

The Press

Your Source for Cougar News

APRIL 2008

The Press
PrairieLand Elementary
1300 E. Raab Rd. Normal,
IL 61761
309.888.6838
www.unit5.org/prairieland
Volume #9
Issue #6

Principal's Message

Dear Prairieland Families,

Celebrating our Diversity – Our Difference is our Strength!

At Prairieland, we do believe that our differences are our strength! We are looking to expand the number of cultural celebrations we recognize throughout the school year and we are asking for your help. If you know of a cultural celebration that would have a positive influence on our school climate, please contact Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Minor, or Mr. Arnold to share your thoughts.

School Improvement

The Prairieland staff met on February 29th for a very productive School Improvement Day! This was an opportunity for teachers from across the district to meet with their grade levels or departments. We also examined our current reading practices, revised our school crisis plan and then discussed issues related to a school-wide crisis drill. Our next School Improvement Day will be on April 25th, when we will continue our work with reading instruction and spend time working with technology such as our new Smart Boards.

School-wide Crisis Drill

Prairieland staff spent a considerable amount of time this year reviewing and revising our School Crisis Plan. We are now ready to have a crisis drill with students, but want to give our families plenty of advance notice. We will practice a "Code Red" scenario on Wednesday, May 7th. Our goal is to properly prepare our students, but not to scare them. A "Code Red" situation would involve the need to keep all staff and students in a safe location, usually due to some kind of an intruder in the building. We have decided that we can practice the same skills, but in a less threatening manner with a different scenario. On May 7th, the scenario will be that a dog has wandered into the building. If this situation were to occur in reality, we would in fact move to a "Code Red" lockdown situation until the dog was removed from the premises. We thought this was a somewhat less frightening scenario than an "intruder" in the building, yet we still are able to practice moving children to safe locations with an adult. We encourage all families to spend some time prior to May 7th discussing what to do in this type of situation.

Kindergarten Pre-Registration

Pre-registration for all 2008-09 kindergarten students will be held at Prairieland on Thursday, May 1, 2008 at 9:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M. Students must be 5 years of age on or before September 1, 2008, to attend kindergarten this fall. If you have a child who will be entering kindergarten this fall, please plan to attend the pre-registration. If you are unable to attend either session on May 1st, you may call the school office at 888-6838. Please share this information with neighborhood families who do not currently have a student attending Prairieland Elementary.

Tim Arnold
Principal

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Calendar

April

- 1 - PIECE Meeting – 6:30
- 15 - Spring Pictures
- 16 - Market Day Pick-up 4:30
- 25 - No School - School Improvement Day



Student Spotlight

Birthday Books

You have an opportunity to help our library grow with the Birthday Book Program. Families can purchase and donate a book to Prairieland's IMC in honor of their child's special day. A bookplate with the child's name and birthday will be placed in the book, and the honored child will be the very first student to check out that book. Books may be selected and purchased for \$15 from a list posted outside the IMC and on the Prairieland IMC website. Families may also talk to Mrs. Renollet about a specific title they wish to purchase from a bookstore. *Thank you for all your support! We have received many birthday book donations and it has made a difference in our collection.*

Thank you and happy birthday to . . .

Cole Dillon (4S) for the donation of *Albert the Great: The Albert Pujols Story* by Rob Rains in honor of his April 3rd birthday.

Makenna Gravel (KMa) for the donation of *Lily's Big Day* by Kevin Henkes in honor of her January 4th birthday.

Lexi Onsrud (KKL) *Little Quack's Hide and Seek* by Lauren Thompson in honor of her February 26th birthday.

Renee Schwitzner (1L) *Watch Me Grow: Penguin* by Lisa Magloff in honor of her February 16th birthday.

Mrs. Mandros (KMa) *The Boy Who Was Raised by Librarians* by Carla Morris in honor of her February 24th birthday.

Hannah Hyatt (KMa) *You Can Do It, Sam* by Amy Hest in honor of her February 3rd birthday.

Matthew Trimble (EI-K) *Cars: Old, New Red, Blue!* By Melisa Lagonegro in honor of his June 9th birthday.

Happy birthday and thank you for helping our library grow.

Busy Student Council!

Winter months have been busy, full of activities and community service. On February 8th, we had over 400 people attend the "Cougars on Ice" open skate at Pepsi Ice Rink. Lots of new skaters left with skating confidence and old skaters left with smiles and perhaps some new skating stories!

We collected \$1,727.42 for Easter Seals and presented our check at the Easter Seals Telethon. During Wacky Week in March, we collected money for The Children's Hospital in Peoria and had an M&M's guess jar to support MS. Bowling Day at Circle Lanes is our biggest fundraiser which supports our activities throughout the year. Thanks to Circle Lanes for their generosity!

We were invited to visit our new neighbors at Evergreen Village, where we presented a welcome banner signed by the students and staff at Prairieland. The students enjoyed a tour of the

facility and look forward to other opportunities to share with our neighbors.

As we wind down our Student Council activities, we would like to thank all of the students, parents, and staff that have supported our efforts to introduce students to leadership and community service at Prairieland. Thanks! Jill Elston & Sue Statton

Prairieland Garden Club

Spring Garden Club is coming into full swing. We will be meeting every Monday starting April 7th until the end of school. We do not meet on March 31st. It is not too late to join garden club if your child is interested and in grades 3-5. We meet 3:05-4 every Monday. Your child may come and pick up a Garden Club form from Mrs. Jameson.

We will be busy clearing out the garden from winter residue in April, and planting the month of May. The students planted bulbs and seeds in March to take home and care for.

Garden Club will be making stepping stones on Thursday, April 24th as a fundraiser for plants for the garden. They will be ready for Mother's Day, May 11th.

Stepping Stones are \$22 for regular ones and \$25 if handprints are involved.

Young Authors

Prairieland is proud to announce the Young Author representatives for 2007-2008. We had so many quality books turned in, it was difficult to pick the top ones! We have four books that will represent our school during the final judging of the entire Unit 5 district. Eighth grade students from the three middle schools will meet on Wednesday,

March 19 to select the books that will go on to represent Unit Five at the Young Author Conference in May at Illinois State University. Our four representatives are:

Jessica Bynum 1R – *The Magic Car Ride*

Hannah Clayton 2Hu – *The Button Buddy Adventure and The Magic Mirror*

Hannah Collins 5F – *White Oak*

Emma Todd 5E– *The Million Dollar Summer*

2008 Young Authors Best of the Rest!

Carley Baughman 1V – *Jaggo's Adventure*

Brennan Mitchell 1V – *My Camping Adventure*

Rebekah Nielsen 1R – *The Bunny Who Loved to Travel*

Amber Magee 2L – *Best Friends*

Madalyne Patton 2L – *Sophie's Day out*

Lewie Brown 3F – *Jacob and the Computer Club*

Brady Anderson 4J – *Iceberg Emperors*

Sam McDowell 4J – *Jerry's World*

Ashley LaFayette 5F – *The Birthday Adventure*

Sarah Filosa and Rachel Smith – *The ABC Guide to Being Girly!*

Maggie Smith 5F – *Gymnastics Disaster*

Congratulations to everyone that participated in the Young Authors contest.



School News

NEWS FROM THE NURSE

Project M.O.M.

There is an increasing concern with the weight and eating habits of America's children. This is undoubtedly a complicated problem. However, what is often overlooked is the one place where a deliberate, positive trend toward change could take place tonight — in the family home. If we can collectively connect with a family's "nutritional gatekeeper," in ways that help the family eat more nutritiously and be more physically active, we could make an immediate change, with lasting impact.

To do this, we need to connect with these nutritional gatekeepers — moms, dads, grandparents, siblings, or other caregivers — to promote good nutrition wherever they make their food decisions. We need to connect where they work and play, and where they purchase and prepare food. This is why the CNPP has launched Project M.O.M.

Project M.O.M. consists of multiple initiatives, all with the same goal of empowering nutritional gatekeepers, like **MyPyramid Menu Planner**.

To learn more about Project M.O.M. and the awesome power and responsibility you have as your family's "nutritional gatekeeper" visit the MyPyramid.gov website!

Susy Marcum, RN, BSN,



Education News

FROM THE KITCHEN

The school lunch is a well balanced and portion controlled meal for your child. Every lunch that we serve includes 5 components: a meat/meat alternate, a bread/bread alternate, a fruit, a vegetable and milk. Once in a while a student will tell us that they don't like or won't eat the entrée or the vegetable we are serving that day. We do practice the "offer versus serve" method, which means that out of the 5 menu items offered a student may refuse 2 items but must select at least 3. However it is our goal to encourage each and every child to take and eat everything we serve.

We also adhere to a strict portion control technique, which insures that each student is getting the right amount of nutrition. We never serve second helpings. Please look over our menu with your child to make sure that he or she will enjoy and benefit from eating a healthy lunch each and every school day. If you have any questions or comments, don't hesitate to contact us.

Email: roszhac@unit5.org
or (309)862-5062

The Cougars' cooks.



Looking Ahead

May

- 1 - Kdg Registration 9:00/1:00
- 2 - AWARE Fair
- 6 - PIECE Meeting 6:30
- 14 - Market Day Pick-up 4:30
- 17 - PIECE Movie Night 8:30
- 26 - **No School** – Memorial Day
- 31 - NCHS/NCWHS Graduation

Quote of the Month

I am always ready to learn, although I do not always like being taught.

- Winston Churchill, British statesman

Reminders

5th Grade Parents

Mark Your Calendars - Parkside Junior High 5th grade Orientation/Open House will be held on April 22, 2008 at 6:30 p.m.

PJHS softball try-outs will be July 28-30, 2008. Times and location TBD.

Spring 2008 STEPPING STONE ORDER FORM

***Stones will be ready to pick up May 1st - 9th, for Mother's Day presents on May 11th.**

Name _____

Grade/Room Code of Student _____

Phone # _____ (in case you forget to come so I can call you...once the concrete hardens it is too late to put handprints in it)

Choice of Stone Shape: (circle one):

Round Butterfly Heart Octagonal Square

Name imprinted on stone (please print name in all Capitals)

Do you want handprints? **Circle Yes or no.** If so, you will need to have your child at school between 4:00 and 4:30 p.m. on the following date:

Thursday, April 24th (please ***circle the date on your calendar***)

Please state any preferences you have for colors, or if you prefer natural stones. We also have stamps of butterflies, dragonflies, and hearts.

Return this form with a \$22 (handprints are \$25) check written to Prairieland Garden Club to the office no later than Monday, April 21st. Any questions email Mrs. Jameson jamesogi@unit5.org, or call her at home, 663-2491, or her cell, 825-2491.

STAFF APPRECIATION WEEK

Every day, staff members touch the lives of students, parents, and communities in significant ways. To show appreciation for their work and dedication, schools across the nation celebrate Staff Appreciation Week. May 5-9, 2008, we will celebrate, honor, and thank Prairieland staff for being a guiding force in helping our children develop into healthy, happy, and successful adults.

If you would like to assist us in our efforts this year, please return this form to the school or email Sarah Breeden at sak.breeden@verizon.net with the information.

Thank you Prairieland parents for all you do!

Teacher Support Committee

Name: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Check all that apply (and specify days/times available if offering to work that week):

- _____ I would like to help secure donations for teacher drawings/giveaways
- _____ I would like to donate a gift card or item for the drawing
- _____ I would like to assist in the planning prior to Staff Appreciation Week
- _____ I would like to donate food items that week
- _____ I would like to volunteer that week
 - _____ prepare food on own or in a group
 - _____ decorate lounge, entry, and outside tent
 - _____ set up for meals and refreshments (some help needed each day)
 - _____ serve meals and refreshments (some help needed each day – traditional sit-down lunch will be on Friday 5/9)
 - _____ clean up after meals and refreshments (some help needed each day)