

SOUTH LYON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

GOOD NEWS

DECEMBER 2011



BARTLETT ELEMENTARY

- Grade K-5 students participated in a Holiday Craft Shop sponsored by the PTO. This was a fun opportunity for the students to make a special hand-made craft to take home for the holidays. Thanks to parent volunteers, students even wrapped their gift and designed a special card for someone.
- Bartlett fourth graders learned new methods of doing multiplication. The distributive property was introduced to students. Judging from their persistent attitudes, they were definitely up to the challenge of learning something new! They demonstrated the ability to think flexibly and learn new ways of solving problems!
- The Bartlett Post Office is up and running! Students interviewed for various positions to assist in running the post office. It was a tough interview process, but students were excited to land their new jobs! After a short training, employees started selling stamps, sorting mail, and delivering the mail.
- In December Bartlett second graders were busy learning about soils. They had the opportunity to plant cucumber seeds in different types of soil. They anxiously awaited the growth of their new plants. As the plants grew, the students recorded their observations and discussed how plant growth differs in various types of soil.
- Kindergarten students learned about animal defenses this month. Students wrote in their science journals how different animals defend themselves. They created their very own animals. They also shared how their animal would defend itself. Wow! Kindergarteners sure have great imaginations!

BRUMMER ELEMENTARY

- During the month of December, Brummer School was involved in the election process for our Student Council. Students interested in running for office presented their election posters in the main hallway for the rest of the school to review. On December 2nd, we held our Primary Election. Due to a tie, we had five final candidates for Vice President (our President-Elect for next year), four candidates for Secretary, and four candidates for Treasurer. December 16th was the date of our General Election Assembly. The Student Council Representatives performed small skits on the Common Core Values in-between election speeches by the candidates. Students in grades 3-5 voted for the candidates of their choice in the classroom on the computers and our K-2 students voted in the media center during lunchtime recess. Our new Vice President is Brinley Beck, the Secretary is Lauren DeWitt, and our Treasurer is Nicky Chezick. Congratulations to each them!
- Our Holiday Concert was held on Wednesday, December 7th. Kindergartners treated us to some wonderful holiday singing. Dr. Brun read, "T'was the Night Before Christmas," to everyone and, what a surprise, Santa came by to say "Hello!" The first graders entertained us by both singing and dancing to holiday songs. The gym was filled with parents, siblings, and grandparents. It was a night that was enjoyed by everyone.

DOLSEN ELEMENTARY

- Second grade has continued to explore with making combinations of numbers that add up to one hundred. Students have used addition of two or more addends to get to one hundred.
- We have been working on a Revision unit for Writer's Workshop. We have learned that to revise is to "see again". Students learned to reread their stories from the previous unit and make plans to change particular features about their pieces.
- Our classes began yet another new comprehension strategy for Reader's Workshop. Our students began to explore what making inferences means. We read a story called What Mary Jo Shared. We wrote down all the things that Mary Jo did in the story. Then we wrote down what that told us about Mary Jo as a person. We discussed how in stories, the author does not always tell us all the information about a character from the words he or she writes in a story, that we infer certain things based on what has happened in the book.
- Second graders have been studying solids, liquids, and gasses. We had a "mystery mixture" that students had to separate! Students had to recall how to separate a mixture using a sieve, filter and possibly evaporation.
- Our classes also studied the monthly habit of mind of Striving for Accuracy. We read stories where characters showed evidence of this and talked about it as a class.

HARDY ELEMENTARY

- 4th and 5th grade classrooms became equipped with interactive SMART boards. The staff noted an increase in student engagement when used as an instructional tool. We also installed a mobile SMART board that is utilized by our special needs students.
- Mr. Lloyd's 4th grade students wrote, directed, and performed a play for the school on the importance of recycling and protecting the environment.
- Mrs. Freels' and Ms. Regan's students created a service learning project. The students put together activity bags to be used by young children receiving chemotherapy and/or radiation at Children's Hospital.
- 5th graders had to opportunity to hear a wonderful choir performance by the CMS choir. Mr. Middaugh and his pupils did an outstanding job. It was also nice for the Hardy staff to see some familiar faces.
- Hardy 4th graders, Katie White and Sheridan Skinner, applied the persuasive writing skills they learned in class to a real life application. They wrote a wonderful letter to the editor that appeared in the Herald.

KENT LAKE ELEMENTARY

- All aboard! The first grade team at Kent Lake did a literary unit on the book The Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg. The students came to school dressed in their pajamas and were given tickets as they boarded the train on the first day of the unit. They read the story and discussed the events in great detail, as well as worked on retelling with the use of a time line. Adjectives were introduced (since the book is full of them!), and the term "similie" was taught. They found examples of similies embedded throughout the story. The students even wrote and illustrated one of their own similies. The culminating activity was watching the movie The Polar Express (complete with hot chocolate) as they then compared the book to the movie using a Venn diagram. It was a very fun and educational experience for the students...and teachers!
- Mrs. Hilton's class had their first Writing Celebration for the year, December 8, 2011. Her student's created invitations, for their visitors to come hear their writing pieces. The students really worked hard on making their invitations enticing for their guests by adding in a preview of their personal narrative. In addition, there was a wonderful turn out of guests, from all generations. There were parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles, even babysitters! The students were truly able to shine as authors. The guests were in awe of the student's writing and were ecstatic to be able to share in this celebration. One guest put it best, "I was a teacher years ago, and I can't believe how advanced these fourth grade writing pieces sound! These kids are truly authors. I would love to purchase their writing at the bookstore!"
- The Kent Lake Stelle Canto Choir had the opportunity to sing on the Grand Staircase of the Detroit Fox Theatre before the performance of Cirque Dreams Holidaze on Saturday, December 17, 2011. The Choir performed songs like "Where are you Christmas" from The Grinch and "Snowflake Carol" along with a variety of traditional Christmas Carols. There were 154 Kent Lake Choir and family members in attendance for the performance. Thank you to all that participated!
- Did you know that a tortoise can feel through his shell, that a chinchilla has the softest fur of any mammal, or that a frog can drink without even opening his mouth?! These are just some of the interesting facts that Kent Lake students learned during our recent visit from the folks at Science Alive. Students had the opportunity to touch otherwise untouchable creatures such as a Burmese Python or the little known Springhaus. Students also learned the differences between mammals, reptiles and amphibians, so next time the children see a frog, they can tell what separates the frog from the family cat!

SALEM ELEMENTARY

- Parents at Salem were invited to participate in a thinking routine, which is a part of our school's Cultures of Thinking initiative. A Chalk Talk was available for families to express their thoughts and questions about teaching and learning at Salem.

- The Kindergarten and 5th grade concert went on without a hitch. It even included a quick video created by 5th graders with the help of a video editor.
- The Title I library received some new additions. The new books consist of high interest books for reluctant readers. The students who have checked them out have shown an increased excitement about reading.
- The Salem Student Council just finished its first service project. Students organized a hat, mitten, and glove drive to help support Active Faith.
- 5th graders at Salem participated in a Business Buddies venture with Plastivan. Students participated in hands-on experiments that showed the importance of plastics and how plastics are made.
- Salem students have been practicing their Habits of Mind! 42 students in grades K-5 completed their Habit of Mind worksheet and received Habit of Mind Master In - Training locker tags. All students watched Habit of Mind Master videos on YouTube so that they could learn even more about the 16 effective habits.
- Mr. Naudi's PE students have been introduced to The Team Zone. Mr. Naudi taught his students to Work Interdependently and Think Flexibly in order to solve their problems during competitive times in PE through a step-by-step process. This method gives students the chance to evaluate a situation to determine its importance and develop a plan of action to ensure it does not happen again.

SAYRE ELEMENTARY

- In December, Sayre second graders worked on becoming math masters through math workshop games, working with learning partners, and mastering double digit addition with regrouping. They also celebrated their writing by sharing with other second graders. Their writing showed all the interesting ways they could use punctuation. (All the ways they learned through reading mentor texts!) They were busy learning to read and create maps of their school, their neighborhoods, bedrooms, and the North Pole. Sayre second graders know where they are going!
- The Metro Parks Mobile Learning Center visited the third grade students at Sayre. During this visit the students caught a glimpse of what life was like as a French voyager. They also learned about the fur trade and the relationships with the Native Americans. The students learned many French words including: la plume (feather), le toque (hat), la mitasse (leggings), and le moccasin (moccasin). This presentation was a fantastic introduction to our next unit of study, The History of Michigan!
- The Sayre Kindergartners worked hard in Writer's Workshop. In the first semester students worked hard at mastering their letters and sounds so that they can use what they know while writing. They practiced labeling their pictures and writing sentences too! In math, students worked on number recognition, writing numbers, and patterning.
- Sayre students bowled in PE during December. Kindergarten and First Grade students practiced bowling using a small "bowling ball." Students in grades 2-5 bowled in Sayre's

Bowling Alley using carpet lanes, plastic pins and rubber bowling balls. The 4th and 5th grade students celebrated their last day of bowling doing an activity called "Frosty Bowl." Students bowled in all crazy, non-traditional ways such as "spin 5 times", "on stomach" and "sit in a chair." All students used their bowling knowledge, persistence and appropriate humor during this activity. There was one winner from each class that was named "The Frosty Bowl Champion." Upon completion of our Bowling unit, all grades 2-5 students received a bowling pass to apply their bowling skills at Pinz Bowling Alley.

- Sayre first graders were busy in December building reading comprehension skills by creating vivid mental images. They also learned to use this skill during their writing.
- Fourth graders at Sayre worked on writing essays. They used the work of published authors as models. After studying numerous examples of published work, they looked for similarities and differences between them to determine what an essay really is. In constructing that knowledge for themselves, they can better write their own essays!

CENTENNIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

- The CMS Teaser was held December 1st in the Cafetorium for all students and staff. During the teaser, parts of the upcoming play "All I Really Need to Know I Learned by Being in a Bad Play" were performed, enticing students to come see more. Cadet Choir sang Frosty Hand Jive, Concert Choir sang Fa la la, Chamber Choir sang Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy, and Statesmen sang Rise Up Shepherd. Band students also performed, setting a lively holiday atmosphere for everyone!
- National Junior Honors Society ran a Penny Wars competition where pennies, bills, and checks counted as positive points and silver coins were negative points. Each class had a rival class where positive points were placed in their own room and negative points in their rival's bin. A total of \$3,660 in proceeds were donated to COTS (Coalition on Temporary Shelter) located in Detroit who provide affordable housing and meals for those in desperate need. A pizza party was held for the class with the most points.
- The CMS presentation of "All I Really Need to Know I Learned by Being in a Bad Play" was a comical crowd pleaser for all who attended. Directed by Jennifer Barshaw, the characters portrayed actors in a bad play that brought home the misery each suffered in a humorous fashion. The cast mingled afterwards with the audience for pictures and refreshments.
- During the 7th grade plant unit, Mrs. Sanderson's Science class at CMS studied the parts of a flowering plant and were lucky enough to have flowers donated for the students to observe and dissect. The students had this wonderful opportunity to take what they had learned regarding flowering plant parts and dissect their flowers looking for specific parts with their own eyes! Talk about hands-on learning!
- Due to large turnouts each year the CMS Choirs performed their holiday concert in the South Lyon High School auditorium. Under the direction of Darel Middaugh, many old

favorites and some new songs were enjoyed by the audience. The entire length of the stage was set with beautiful poinsettias, adding to the pleasure of the evening. A standing ovation was given to this talented group of students afterward!

MILLENNIUM MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Mrs. Miller's 7th grade Science students completed their Wisconsin Fast Plant Investigations. Students were in groups investigating the effects that changing one variable in their plant's environment had on its growth and development. Mrs. Miller also had a time-lapse photography camera set up taking pictures every 30 minutes of the plants growing. These photos were converted to a video to show students the growth and development of the plant throughout its entire life cycle in just a few minutes.
- From Mr. Levi's Industrial Technology Classes: The 6th grade students studied communications through the programming of the robotic arm, the creation of a technology collage and by also writing a one page summary on how something works. The 8th grade students worked on designing, constructing, and testing catapults for accuracy and precision. 8th graders moved on to studying electronics via a learning tool called Mr. Circuit. The kit has individual students building specific electronic circuits using components such as resistors, capacitors, transistors, batteries, LEDs, switches, and integrated circuits.
- The 8th grade Algebra classes are constantly using investigative learning in order to discover different algebra concepts. In a rope tying activity, they discovered decreasing linear lines during a cooperative learning, hands-on investigation. This investigative approach helped students discover the content on their own and apply it to real life situations.
- Millennium Middle School's 6th Grade Math Plus students made a connection between math and nature on their Equation Expedition. They categorized various equations and related them to types of fish. They began their journey by catching guppies (one-step equations). After guppies, along came minnows (two-step equations). Students journeyed down river and reeled in some barracudas (multi-step equations). Duh dun, duh dun. Lastly, students ventured to the ocean for sharks only to find these equations are not big and scary like Jaws, just several steps with negative numbers and the distributive property. Along the way, no limbs were lost - just new connections made!
- While learning about the Constitution, Mrs. Fleming's 8th grade social studies classes participated in a mock trial. Her students took on roles of lawyers, judges, witnesses, and jury members. The trial was about a high school student who claims he was pushed down a flight of stairs after school by the quarterback. The quarterback claims he was only trying to talk to the student about a cartoon he drew for the newspaper. The trial is not based on an actual court case.

SOUTH LYON HIGH SCHOOL

- Student Council and National Honor Society worked together on a cell phone drive. Used cell phones were collected in December to be recycled. The money gained through recycling is used to purchase calling cards for soldiers.
- Student Council adopted two families for Christmas through Lyon Community Chest. They provided not only gifts for the children, but Christmas dinner as well.
- SLHS staff came together after school to create some beautiful bowls for 'Empty Bowls'. Empty Bowls, a fund-raiser to bring awareness to the plight of the hungry in communities around the country, was conceived by an art teacher, in which students and staff make ceramic bowls, serve soup and take donations for the soup and bowl. Bowls can also be sold at a silent auction or placed in the general grouping of bowls to be perused and purchased. Each person making a bowl wrote a quote or reflection about the experience or thoughts on the issue of hunger, which will accompany each piece adding greater meaning and value to the artwork.
- Student Council hosted a canned food drive for Active Faith. The drive ran for two weeks, November 28 to December 8th. The class who earned the most points won a pizza party.
- Office Staff and Administrators cooked breakfast for the teachers the Friday before Winter Break, to show appreciation for all their hard work. This is the second year in a row for this event, which will certainly continue, as it has been very well received.

SOUTH LYON EAST HIGH SCHOOL

- Congratulations to Olivia Richvasky! Next fall she will be going to U of M for softball. The signing for her Athletic Scholarship took place on Friday, December 9. Way to go Olivia! Go Blue!
- South Lyon East Choir students Alyssa Impullitti (11th) and Jacqueline Rogge (10th) recently participated in Regional Honors Choir in Howell on December 3. Regional Honors Choirs participants come from schools in District 4, and are selected through an audition. During rehearsals for their December 3 concert they also auditioned for State Honors Choir and were selected as two of the eight Alto voice parts that will be performing with exceptional choir students statewide at the Michigan Music Conference in Grand Rapids in January. Congratulations to Alyssa and Jacqueline!
- The cross country team celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Witch's Hat Run this year. Coach Scott Smith was the race director or co-director for this entire time. Michigan Runner Magazine recognized the Witch's Hat Run's success with two different articles in the latest issue. On February 11, the boys cross country team will be hosting the Winter Witch's Hat Run for runners of all ages. Registration forms can be found at www.slxc.com/witch
- The SLEHS journalism class recently was awarded a \$50 prize from the American Society of Newspaper Editors for having the third-highest number of visits to their

online site from among all the schools participating on the My High School Journalism website (my.hsj.org) as part of the "Got News? Get Clicks" contest. Please check out the online East Edition at my.hsj.org/slehs. Additionally, the East Edition is proud to be sending senior Jon Munro to be part of the Detroit Red Wings High School Journalism Day where he will have a chance to meet coaches, members of the press and players, participate in a press conference, watch a Red Wings practice and then compete in a writing contest covering the event.

- Mrs. Mellor's 6th hour calculus class was "caught" doing their warm up during a fire drill. This shows how self-motivated South Lyon East students are. Way to go Cougars!
- South Lyon East High School just finished a large donation project to Mott's Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor. They created double-sided fleece blankets tied together on the sides in knots. Members spent a few weeks fundraising for the supplies by holding an extensive returnable can and bottle drive in seven different neighborhoods in the community. This was a large success which allowed Mrs. Joslin, the advisor, to purchase plenty of fleece cutouts just after Thanksgiving. The members then over a period of two days gathered in the Media Center after school and cut and knotted 53 full sized blankets. Each blanket was solid colored on one side and patterned on the other- they were very kid friendly and the members enjoyed the process! Over the holiday break Mrs. Joslin and the NHS Officers took a trip to Mott's to deliver the blankets. They were very well received and were told their contribution would be added to the current stock of blankets to be given to each child for Christmas who is staying at the hospital. The National Honor Society unanimously agreed that the donation project was well worth the time and effort!
- Recently the SLEHS National Honor Society held a bi-annual blood drive with The American Red Cross. They scheduled 72 teachers and students, 16 years of age and older, to participate during the school day, and many National Honor Society members assisted in the process of planning and overseeing the donors. The event ran smoothly and many students were given the opportunity to donate their blood to a good cause. They will be holding their second drive on March 23.