

Briggs At Large

The Voice of the John R. Briggs Elementary School
"Educating for Success, Now and in the Future"

March 5, 2009
Volume 27, Issue 12

John R. Briggs Elementary: 978-827-5750

MARCH

6 Dr. Seuss Day
10 Early Release
12:00 PD Day
11-12 P – T Conf.
12:00 Release
19 PTA Meeting
19 School Council
30 MCAS Begins
Gr. 3 - 5

8th Annual A-W Benefit Game

AWRSD Educators
Vs
Law Enforcement

**April 4, 5:00 pm
Cushing Iorio**

**\$5.00/donation
Benefit Mitchell
Swanson and his
Family**

*Tickets available in
school office.*

Wear a Hat Day

The JRB Community will be receiving a 9 piece obstacle course from the Make a Wish Foundation in memory of Rachel Lee. Student Council members will be holding a "Wear a Hat for Rachel" Fundraiser. Proceeds will go toward a memorial marker in Rachel's Memory. Hat Day will take place on **March 28th** which is Rachel's birthday. If your child would like to participate in this event, please send \$1.00 or a donation of your choice to the office on March 28th.

Read Across JRB – March 6th

Foster Love to Read

Parents who want to help their children learn to read should just do what comes naturally, says Lesley Mandel Morrow, a professor of education at Rutgers University. Simple, everyday acts like cooking, taking a walk, shopping or sharing a family meal present excellent opportunities to motivate your child to read independently, according to Morrow, an early childhood reading specialist at the Rutgers Graduate School of Education (GSE) and vice president of the International Reading Association.

"Take advantage of opportunities that arise as a part of your everyday life and you will help your **child** acquire greater literacy skills."

Following are some practical tips from the GAINS program team:

Cook together: The next time you cook, ask your child to read the recipe while you prepare a dish together. Together, write down meal plans or a grocery list. Have your child write out a favorite family recipe.

Go for a walk: Take

advantage of your child's natural love of the outdoors. Write about what you see on a walk, keeping lists of the plants, animals, insects and birds you come across. Observe the moon and stars above and keep a log of your observations.

Share a meal: The next time you pass the mashed potatoes, think of the valuable learning opportunity dinnertime poses for your child. Research shows that the longer a family sits around the dinner table, giving everyone a chance to talk about their day or what they'll do tomorrow, the more exposure their children will have to vocabulary words and the more likely they will do well in reading.

Go shopping: Before you go, make a list. Then, scavenger-hunt style, have your child find those items in the store, reading and comparing labels and selecting items that fit your needs. Read and talk about the signs you see in the store.

Check out the news: The

newspaper presents an opportunity to practice reading skills every day. Visually stimulating sections such as the comics or the travel section will catch even a young child's eye. Discuss what you've read, or keep a file of favorite clips.

Read and write routinely: Read aloud to your child, and have your child read to you. Read silently sitting side-by-side. Talk about reading. Discuss books or magazine articles you enjoyed reading. Write little notes. Keep and share daily journals.

Be supportive: When your child advances to topics you don't remember anymore, or don't understand yourself, continue to show interest by helping them find resources in the library or on the Internet. Sometimes just sitting beside your child and listening as he or she struggles with an academic problem, letting them know that you care, can make a big difference in their progress.

MCAS Corner

Grades 3 – 5

March 30 – Apr. 15

May 11 – May 28

Try this one...

Gr. 4 – ELA

Writing Prompt

Think about a tradition or an experience that is important to you. For example, maybe you have a special meal that you eat, a holiday that you celebrate, or a certain place that you go each year on vacation.

Write a story about a tradition or an experience that is important to you. Give enough details for readers to understand why it is important to you.

Answer to last issue's BAL MCAS question: **D.** It describes something that really happened.

Parent & Teacher Professional Devel. Behavior Management

March 17, 2009

6:30 – 8:30 pm

Adventure Kids

Child Care Center,

Fitchburg

• SONGS IN SIGN LANGUAGE

APRIL 16, 2009

GUILD OF ST. AGNES

MUSIC News

BAND REHEARSELS: **Beginner Band** rehearsals are held on **Thursday afternoons** during the school day, and **Concert Band** rehearsals are now held on **Friday afternoons**. **PLEASE** make sure your child has his/her instrument for rehearsals.

Chorus.... Rehearsals are back to regularly scheduled **Tuesday afternoons;** after school.

2009 National Arbor Day National Poster Contest News!

5th Graders in Massachusetts were invited to participate in the Arbor Day Poster Contest. The science students in 5R, 5H, and 5T took up the creative challenge and drew posters that depicted the theme: "Trees are Terrific... in Cities and Towns!". Only one student's work can be sent to Boston to compete against other 5th graders in Massachusetts.

The first place winner is Tyler B. Tyler's poster will be sent to Boston to be judged, and if he wins, his poster will compete in a national competition. The 2nd place winner is Noelle S., the third place winner is Rachel W., and honorable mention goes to Joseph B. and Joshua B. "Through artistic expression the students communicated hope for the future of our planet." Congratulations to all science students who participated. These posters will be up around J.R.B. to inspire our community.

Jump Rope for Heart

I personally want to thank everyone that took part in this year's Jump Rope for Heart. Briggs raised over \$1000 for the American Heart Association and I was very pleased with the amount of participation. The students seemed to have a great time with the event that was planned for them as well. During the students Physical Education class we had a long rope jump contest (two students turning the rope, one students jumping). The students had to jump 25 or more times without making a mistake to sign their name on a chart and with hundreds of names on the chart it shows how hard the students worked. During one 5th grade class, Johnna R. set our first school record with 1376 jumps. This amazing feat took 35 minutes and some great teamwork from a classmate to turn the rope for that long. I want to thank the families of JR Briggs for giving to Jump Rope for Heart and the students for giving their all during this great event. Thanks,
Mr. Berg

Music for Young Children

The A-W Community Partnership for children presents free events for parents and their young children. Music for Young Children, led by music educator, Ms. Lynne Martinez, features hour long sessions open to the public by pre-registration. Each event is held twice daily at either Steven's Public Library or First Congregational Church, Westminster.

* **MARCH 5TH SOUNDS OF MUSIC**

10:00- 11:00 Westminster

12:30 – 1:30 Ashburnham

• **March 11th Musical Learning**

10:30 – 11:30 Ashburnham

1:00 – 2:00 Westminster

• **March 18th Simple Songs,**

Movement, & Finger Play

10:00 – 11:00 Westminster

12:30 – 1:30 Ashburnham

Pre-register: 978-874-7312

jharrison@awrsd.org

School Council News...

Penny War results:

Thanks to all who participated in the Penny War Competition. Your enthusiasm and generosity is greatly appreciated especially during these difficult times. The children enjoyed filling their jars with pennies while adding silver to the other grades jars in order to counteract penny points. The classes were such good sports recognizing that "all is fair in love and war."

Grade 1 collected the most points and therefore will be coined

"The Penny Honchos of JRB!"
\$1700 to Olivia's Family