March 9, 2010 Issue 22

Palouse Prairie School
of expeditionary learning

Tuesday Times

Our Weekly Newsletter

We are Family!

~Elizabeth Bromley-Vogel

The first grade crew has been working hard to develop their understanding of *family* over the last couple of months. We have been so lucky to have many guests and volunteers help us with our learning process.

We began our investigation by picking apart our learning target: *I can compare my family with families from other times and places.* For example, the students wondered: what does "compare" mean? What other times (Past? Future?) are we going to be talking about?

We started by discussing our own families. Who makes up a family? What is the definition of family? To go along with these discussions the students made family trees. They sketched portraits of family members first, and then worked on final drawings. Next they painted trees on poster board and added leaves, grass and other details. In the last week the students have been assembling their trees, which are looking wonderful.

We discussed differences between the past and present, and how families might have been different in the past. Did families in the past watch TV? Did they live in similar spaces to our own? To help us answer these questions we turned to Ms. Ann Catt from the Latah County Historical Society. Ann is the curator of McConnell Mansion and was the perfect source of answers for us. The first grade crew walked to the mansion at the end of February and discovered many interesting things about families from the past. The crew particularly enjoyed learning about what families did for entertainment in the past, and how McConnell Mansion differed from our own homes (the old-fashioned bathroom was quite a hit!).

In order to learn about families from other places, we have had visits from many first grade family members. We had quite a few parents come in to share family stories and traditions with the students. Thank you to all of the volunteers who helped us to better understand family!

Design Principles & Spotlights

The Having of Wonderful Ideas | Responsibility for Learning | Diversity & Inclusion | Success & Failure | The Primacy of Self-Discovery

Service & Compassion | Empathy & Caring | Solitude & Reflection | Collaboration & Competition | The Natural World

This week's spotlights are on:

Hannah Reeder for helping her mom clean up the first grade classroom after school; Akea Pavel for taking the time to help a friend write and spell	Service & Compassion	We are crew, not passengers, and are strengthened by acts of consequential service to others. We are continually asking the question, "How can I make a difference?"
Charles Scott for working hard during writers' workshop and labeling all his pictures; Dan Reeder for knowing where to look to spell words and then applying that to his writing	Responsibility for Learning	Each of us learns within and for ourselves and as a part of a group in a specific process of discovery.
Rennie Forbes for persevering with his reading instead of giving up. He is finding out what a great reader he is!	Success & Failure	Success helps us to take risks. We learn from our mistakes to turn disappointments into opportunities.
Emma Reeder for suggesting that the 4/5 use the bowls they created for the PCEI Plate Projects at the next Raucous Readers' Round-up.	The Having of Wonderful Ideas	We all have great ideas to share. We need matter to think about, time to experiment, and time to make sense of our world.

PPSEL Wellness News

March is National Nutrition Month and this week is National School Breakfast Week. While PPSEL does not have a school breakfast program, we whole-heartedly believe in the importance of breakfast. You probably heard it from your own parents: Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. But now you're the one saying it — to your sleepy, frazzled, grumpy kids, who insist "I'm not hungry" as you try to get everyone fed and moving in the morning. Even if you eat a healthy morning meal every day, it can be tough to get kids fueled up in time for school, childcare, or a day of play. But it's important to try.

Why Bother With Breakfast? Breakfast is a great way to give the body the refueling it needs. Kids who eat breakfast tend to eat healthier overall and are more likely to participate in physical activities — two great ways to help maintain a healthy weight. Skipping breakfast can make kids feel tired, restless, or irritable. In the morning, their bodies need to refuel for the day ahead after going without food for 8 to 12 hours during sleep. Their mood and energy can drop by midmorning if they don't eat at least a small morning meal. Breakfast also can help keep kids' weight in check. Breakfast kick-starts the body's metabolism, the process by which the body converts the fuel in food to energy. And when the metabolism gets moving, the body starts burning calories. Also, people who don't eat breakfast often consume more calories throughout the day and are more likely to be overweight. That's because someone who skips breakfast is likely to get famished before lunchtime and snack on high-calorie foods or overeat at lunch.

Breakfast Brain Power
It's important for kids to have breakfast every day, but what they eat in the morning is crucial too. Choosing breakfast foods that are rich in whole grains, fiber, and protein while low in added sugar may boost kids' attention span, concentration, and memory — which they need to learn in school. Research also has shown that kids who eat breakfast get fiber, calcium, and other important nutrients. They also tend to keep their weight under control, have lower blood cholesterol levels, and fewer absences from school.

For healthy, quick breakfast ideas and articles on improving family health, go to http://kidshealth.org

Parent Problem Solvers

Problem-Solving Parents Follow-up Meeting, Thurs. 3/11 from 3:15 - 4:15 p.m. Interested parents and community members are invited to a follow-up meeting to work on the needs that the teachers see for the school, next Thurs. 3/11 from 3:15 - 4:15 in the P.P.S. café.

We'll be working on some exciting and practical ideas for 1) helping the teachers get planning time and collaboration time necessary to implement expeditions and 2) incorporating more art, P.E., music, dance, and theatre, to meet state standards. Everyone is welcome--every little bit of input will be valuable! Children will be allowed to play in the back room (with parents ultimately responsible for them), where we'll also have a National Geographic video. (If you are available to help with watching kids this week, please let us know!) Also, feel free to contact Judy Sobeloff at freewriting @ turbonet.com with questions or if you'd like to participate but can't make the meeting.

Dates to Remember

- **Board Meeting – March 11, 7:00**
- **Spring Break – March 15-19**
- **Student-led Conferences – April 1 & 2**

Reminders

Spring Break is next week (Though technically, the first day of spring isn't until March 20)! I hope you and your family find time to spend quality time together in the great outdoors. With the weather cooperating as it has, we should all be taking advantage of these early spring days. Ads incentive for you, research indicates that one of the best antidotes to a stressful lifestyle is to spend time in natural settings outdoors. Children who spend time outdoors are likely to be:

- happier
- healthier
- smarter
- more cooperative
- better problem solvers
- more creative

Children need leisurely, unscripted, and exploratory hours to find the wonders in their own backyards and neighborhoods, from discovering the beauty of the stars in the night sky to watching Robins flitting about on a crisp March morning.

South Fence Update. You'll notice that this reminder has been in the newsletter for a while. We are still in need of roughly $500 for the fence's completion. We'd love to enhance our play areas and have some big plans for that south area including part of it being used for the Kindergarten spring expedition. Please help us to fund its completion. Make checks payable to PPSEL.

Community Circle – Each Friday from 11:00-11:20. Come sing and celebrate with us! We would love to have musicians and singers to join us to teach the students new songs. If you are such a person or know of musicians, please send them our way. Also, we have the opportunity to have a nice piano donated to us; we only need to pick it up in Pullman. If you have a truck and could help move a piano, please let me know! sclayton@palousepriairieschool.org