

SOUTH LYON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

GOOD NEWS

NOVEMBER 2011



BARTLETT ELEMENTARY

- Fifth grade students have been busy in science. We are currently investigating matter and molecules. Students have been thinking about how molecules in different states of matter (solids, liquids and gasses) are arranged and how they move. We have had great discussions about whether or not gas molecules or liquid molecules can be compressed! Fifth grade students should be proud of the level of thinking that they have been doing in science!
- The fourth graders at Bartlett spent November discussing money in math. In their math workshop, students were able to use money at stations to buy books and groceries. Students choose items to buy then purchase them from each other. Fourth graders learned concepts of making change and adding and subtracting money as well as the reasons behind using a decimal point in money.
- Third grade students were busy learning about fractions in math workshop. They participated in fun activities like “making brownies” creating fraction cards, and playing fraction games that helped them understand how to order fractions from least to greatest. With math workshop, students are excited about math!
- Bartlett students had a fun time seeing the assembly: “Hola! The Spanish Fiesta Show.” This enrichment program led kids on an exploration of the art of Hispanic music and an introduction to the Spanish language. Just like a Spanish Fiesta, this assembly was a fun, festive, and a musical celebration that had the students singing along as they learned.

BRUMMER ELEMENTARY

- For the 11th year in a row, we've had 100% attendance at our Parent/Teacher Conferences. We are so proud of the dedication of our staff and parents to this important event.
- On November 29th, at 4:00 p.m., 35 fourth and fifth graders participated in a Pizza Readathon. They each brought tons of books to read and a drink to have while eating the pizza. It was the best pizza ever!
- The Brummer Neighborhood Council met on November 29th, at 7:00 p.m., to discuss the fundraising plans for the year.

DOLSEN ELEMENTARY

- The first grade geologists explored rocks through many hands on science lessons. We learned to describe rocks, sort them and categorize the different sizes. We even had a parent who works with earth materials come in and do hands on demonstration for all of first grade!
- We are so thankful for our families, our school and our friends. In Social studies we began our look at families and explored the unique characteristics of our own families.

- Math workshop has been an exciting learning time for our first graders. This month we focused on addition, graphing, number sequencing and skip counting. Playing Double Compare and Tens Go Fish were some of our favorite math fluency games.
- In Reading Workshop first graders learned how to make text to self connections and how using these connections can help them to comprehend what they are reading. We are also learning how to retell stories that we have read using details from the stories.
- Writing time has been one of the favorite times of day for first grade. We have been writing about small moments that have happened in our lives. Students get excited when they get to write about themselves. They learned how to “zoom in” on a small part of their day and use details to spice up their stories.

HARDY ELEMENTARY

- The Hardy PTO hosted several family events over the month of November. They included family game night, a night of roller skating and some bowling at Pinz.
- Hardy’s Girls on the Run participants completed a 5k at Mayberry State Park as the culmination of a lot of hard work. Girls from grades 3-5 worked on social issues and healthy living.
- Matt Glover, author and children’s literacy guru, worked at Hardy on Thursday, November 10th. Mr. Glover worked with Hardy staff and students on the writing workshop and conferring.
- To become a “Green School,” the staff decided to institute “No Trash Friday’s,” where students are encouraged to bring their lunches in packaging that can be taken home and/or recycled.
- The students earned a dance party reward during their PE time for meeting the fundraising goal during the Lap-a-Thon. Great job, guys!

KENT LAKE ELEMENTARY

- In early November, a parent in Mrs. Randolph’s third grade classroom entered the class in a "goals for schools" contest with the Plymouth Whalers Hockey Team. The night of the drawing, the Whalers scored a goal, and the class won the drawing. One of the Plymouth Whalers, accompanied by his manager, visited Mrs. Randolph’s classroom on November 16th to present a \$100 Visa gift card to be used to purchase classroom materials. Mrs. Randolph plans to purchase a couple of new math games and some books that were suggested by visiting author, Matt Glover. A photograph was taken of the class with the Plymouth Whaler, where it was posted on their website. Needless to say, our third graders were ecstatic!
- The 1st graders at Kent Lake Elementary studied about Pebbles, Sand and Silt. On Monday, November 21, they had Mr. Sean Paulson, a geologist, come and visit their classrooms through the Business Buddies program! He discussed what geologists do,

where they work, and even showed them videos of two types of tools they use. Mr. Paulson also showed them a video of a “Geoprobe” and a “Hollow-stem Auger drilling machine.” It fascinated the students to see these tools in action! He also brought in many different rock samples, even ones that came from far beneath the Earth’s surface! Mr. Paulson’s visit added so much information to our science unit. They were delighted to learn from him!

- The third graders in Mrs. Harma’s class have been studying animals in science. Each student worked on a project called Create-A-Creature. The purpose of the project was to allow students to create their own 3-D animal using recycled items from home to show how animals adapt to their environments. They decided on which habitat/ecosystem their animal would best thrive. The students had to write a report based on their new creature. The kids then got to share with the class their report and new creature! We all learned a lot!
- First Graders at Kent Lake celebrated Thanksgiving in a new way this year! They rotated through three activities that were geared towards using skills learned in math and language arts. In the math station, the children made a turkey by counting by 5's. In the language arts station, the children listened to a story about turkeys and then wrote about why they would want a turkey for a pet. Finally, the children read a recipe and made pumpkin pie in a cup. The vote was about half and half on whether or not the pumpkin pie in a cup tasted good or bad!
- The fifth graders in Mrs. Madeja’s classroom spent an afternoon celebrating and sharing their writing after they completed their first writing unit on personal narratives. To celebrate their hard work over the last 2 months, the students were invited to a pajama publishing party where they gathered in groups of 6 to share their final pieces. Students listened actively as each writer read his/her story aloud. The students then provided feedback on each piece by offering one suggestion and one compliment regarding the writer’s craft. Some of the compliments heard around the room involved the writers’ use of dialogue, description, internal thoughts and the effectiveness of the writers’ leads and endings. It was refreshing to hear the laughter and gasps as the pieces were being shared. The students loved hearing each others’ stories and took away some new ideas as well.

SALEM ELEMENTARY

- Our staff welcomed Mrs. Courtney Rabassa as our new Title One teacher. Mrs. Rabassa started working with her kindergarten and 4th grade case load during the last week of November.
- The Salem staff has been working on making Salem a Culture of Thinking. A small group of participants have attended meetings in Clarkston to help our school implement thinking routines as a way to promote student thinking, substantive conversation, writing across the curriculum and use of the Habits of Mind.

- Several Salem students started working with their Kids HOPE mentors. The mentors come into the school during lunch hours to provide support in a multitude of ways. The children look forward to meeting with their mentors on a regular basis.
- Kindergarten students practiced the new Thinking Routine: See, Think, Wonder to jumpstart their new social studies unit, Where Am I?
- The first graders at Salem continue to be mathematicians as they have learned how to use Touch Math to solve subtraction problems.
- As an extension on their social studies unit on maps, the second graders read the book *Flat Stanley*. Afterwards they made their own Flat Stanley to mail to a friend or relative. Flat Stanley was mailed back with a letter that detailed what he did while he was gone. We put all of the letters on display in the hallway mapping out where Flat Stanley traveled too!
- Green is the new black! Or at least in third grade it is! Third graders are testing out their green thumbs while delving deep into the world of plants! They have learned the parts of a plant, parts of a seed by creating a "seed book", plant habitats, and much, much more!
- Third graders at Salem have traveled the state of Michigan...on paper, at least! Salem Third Graders completed a "Great State, Great Map" project! They were provided a poster board sized map of Michigan and on it had to locate and label over 20 important Michigan landmarks! Creativity was at its best as some students used chocolate chips as the Porcupine Mountains and a small crown as Isle Royale, just to name a few!
- Mrs. Raines recently taught some of her first grade students how to play memory with their sight words as a way to help with fast word recognition! The students were excited to take their games home to play with their family!
- 4th graders tried their hand at a new strategy called See, Think, Wonder during math multiplication lessons. It was fantastic observing how their minds think, especially the diversity of ideas that were presented. As students did their sharing it was evident that they were using the Habit of Mind of Meta-cognition.
- The fourth grade science students tried a new routine, Generate, Connect, Sort, Elaborate (GCSE), as a way to recall and think about knowledge related to "earth-saving" practices. The activity was a first for the entire fourth grade class of Salem, and the students had some powerful ideas to share.
- 4th grade writers also celebrated their writing with one another at the end of our first personal narrative unit. Students really enjoyed reading the positive comments left by their peers which gave them an even larger purpose for writing.
- Fifth grade classes have been trying several new thinking routines. See, Think, Wonder was used in social studies and in math as a way to launch new content. Additionally, Chalk Talk was used to summarize ideas at the end of a science unit.

SAYRE ELEMENTARY

- Third and fifth grade students at Sayre have been working on a drumming activity using the tone and bass parts of the drum. They were very excited to read drum notation. Students will use drum activities in their Music Informances in the Spring.
- Sayre students in grades 1-5 worked on hand dribble for basketball. They used their “dominant” and “non-dominant” hands to dribble the basketball during a variety of activities in November. Kindergarten students used their “favorite” and “not favorite” hands to dribble their basketballs!
- Sayre Kindergarten students were busy reading and writing in November! They made and read many books and worked hard in writing workshop. Students enjoyed reading and pointing to words in their books. They tried hard to make the words on the page match the pictures, too. In Math, the Sayre Kindergarten students worked on creating and labeling patterns.
- First graders at Sayre set sail on a pretend voyage on the Mayflower. Upon reaching their new world, they celebrated with a feast!
- Second grade students at Sayre were excited to share their work with parents during student led conferences. They showed their math, reading, and writing goals, their math journals, and a pieced of published writing. Parents were proud of their children for sharing their work with them before the parent-teacher conferences.
- Third graders at Sayre have been making daily observations of the moon in order to build knowledge of the phases of the moon and how the earth’s and moon’s movement affect human life.
- Sayre fourth graders shared their personal narratives with each other. Knowing they would share these, they were more motivated to do their best.
- Sayre 5th graders participated in a Kid's Calendar contest held by Oakland County Water Commission. The contest was for students to draw an illustration of how to keep Oakland County's water clean. They received over 1,000 entries. All students enjoyed participating and created wonderful calendar posters! Although none of our students won the contest, two Sayre fifth graders received honorable mentions! These students were Tyler Bland and Emily Hill from Mrs. Kane's fifth grade class!
- Matt Glover, a former teacher and principal and current author on the topic of writing instruction in elementary grades, visited South Lyon in November. He spent one day each at Hardy, Kent Lake, and Sayre Elementary to work with students and teachers there, and then presented to the grades 3-5 staff on our curriculum day. Teachers learned more about creating units of study to address the needs of the students in their classes, and also how to better confer with our young authors.
- More than 98% of our students were represented by their parents/guardians at parent teacher conferences this November. This mutual support and communication is a critical factor to our students’ ongoing achievement.

CENTENNIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Two CMS choir students were accepted into the Michigan School Vocal Music Association State Honors Choir: Mackenzie Haislet and Brianna Attard. The selection process begins with an audition with their school director to represent Centennial at Regional Honors Choir. At Regional's the students audition again for the chance to participate at the state level. Members of the State Honors Choir will meet four times to rehearse and then perform a major concert in DeVoss Hall in Grand Rapids on January 22. We are very proud of them!
- On October 27th Centennial students participated in the first Charger Writing Challenge of the year. Thirty minutes of each class period were dedicated to this project. Students focused their writing on the positive Habits of Mind necessary to have a successful middle school career.
- To reinforce the study of the phases of our moon, students in Mr. Shimones class used cupcakes as the earth and Oreo cookie halves with frosting scraped to depict various phases of the moon. Students placed the phases in the correct order with regard to our sun. It was a wonderful and tasty learning session!
- A Poster & Poetry Contest sponsored by the National Career Development Association was held at CMS the beginning of November. Congratulations goes to Lexi Abernethy, our CMS middle school winner of the 2011 contest. This year's theme was "My Career Dreams". Lexi's poster will be entered into the district level contest and will be posted on the National Career Development web site. This was one of the ways our students celebrated National Career Development Month!
- Students in Mrs. Sanderson's seventh grade Science class studied the organelles (little organs) of cells and their specific role each play in how cells work. To illustrate this, Brendan Connolly baked a delicious cake into an example of a plant cell. The lesson was informative, and the cake delicious!

MILLENNIUM MIDDLE SCHOOL

- On November 16th, students at Millennium were "Dressed for Success." In recognition of National Career Development Week, students dressed as professionals in a chosen career and shared their career dreams with others. Student Council and NJHS members helped with the event as well. It was a fun day at MMS learning about careers and the students looked great! In addition, winners of the Poster and Poetry Contest were announced. The contest is sponsored by the National Career Development Association. The theme for this year is "My Career Dreams." In the Poster Category: Third place was awarded to Lauren Kafara, second place was awarded to Julie Francis, and first place was awarded to Kassie Lavigne. In the Poetry category, Megan Hutter was the first place winner. These students also qualified for the District Contest. Congratulations to our students!

- Students in Mr. Costa's and Mr. Ferguson's 8th grade Science classes were reviewing for their weather exams by creating original plays based on the study guide for this unit. This project gave students an opportunity to be creative in science, as well as a kinesthetic activity to help reinforce concepts.
- On Nov. 14th, MMS held our semiannual "Writing Extravaganza." All students spent a portion of each class period during the entire day writing about a common theme. The topics were related to Social Studies: Liberty vs. Security, Global Warming, and Digging Up the Past. Expository writing is an essential element of the educational process. By having every student write about the same topic at the same time, we are hoping to reinforce the importance of practicing strong writing skills across the curriculum. All teachers were involved in grading the papers using the 6+1 Writing Rubric.
- MMS received an ExxonMobil Educational Alliance Grant in the amount of \$500.00 for use towards programs in math or science. This generous grant was provided on behalf of the local South Lyon (Mobil) gasoline station. ExxonMobil believes it is fundamentally important to encourage the next generation to pursue studies and careers in fields involving math and science.
- MMS counselors, Mrs. Diane Bardsley and Mr. Jason Gilders started conducting small group counseling sessions in November. Themes throughout the year include such topics as: New Students, Middle School Adjustment, Divorce/Changing Families, Grief, Friendship/Self Esteem, Guy's Issues and Girl's Issue.

SOUTH LYON HIGH SCHOOL

- Senior Gabrielle Williams, signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball at Wayne State University next year. Williams, a four-year letter winner at shortstop, has an overall batting average of .460 with a fielding percentage of .935. She has had over 30 RBIs in each of the last three seasons and helped lead her team to a 20-8 season last spring. Williams is also a four-year varsity basketball and three-year varsity volleyball player, serving as captain of all three of her teams. She has also been a scholar-athlete throughout her high school athletic career. Wayne State is a NCAA Division II member of the GLIAC conference.
- The South Lyon High School Pride of Lions Marching Band competed at the Michigan Competing Band Association State Finals on November 5th at Ford Field in Detroit. South Lyon, the smallest band at State Finals, placed 3rd with a score of 84.51 against 12 other bands in Flight II. This is the highest score and placement for South Lyon since 2006.
- The fall play, Murder at the O.K Corral was a hit with the audiences who attended the 9th- the 13th of November. The hard work of the students and parents involved with the production payed off -audiences laughed uproariously throughout each performance. The show was double cast, giving more students a chance to appear on stage, and the audiences a chance to see the show performed in very different styles. Miss Whitefoot

would like to thank all of the students and parents involved, and anyone who attended the show. Next for SLHS Drama is the upcoming musical; a comedy called *Once Upon a Mattress* which is based on the fairytale, "The Princess and the Pea". It will open this April and run for two weekends.

- From the SLHS Choir Department: Laine Foster, Austin Hinkle, and Karoline Kinjorski successfully auditioned for the MSVMA Regional Honors Choir. They will perform at Pioneer High School in Ann Arbor with students from dozens of other schools on Saturday, December 3. Thirty one students performed the American and Canadian National Anthems on Saturday, November 5 at Compuware Arena in Plymouth prior to the start of the Plymouth Whalers hockey game against the Windsor Spitfires.
- The NHS students held a successful blood drive on Nov. 3rd. Seventy-five people registered to donate; forty were first time donors. Fifty-seven people successfully donated one whole blood unit each. One student successfully donated two units of double red cells which were collected using an aphaeresis machine. A total of fifty -nine units were collected which will help up to 177 hospital patients once again enjoy good health. The NHS students did a fantastic job running the program and the students who came down to donate were very well behaved; several nurses commented on what great kids we have here at SLHS. Thanks to the NHS students for making a difference in their community.
- Mr. Simovski took his AP Government class on a Field Trip to the Henry Ford Museum to work on a project connected to the With Liberty and Justice for All exhibit.

SOUTH LYON EAST HIGH SCHOOL

- On November 11, Pam Huffman's German I classes celebrated *Martinstag* Day. On this day every year children in Germany make lanterns and participate in a procession from door to door singing songs about St. Martin, in exchange for sweets. At the end of the procession there is usually a bonfire. The German students made lanterns for *Martinstag* Day and entertained all by singing German songs in the halls.
- Congratulations go to SLE's Drama Department! November 16 - 20th, Donna Kupper led the students in a spectacular performance of '*Singing in the Rain*'. The singing, dancing and all around talent shown by these students in this difficult, college level musical, was incredible. The scenery and special effects were wonderful...who would have thought they could actually get it to rain on our stage?! Thank you, SLE's Thespian group and Donna Kupper!!! Bravo!!