.

In math we have been working with addition and subtraction problems. We have been working on writing number sentences and drawing pictures to help us solve our story problems. Thank you for all that you do and your continued support!

## Grade One News...

**Mrs. Gambardella, Mrs. Mordecai,  
Mrs. Rodrigues, Mrs. Tuohy,  
Mrs. Bershefsky, Mrs. Shinnick**

Happy Spring from First Grade! April has been an exciting month for us. We are enjoying the warmer weather and seeing the beautiful signs of spring.

In Reader's Workshop, we have been focusing on wondering in nonfiction. Good readers ask questions about their book topics, and then search for the answers as they read. This gives us a purpose for reading and helps us to make meaning of what we learn. On April 9<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated Read Aloud Day! Each class had a surprise reader. The Rotary Club of Trumbull donated *Imaginative Inventions* by Charise Mericle Harper to each first grade class in Trumbull. We also enjoyed meeting a real author, Mark Kimball Moulton, who visited our school on April 8<sup>th</sup>! He was also a wonderful story teller and we enjoyed reading many of his books. Like the book *Imaginative Inventions*, Mr. Moulton also spoke of the importance of using our imagination to read, write, think and CREATE!



In math, we have been practicing our story problem routine for solving combining and separating problems. You can practice with your

family at home! First we visualize what is happening in the problem and try to retell it in our own words. We then figure out if we will have more or less than what we started from. We choose a strategy and solve it! To help us with this, we have been playing many addition and subtraction games such as “Five in a Row” and “Tens Go Fish.” We have charted strategies that help us add and subtract.



We have been very busy scientists this month as well! We began with studying the lifecycle of a lima bean. We learned that these green plants need air, water and sunlight to grow. To prove this, we planted our beans in plastic bags containing moistened paper towels. Later in the month, we began our lima

bean experiments for the May Science Fair. We have learned all about the Scientific Method and are excited to see the results of our experiments.

In Writer’s Workshop, we began a new poetry unit in honor of Poetry Month. We have enjoyed exploring many different forms of poetry in reading and writing and using great describing words that help us write about movements, sounds and the changes in weather. We love shrinking an idea into a poetic phrase to describe something!

We are looking forward to our field trip to Sacred Heart University to see the play, *The Curious Quest of Benjamin Bunny* on May 17<sup>th</sup>! We keep learning, laughing and loving every minute of first grade.

## **Grade Two News ...**

**Mrs. Alfano, Mrs. Angon,**

**Ms. Hull, Mrs. Pereira,**

**Ms. Sansone**

Now that hints of spring are popping up all around us, with the sun finally making its appearance and the light warm breezes filling the air, the children get to play outside for recess and run off all their energy! This allows them to socialize with friends in different classrooms and gain renewed energy to continue to work hard the latter half of their school day. April is always a time when we can see evidence of growth in nature as well as within the classroom! It is a wonderful

time of year. The children are excited and ready for new challenges!

One challenge the children worked hard to accomplish was their Community Worker research. The children worked all month long to research the community worker they would like to be, type their report, and think of props and certain clothing to represent their particular worker. Their hard work will be evident during the Community Fair in May! The children had fun working with three-digit numbers in math. They even worked with filling in numbers to 1000 on their number charts! This was a challenge for them, but they enthusiastically jumped into it! They love working with large numbers! They enjoyed learning about fractions and making their Fraction Flags too- some tried to represent the flag of the countries they are from!



The children continue to read independently from a variety of self-selected fiction and non-fiction texts. While doing so, they are using many of the strategies learned throughout the year to become stronger readers and bigger thinkers! They really enjoy identifying important facts that they learned from non-fiction texts. They discovered that an earthworm can be as big as an automobile and certain plants eat animals to name just a few interesting facts! This was fascinating to them. Ask your child to tell you about the new and interesting facts they learned about in school!

Each night, as you read with your child, remember to talk to him/her about the book he/she is reading. Ask questions about the author’s main idea, character traits, and vocabulary used in the story. This will help to improve your child’s reading comprehension. If your child chooses to read a non-fiction book, ask them to recall facts/details from the text. Help them understand the challenging vocabulary too.

Not only did we welcome the warmer temperatures, but we also welcomed a wonderful children’s author- Mark Kimball Moulton to second grade! For those of you who may not be familiar with his work, take out one of his delightful picture books from the library for your family’s enjoyment! He is a clever and interesting fellow. He brought his love of books and children to our library and shared his storytelling abilities while visiting with us. The children were a captivated audience and loved everything he told them. It was great to see the children engage in the visit and to realize that

writing serves a purpose and can be quite entertaining!

Second graders also participated in the National Read Aloud Day on April 9th. Each classroom at Frenchtown, and throughout the district, had the opportunity to listen to beautiful stories read by volunteers in our community. It was a wonderful experience for reader and student!

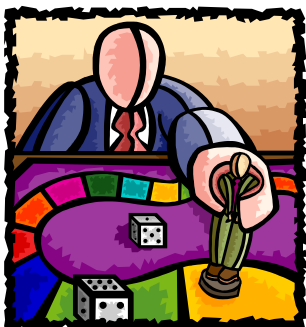
Our Jump Rope for Heart program kicked off Spring Break and helped raise money for a great cause. Without the hard work and dedication of our wonderful gym teachers, Mr. Bourque and Mr. Strychalsky, the event would not have occurred. Each year they do an amazing job training the children about jump roping safety and endurance. Room moms pitched in to supply the class water bottles and juicy oranges! The children really enjoyed the snacks after jumping

We hope you all had a safe and fun Spring Vacation with family and friends!

### **Grade Three News...**

**Mrs. Atwood, Mrs. Cretella,  
Mrs. Makoski, Mrs. Martins,  
Mrs. Carley**

Our third graders have been busy in the month of May. In reading, the third graders learned to stop and ask questions throughout their reading. This exercise teaches your child how to reflect upon their reading so they can identify what they learned while reading. Strong comprehension is the result of purposeful practice. They have been reading nonfiction text and exploring many subjects while reading articles. During the second part of the month the students learned a new comprehension strategy called determining important ideas. They practiced making inferences, and visualizing in order to understand the stories they read as well as explore the important ideas presented. While reading with your child at home, practice asking them these questions to support our lessons in the classroom: What is happening so far? What did



you picture happening in the story? How does visualizing help you understand the story? What is the important idea the author is trying to tell you?

Math Night was a great success with nearly 80 families in attendance. Battleship, Pattern Blocks and Trade Up to 100 were the three most popular games. Thank you for joining third grade for such a fun time! In math, we finished our units on strategies to solve multiplication and division equations and number stories. We also finished our unit on finding number patterns. We began our unit on fractions. Your child practiced finding equal parts of a whole and naming fractions. They also learned to order fractions from greatest to least and identified equivalent fractional parts. Your child should be practicing facts nightly. Addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are on the checkpoints. Please make sure you review it with your child, sign it and place it in your child's folder to return school. Have your child practice their basic facts along with multiplication and division with math flash cards. This will ensure better results on their Computation Checkpoints and Mad Minutes.



In writing, the students began listening to fictional stories which inspired them to write exciting fictional pieces. They learned tips that writers use to engage the reader and enjoyed writing their own "what if" stories. As we move forward, the students will learn how a character develops in a story to support creativity in their own writing. We continued our social studies unit on Native Americans. The students explored the life of the Cheyenne. They learned to explain the importance of buffalo to the Cheyenne people and they described how the horse changed the Cheyenne's way of life.

Our statewide embedded task called Soggy Paper was our area of focus for science. The students conducted a fair test while making observations of the properties of different papers. Be sure to ask your child which brand of paper towel is the most absorbent.

We can't wait to see all the students dressed up as their historical figure during family week. Mrs. Carley's class has already visited the Trumbull Historical Society. The other third grade classes are eagerly awaiting their trip to the Historical Society. We are excited for our upcoming field trip to the Theatre Works presentation of several beloved children's books on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

## **Grade Four News...**

**Mrs. Weinstein, Mr. Fiore,  
Mrs. Gaspar, Ms. St. John  
Mrs. Wolfe**

May was kicked off with our much-anticipated trip to the Bronx Zoo. Students had an opportunity to see many endangered animals up close and personal. In doing so, this deepened our commitment to doing what we can to save these precious creatures. We appreciated the tremendous parent participation and hope you enjoyed the animals, exhibits, and the chance to spend some time with your children on this fun-filled trip.

Even though spring is in the air, May is proving to be a very busy month for the fourth graders at Frenchtown! In reading, the classes have been focusing on determining important ideas and summarizing narrative non-fiction text. Through reading a variety of literature, the students are working to strengthen this critical skill. You can help your child by asking him or her about important details in their just right book and then supporting their opinions with facts from the text or passage.

In math class, the students are moving into a new unit where they are learning to use a variety of strategies to solve multiplication and division problems with larger numbers. They are discussing problems in depth and are sharing their reasoning and solutions. Students are encouraged to develop more than one way to solve a problem and to use methods that are based on understanding numbers and their relationships. Some of the methods may not be the ones you learned in school, but you may recognize some of them as methods you use in your everyday life. One of the most important things you can do is show genuine interest in the ways your child solves problems, even if they are different from your own.

Do you know how plants make their own food? Photosynthesis is the answer! In science students are learning all about plants. Springtime is the perfect season to start this new unit. The social studies classes are learning about the variety of landscapes and water features in the United States. The chapter also looks at how natural resources influence people and how they change the environment.

Help show your Frenchtown spirit by marching with us in the Trumbull Memorial Day

Parade. This year it will be held Monday, May 27<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. Please note the change in time. It's Frenchtown's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we hope to have the largest turn out ever!

## **Grade Five News...**

**Mrs. Carley, Mrs. Russo,  
Miss Caravetta, Mrs. Windsor,  
Mrs. Demshak**

Science Fair is underway! At this point, all children have chosen a science fair question to test. Children have also been given a science fair logbook to accompany their project. As your child works on his/her project, they should be noting their observations, data, questions and diagrams within this journal. In addition, a schedule of upcoming science fair due dates has been placed in the front of their journals. Its purpose is to keep your child on schedule so they don't wait until the last minute and become overwhelmed. Classes will continue to review the steps of the science fair process in class, as well as model the research paper that will go along with the project. Unlike the Heroes project, ALL children will be required to create a presentation board to display their project. Boards are available for purchase in the office for \$5.00. If you have any questions regarding your child's



science fair project, please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher or visit the fifth grade website.

Please be sure to encourage your child to continue to give 100% in all areas of school. The end of the year experience is a wonderful one for fifth grade. We have many upcoming activities such as visiting Putnam Park, Hammonasset State Park and YMCA to name a few. We are hoping that each child earns the right to celebrate and share in these wonderful experiences. Please keep an eye out for flyers regarding important dates.

In social studies, your child is really honing in on how America won the war for freedom and gained its independence. They will be learning about the events that led to the American Revolution. As a culminating activity, the fifth grade attends Putnam Park, where they can travel back into Revolutionary times and see how important CT was during that time period.

It may seem early, but our fifth grade farewell ceremony is June 19. Please notice appropriate dress code and make sure your child is ready for this special event. Girls need to wear skirts or dresses that are appropriate for 10-12 year old children along with shoes they can walk safely across the stage in. Boys will need to wear dress slacks and nice shirt tucked in. This appropriate dress is expected for all children throughout the duration of the banquet. Shorts and t-shirts are for after the event is over.

## **From the Nurse's Office...** **Mrs. McCullough**

There has been an increase in the number of illnesses over the last month. Kindergarten and First grade has been hit hard. Children are coming to school sick and infecting their classmates. Therefore, I want to reiterate the rules for illness and when to keep your students home. We are seeing the second round of flu and many cases of strep throat and the stomach bug. These policies are in place in an attempt to keep everyone healthy.



**Temperature or fever:** A temperature of 100 or over with or without symptoms, please keep your child home until he/she is fever free for at least 24 hours. Please do not medicate your ill child and then send them to school. Children always tell a classmate or the teacher and end up in the nurse's office with a panicky note from the teacher.

**Strep throat:** may return to school after being on antibiotics for 24 hours and fever free.

**Pink Eye:** Must be excluded from school and started on medication from your doctor . May return to school 24 hours after treatment has begun.

**Head Lice:** Children will be excluded and must have appropriate treatment before returning to school. **ALL** nits must be removed. Nurse will check in the AM before allowing the student to return to the classroom.

**Vomiting/Diarrhea:** Students will be sent home for vomiting and diarrhea [2 bouts of diarrhea]. They can return to school 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea.

Please inform the nurse of communicable disease such as strep throat and the flu.

Proper hand washing goes a LONG way in the prevention of illness. So please encourage your children to wash their hands before they eat and after they have been out playing or have just returned from running errands with you!

If everyone is responsible about this issue, we should have less illness. If your child stays home from school for an illness it is inappropriate to allow them to attend an after school function or club!

Thank You and Have a nice May!  
Tracy McCullough RN

## **Reading News...** **Mrs. Infante, Mrs. Cannon-Axtell, Mrs. Olimpieri**

**From your Frenchtown Reading Department:**  
**Here is the next installment of a reading strategy that good readers can do!**



### **CAFÉ Strategy: Use Main Idea and Supporting Details to Determine Importance**

The main idea of a passage is often stated in a sentence within the passage. It helps readers understand the most important idea about what is being read. The other sentences of the passage include pieces of information that tell more about the most important idea. These are called the supporting details.

Understanding the general idea of a text can be tricky for beginning, emerging, or even established readers. It can require time, brain power, and hard work to determine the main idea of a passage. Learning how to use the main idea and supporting details is an essential piece to a reader's success in comprehending text.

### **How can you help your child with this strategy at home?**

1. When reading with your child, stop frequently and ask your child what they think the selection is about. Then, ask your child to give you one detail to support their thought.

2. Remind your child that readers may think differently about what the author's main point is in the selection. When a reader decides what he/she believes is the main idea, evidence from the text must be given as support. Model this process for your child, thinking aloud as you go and supporting your findings with details from the text. You may wish to use the following terms:

**topic** – the subject, what the text is about  
**main idea** – most important idea about the topic (usually a sentence)  
**supporting details** – bits of information used to support main idea

3. Give your child an opportunity to practice this strategy. After reading a selection, ask:  
In a few words, what is this selection about?  
What do you think is the most important idea about this topic?  
Did you find the main idea written in the passage or did you infer it?

Thank you for your continued support at home!

Written by: Allison Behne © 2010

www.thedailycafe.com Ideas and strategies are taken from:  
The CAFE Book, written by Gail Boushey & Joan Moser



*Frenchtown has earned  
74,100 points. 74 shoppers  
have designated our school  
to receive their Big Y points.*

**Thank you to the 299 Frenchtown families that  
registered. Our YTD total earned is \$5266.92.  
Let's keep our number growing!**