

Winter Days

Learning Can Be Fun for the Family!

By Betsy Bascom and Melissa Whitney

As we celebrate the 100th day of school, we would like to revisit some important ideas to help your child continue to have a successful school year!

- * Continue reading to your child daily. The long cold days of February and March can be made more enjoyable when sharing a good book! Even older children enjoy this quiet and relaxing activity with a parent following the busyness of the school day. You may discover a series you will enjoy together or different genres.
- * Make sure your child has time for unstructured play daily where he/she can stretch his/her imagination. Through play, children often practice social situations and work through interpersonal difficulties. It also provides great relaxation from the stresses of the day. Please remember, electronic games or toys usually do not provide the same benefits.
- * Helping out with chores at home translates into becoming a positive member of the school community, socially and academically. As a child completes a chore, he/she sees his/her value within the family and school unit in a positive light. Everyone wants to feel needed and valued!
- * Don't forget to spend some time having fun together as a family! Scheduling a family game night, visiting the library together or a family walk are three free ways to spend quality time together.

Spring will be here before we know it! We all know how quickly our schedules will fill at this time of year. So take the opportunity to reconnect as a family and have fun together!



Box Tops bring in cash for John Lyman School!! Thanks to you, the school made \$566 on the last submission!!

The next submission is due **Wednesday, February 24**, so please drop off your box tops today in the collection box outside the main office.

Visit the Box Tops website where there are many more ways to support our school through the boxtops program. There are many opportunities for winning bonus Box Tops for our school, fun printables for the kids, and coupons for the parents. The web site is www.btf.com.

News from Room 19

Mrs. Abbott's Room

Efraim Silva

When we went to school on the 26th of January we had a special assembly. Efraim Silva came in with his partners. They were men and very talented. They wore grass skirts. They showed us dances from Brazil. The dances were called the samba, capoeira, and the maculele. They sang, showed us and played all different kinds of instruments. One of the men did a back flip off the stage. At the end we screamed and cheered and clapped for them. Two days later we danced with Efraim to music with just our class. He played on a drum and a tambourine. He is teaching us three dances from Brazil. We are going to do an assembly for our performance. I hope the performance is good.

By Casandra, Hanna, and Max

Writers' Workshop

Almost every day room 19 has Writers' Workshop. We have writing after meeting. We put the music on to calm ourselves down to get more writing done. Before we start writing we do a brain gym warm up. Brain Gym warm ups is where you get your body exercised and your hands ready to write! During Writers' Workshop some of us publish books. We can do a spiral book or a hard cover. We also could submit a story or a poem to the Writers' Wall. To make a book you have to edit with a red pen. You have to fix capitals, periods and spelling. When you are done you have the teacher fix or you add something to the story. After the teacher checks your work you will make page breaks. Then you give Mrs. Abbott your writing and she types it up for you. Next you do your illustrations and color them in as well as you can. Then you finally get to make your book.

By Elise, Maia and Nadifo

The Amaryllis

The amaryllis came in a box. We had to put in the soil and bury the bulb. Then we watered it. We waited for it to grow. Then we measured it. It was three inches tall. We made a graph to see how much it grows. We measured it six more times. The second time we measured it was seven inches. It might grow to 22 inches. I hope that it can grow for many days. It is more than 20 inches now. The bud is starting to open so it is going to bloom. I hope the amaryllis blooms soon.

By Caroline, Chad and PJ

Pajama Day

It was PJ Day on Friday, January 29, 2010. Almost everyone was wearing pajamas. There were people with zips on pajamas and buttons. There were pajamas with feet and some with none. Some people wore robes and slippers. There were snowflakes, racecars, and stripes. There were some pajamas with Hello Kitty. Some people were wearing boots. Pajama day is a school spirit day. Pajama day is so awesome.

By Dayna, Hazel and Spencer

continued on page 3

News from Room 19

Mrs. Abbott's Room

continued from page 2

Brazil Projects

We are learning about Brazil and doing a little project. We started by writing what we know about Brazil. Then we asked questions. Then we split into groups. Then each group chose a question to research. We looked in books to get our answers. We had questions about pets, food, parks, animals, how do they get around and other stuff. Then we had to write it down. We had to copy it over onto final draft paper. Then we made pictures of the things we are studying about. We colored them in with crayon. Then we painted it. Doing projects was fun.

By Anna, Bayla, Charlie, and Jacob

Victoria Christgau

On two Tuesdays in January, Victoria Christgau came to Room 19! She came to dance and sing with us. The first song we learned was *Turn the World Around*. She put her hands on her chest. We did the ABC feeling game. You say the ABCs in feelings like angry, sad and happy. She also played the drum for us. She played the drum and sang songs at the same time. When she was drumming she would call a body part and you moved it. We also learned the four agreements. They are Attentive Listening, Mutual Respect, No Put-Downs and the Right to Pass. They help you listen. I hope we can sing with her at her assembly.

By Aidan, Gabe and Marshall

SAVE THE DATE!!

What: Diary of a Wimpy Kid Movie Fundraiser

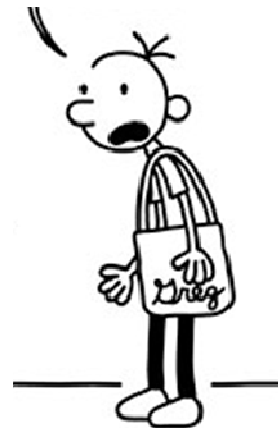
When: Saturday, April 10th

Where: Destinta Theater in Middletown

Kick off April vacation with a family movie night!

Based on feedback from the fundraising survey, a huge majority of families showed interest in a movie fundraiser. The popular "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" book series was made into a movie and will be released in April. Order forms will be sent home in March and the exact time of the show will be communicated a few days before the show - it should be sometime between 4-6pm.

Pencil in April 10th so you don't miss it; more details will follow! If you have any questions you can contact Stacey Durand at 860-349-2518.



DANCES OF BRAZIL!



Thanks to Young Audiences, JLPA, Efraim Silva and our Interdisciplinary Team, we were able to bring the first and second graders Ginga Brasileira! This ensemble gave the students an exciting performance on January 25th and are now in the middle of a five-day workshop with all 1/2 classes. They bring "Dances of Brazil," the art of Afro-Brazilian dances that fuse rhythmic music with high energy gymnastics and martial arts. Efraim Silva, who brought his art form from Brazil, teaches the children about Capoeira (a martial arts dance form) the Maculele (a stick dance created by African slaves working on sugarcane plantations), and the Samba, the national dance of Brazil. All the first- and second-grade students will put this together at the end of the workshops and will share a small performance. They are currently studying South America.

***It's Coming Again – March 2010
During Teachers Conferences!***



Did you miss it in December? Well, we had 10 people come to this fund raiser and they walked away with a total of \$2025!!!! JLPA received an additional \$202.50.

Sell Gold...

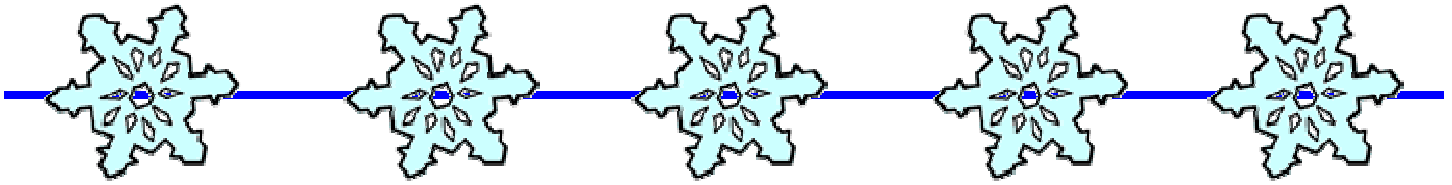
Walk Away with Cash!

Bring your unwanted or broken gold jewelry (10-22K) and YOU receive 70% of what is worth based on the 2nd fixed London closing price for that day. Lyman parent, Mitchell Schnipper, will donate 10% OVER AND ABOVE the total distribution amount to JLPA.

Contact Janice Keeman at jjmas4@gmail.com or 860-349-4111 with any questions.

If you would like to be on the John Lyman School e-mail list, please contact our e-mail parent Bernadette Basiel at bbasiel@hotmail.com. Even if you were on the list last year, you are not automatically on it for this year. Please e-mail Bernadette to be added to the list!





Quick Quips from the Principal's Office Winter 2010

Was anyone surprised that Punxatawney Phil saw his shadow? Did anyone think that we wouldn't have six more weeks of winter? I only wish Phil could have predicted and delivered on temperatures about 10 or 15 degrees warmer!

Winter Wear

Please have your child prepared to play outside because we will send children out to enjoy the fresh air any time the temperature and weather conditions allow. They really **need** to get outside midday! I am amazed at the children who come to school on some of the very cold days with no gloves or mittens and with only sweatshirt type jackets. Just to remind you, in order to play in the snow, children need all four of the following: hat, mittens or gloves, boots and snow pants. Students without appropriate clothing must stay on the blacktop area during recess. (Please see page 6 of our school handbook for further information.)

Choice Month

As you know, January is "Choice Month" in Region 13 and we enjoyed lots of visitors, many of whom are back this first full week of February to register as new kindergartners, the class of 2023! The *Hello Chorus* performed our new welcoming song wonderfully, often twice a day! Our student senators did an outstanding job of taking prospective parents on tours of the building (other than classrooms) and talking about the Integrated Day Program at Lyman "through the eyes of a child." It is always a pleasure to watch our students exhibit their knowledge, independence and involvement in their own learning as they enthusiastically articulate for prospective parents what the Integrated Day Program and John Lyman School mean to them. As a community, we have reason to be very proud of our students! As always, when I reflect on the busy month of January in Region 13 elementary schools, I am struck by how wonderfully our students shine as they share with visitors what life at Lyman is all about and to see parents exploring the options and asking questions to help them make their decision as to where to register their children. For those who ultimately choose the Integrated Day Program, I have always felt as though I'm welcoming old friends by the time the new school year starts!

Backpack Alerts

A timely reminder about things that should and should not come to school... First, please make sure you know what your child is bringing to school in his or her backpack. Generally speaking, it should be only the things needed for school: snack, lunch or lunch money, homework, notes between parent and teacher, Wednesday Envelope, etc. Please note that the list does not include toys, toy weapons or electronic devices such as iPods! Except in very unusual circumstances when parents have arranged for special permission from me, such items are not allowed on the bus or in school. Thank you for checking on such items. Your assistance in this area will mean that your child will not be distracted by toys and gadgets that should not be here and will be able to focus on the world of schoolwork. Additionally, it will mean that you will not need to come to school to pick up such items from the office!

continued on page 7

Quick Quips (continued from page 6)

Elementary School Leadership Conference

On Wednesday, January 13th, our third and fourth grade senators attended the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) Elementary School Leadership Conference at Asnuntuck Community College in Enfield. The students represented our school well as they attended an opening convocation, workshops on such topics as Communication and Productive Thinking and a closing assembly with entertainment provided by Mime Mallory Bagwell. (Some longtime families and staff may remember artist residencies that we have had in the past with Mallory related to some of our science units.) Special thanks go to the parents who drove the students and participated in the Parents' Workshop with UCONN Professor Michele Neme-Bagwell. While I was involved with the committee that planned and ran the event, I enjoyed spending parts of the day with our John Lyman group, observing their excitement and participation. It was obvious that they got a great deal out of the day as evidenced by the activities they planned for their first senate meeting with the new second grade senators. As well, they did a great job publicizing Pajama Day, our January Spirit Day through use of "teaser posters" and morning announcements. They will continue to be sharing some of what they learned with the second grade senators and with their classmates.

Family Share Morning

The turnout for the January 26th Family Share Morning was wonderful! We were very happy to see so many parents and children visiting in their classrooms, throughout favorite spots in the school and gathering for a light breakfast in the cafeteria. Several parents filled out our brief surveys which gave us some good feedback for future mornings. The next Family Share Morning will be Wednesday, April 28th, from 7:00-8:30 A.M.

School Attendance

Several teachers have expressed concerns about children either being out of school extra days by extending vacations or families taking extra vacations resulting in children missing several days. They are very concerned about what students lose by not being in school. I share their concern.

Parents often plan to have children spend some work time on vacations, asking teachers to provide the work the child will miss. Sometimes they actually are able to reserve some time, but more often it just doesn't happen. If your child will be out of school for a trip or vacation, please remember that it is not possible for teachers to provide students with assignments or make-up work prior to leaving. While some work can be done during or after vacation, there are many learning experiences, such as math labs, hands-on collaborative science explorations and classroom discussions that are impossible to replicate. In fact, my consistent message to teachers is to suggest daily reading, completion of a vacation journal and daily hands-on math activities such as counting change, estimating the cost of purchases or tickets, or activities such as counting license plates from various states, and figuring out how many states' plates are still to be seen. These are authentic learning activities that can be done while traveling.

Lost and Found

Our collection of "found" items is growing again which means families have definitely *lost* items! Many mittens and gloves are looking for their mates. I have been happy to see parents who are in the building for any reason visiting the Lost and Found, looking for and picking up any familiar items as well as encouraging their children to search through periodically. At each school vacation Mrs. Allen bags many nice clothing items which we donate to a local charity which means you only have a few more days to look! We'd really rather see the items go to their rightful homes!

continued on page 8

Quick Quips (continued from page 7)

To avoid donation of your child's belongings and increase the likelihood that items actually return to your home, please:

- label clothing, especially outerwear,
- encourage your child to check the **Lost and Found** tables in the front hall this week and for any missing items and take a minute to look for familiar items any time you are in the building.

Connecticut Mastery Tests

The Connecticut Mastery Tests (CMT), measuring skills in reading, writing and math, will be administered in March to all Connecticut students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. At Lyman and Korn Schools tests will be administered in the morning during the weeks of March 1st and 8th. Parents of third and fourth graders will be getting a letter explaining what to expect and outlining the schedule for those weeks. The schedule for some related arts classes may be rearranged so that no student will miss any of those classes that are held once a week. If you are in the building during the mornings of those two weeks you will notice that the school will be especially quiet and that there will be neither announcements nor any moving in and out of 3 / 4 classrooms during the time that students are being tested. It is especially important for 3rd and 4th graders to be on time for school during those weeks as children arriving after the test sessions have begun will not be able to go into their classroom until after the day's testing is complete. They will then have to make up the test later in the day.

Parent Conferences/ Family Conferences

Just a reminder, the early release time for spring conferences is 12:00 noon on Wednesday, March 24th and Thursday, March 25th. Children will eat lunch at 11:15 A.M. on those days. Kindergarten teachers will send home a special notice to parents of kindergarten students about their schedule on those days. For those who haven't had 2nd, 3rd, or 4th graders at Lyman before, you have an amazing experience ahead! You will find the family conferences to be awe-inspiring. These **student-led conferences** are another way students demonstrate their developing personal responsibility for learning. Students will have opportunities to prepare for the conferences in the weeks leading up to conference week.

Attention: Parents of Fourth Graders

While the exact date will not be established until late April, the **Recognition Assembly**, held during the last week of school, is of particular significance to you and your child. While we recognize younger students for some activities, the Recognition Assembly is essentially a celebration of the end of elementary school for our fourth graders moving onto Memorial School. One tradition that has evolved surrounds the dictionaries that JLPA purchases for presentation to every "graduating" fourth grader. As a part of this tradition, parents in attendance may come forward and present their child's dictionary to him or her. It is a very special "ceremony" which we approach with dignity and special affection for our soon-to-be-fifth graders and which symbolizes the significance of their moving from their elementary to their middle school student status. Immediately after the date has been finalized, I will notify parents of fourth graders so they may make arrangements to be at the assembly if they choose to do so. Expect a notice in the Wednesday Envelope in late April or the first week of May.

One last note... It seems as though every time of year is a busy time of year, but I want to assure you, once again, that I always want to be available to you. I try to maintain an "open door" policy. If you have questions or need to talk to me, don't ever hesitate to call or drop in! If you don't find the time to reach me at school, I never mind being called at home. If a call comes to our home at an inconvenient time, I'll let you know and call you back!

Happy Winter Vacation!

~Karen