



# Roger Sherman Elementary

November/December 2010

## *Principal's Corner*

L. Moss

On behalf of myself and the Roger Sherman Staff, best wishes for a joyous holiday season and a prosperous new year. School ends for the holidays on Thursday, December 23 and will resume on Monday, January 3, 2011.



## *Pre-K and Kindergarten*

S. Conway, M. Rarey, K. Nitkowski, K. Kalber

Thank you to all the parents and guardians of our preschool students who came in for our parent teacher conferences on behalf of Mrs. Conway and Mrs. Rarey. It was a pleasure talking with all of you.

The preschool classes of Mrs. Conway and Mrs. Edson had a wonderful November month learning about food groups and good nutrition. We discussed the 4 basic food groups; meals of the day; where foods come from; how they get to the stores and how to prepare meals.

In December, the children are learning about the various holidays celebrated: Hanukkah; Ramadan, Christmas,

Kwanzaa and New Years! We learned about these holidays by viewing and discussing posters, singing songs and story books read to them. They will bring home a booklet entitled "My Holiday Alphabet Book," as well as lyrics to famous holiday songs.

"Happy Holidays!" to all of you.

The preschool classes of Mrs. Rarey and Mrs. Rodriguez have been busy trying to help people in need. The parents generously donated muffin mix and fruit and the children spent the week baking muffins for the soup kitchen. We mixed and measured and counted. After all the muffins were done, we put them into hand-decorated bags along with a piece of fruit and a juice box. We made over 100 bags! Mrs. Valentin and Koralise (who was in preschool 3 years ago, but still does this every year!) delivered the bags to the soup kitchen where 2 students from the morning class, Jenna Pavelkops and Daren Johnson (along with their moms) handed them out to the happy customers.

We have also been reading about Alex's Lemonade Stand and collecting money so that we can have a yummy snack and an icy cold glass of lemonade while at the same time helping children who are sick. We have already gotten over \$150!

The last project we will do will be to do chores at home to raise money for Heifer International. This organization gives animals to people who then learn to take care of them and make money from them as well as pass on the baby animals to their neighbors so that they too can make

money to buy food and clothes. We have learned that giving to people and helping people can make us feel really good.



Daren Johnson with his baby brother and Jenna Pavelkops handed out "breakfast to go" bags to the people at the soup kitchen on Broad Street.

The kindergarten teachers appreciate all the parents who came to report card conferences. We really enjoyed meeting with you to share your child's progress. The children have been focusing on learning to read books by checking the pictures and getting their mouths ready for the sounds the letters make. Please continue to work on sight word contracts and read books at home. The projects that have come in are fabulous and on display. In math, the kindergarten students have been focusing on recognizing pennies and nickels and telling the value of each coin. The children really enjoyed learning about the first Thanksgiving in November. Now, they are learning about culture and traditions through the study of Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa. We hope all of our kindergarten families have a happy and healthy holiday season!

## First Grade

**A. Weaver, K. Fedora, B. St. John, A. Sharnick**

Students in First Grade have been working hard at practicing their sight words. Reading all our sight words will make us better readers. Please practice with your child nightly.

In Science we have been learning about life cycles of different animals. Recently we learned facts about butterflies and their life cycle. We read a story in our anthology book titled, I Am A Butterfly, and completed some butterfly activities.

During Math we have learned about place value and are currently working on counting money. First graders need to be able to identify pennies, nickels, and dimes. We are practicing counting different coin combinations. We really enjoy using money math manipulatives to build our own amount of money. You can help your First Grader by practicing counting coins at home.

Mrs. Weaver's class has been working with their book buddies to create holiday ornaments. Mrs. Fedora's class will be making holiday ornaments with their buddies soon too. First graders really enjoy working with their older buddies on projects.



David practicing spelling words with shaving cream.

## Second Grade

K. Baransky, A. Jensen, J. Crouse, A. DiGennaro

The second grade classes held Thanksgiving Feasts to celebrate the season of giving. Delicious foods were brought in such as turkey, sweet potatoes, mashed potatoes, wings, rolls, pies, and many other yummy foods. Students shared what they were thankful for and discussed the events that took place on the First Thanksgiving. Thank you to all of the parents who helped out and who donated their time or brought in food. Thank you to all the students who showed proper manners and respect.



The Second grade classes completed a service learning project supporting childhood cancer research. Students in each class worked on communication skills by explaining why they were raising money for Alex's Lemonade Stand. We have raised over \$1000.00 for this worthy cause. We would like to thank everyone who helped us.



Jose', Iris, and Nicole greeting classes as they came into the lemonade stand.

## Third Grade

B. Higley, K. Wilson, B. Cabell

Third grade students have begun the **Friends to Grow On** theme in their anthology. They have read The Stories Julian Tells by Ann Cameron, The main character Julian is in need of a good friend and he finds one when Gloria moves in next door. In The Talent Show, by Susan Wojciechowski, a girl named Beanie realizes she has a special talent to share in the school talent show. The students have also read Centerfield Ballhawk by Matt Christopher. This realistic fiction is about a boy named Jose who wants his dad to be proud of him. Ask your child what a ballhawk is. They may be able to teach you something you did not know before.



Miss Wilson's class making gingerbread houses, including Giovanni, Christian, and Elijah

The students have completed a focus on *nonfiction texts*. They read factual books and learned information from them. Students can describe the elements of nonfiction books such as the table of content, index and glossary. They easily notice bold print words and captions describing photographs. The students can explain diagrams, maps and charts found in many nonfiction books. They are truly becoming active, engaged readers and it is exciting to see the growth!

The new focus in reading comprehension is making connections. Third graders are making self to text, text to text and world to text connections. Every connection must include a feeling. Ask your child to make a connection after completing their nightly reading homework. Use this guide...In the story \_\_\_\_\_ felt \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_. I felt \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ and I both felt \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_.



Andrew and Rakiet from Miss Wilson's class

In mathematics the students have begun a unit on *multiplication* and have learned how to create **arrays** (an arrangement of object in equal rows and columns) to solve multiplication facts. They are very excited about learning the times tables. This year students are responsible for learning the 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 facts. They have learned the names for the numbers being multiplied (**factors**) and that the answer is called a **product**. Please help your child learn these facts. Knowing them will greatly help in other areas of math and will also help students to solve real world problems in life.

Did you notice the dictionaries your child came home with? They were donated to Roger Sherman third grade students by the *Rotary Club*. A great big, "Thank You!" to the Rotarians! The

students have enjoyed using them, not only to look up the meaning or spelling of words, but also reading them. Yes, Reading them! The dictionaries are loaded with interesting facts, charts and maps!



Mr. Cabell's class enjoying their PBS reward

Part of PBS, our school wide behavior program, is earning yellow tickets. Classes earn yellow tickets when the entire class shows respect for self, others and school. This month classes earned enough yellow tickets to create gingerbread houses. It was a fun activity for all and wow did they look yummy. We hope you enjoy the gingerbread houses. They make a beautiful centerpiece for winter holidays.



Some of Mrs. Higley's students working hard

The third grade students have worked very hard this first term of the school year and many are anxiously waiting for the upcoming holidays and vacation. Please remember to have your child practice their math facts and reading- just a few minutes each day. Practice during the time away will help to ensure your child's success in 2011.



Thank you to all who purchased pencil grams. This successful fundraiser will help defray the cost of the third grade trip to Norwalk Aquarium in the spring.

Happy Holidays to everyone! Enjoy your vacation- may it be a happy, safe and peaceful one! We look forward to 2011!  
The Third Grade Teachers

### *Fourth Grade*

**W. McKay, A. Bryers, F. Wagner**

All of the fourth grade classes are practicing addition facts for the new math initiative, "Are you Faster Than a Fifth Grader" coming up in January. Each of the fourth grade teachers will select 7 students to compete in the first round of this competition. Keep practicing your math facts at home. We have also been using the "Thinking Math" posters in the hallways.

Many students from our grade level took the Mathletix test. There were 6 fourth graders picked for the Mathletix team!

### *Fifth Grade*

**S. Owen, A. Abbott, R. Tellez**

The fifth grade classes of Miss Abbott, Mrs. Owen and Mrs. Tellez, worked together to "build" on our knowledge of geometry. The students were split into mixed, cooperative groups. Each group was given a box of spaghetti and a bag of mini marshmallows. As a group, they had to work together to create a structure. Each team needed to problem solve to create structures to fit the following criteria: Most Aesthetically Pleasing Structure, Tallest Free-Standing Structure, and Structure That Can Hold the Most Weight. Each team spent time discussing possible creations to fit those categories. As building began, many teams became frustrated and looked for outside assistance with their structures. The students were reminded that a successful structure must start with a strong base. Although the students viewed this activity as being very simple, they quickly discovered it would take a lot of teamwork to create a structure at all. In the end, each team was able to create a structure of some kind. The winning structure held over 2 pounds of weight! All of the students enjoyed being a part of the activity!



On behalf of the fifth grade teachers, we would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season and wonderful new year! We look forward to working with all of our students again in 2011!

## *MLT, Art, Music, Media, PE*



**Mrs. Muir – MLT**

### Newsletter MLT December

Most Kindergarteners have mastered how to log onto the computer, and how to use a mouse and keypad. They are also typing their first and last names using upper and lower case letters, and are inserting clip art and WordArt. First graders are creating their own PowerPoint show. They are creating new slides, copying and pasting images, adding color, creating transitions and animations and importing sound. They are having so much fun when they run their slide shows and see all the things that they added to it! Second graders have transitioned into the adult version of Microsoft Office and are having great success. They are enjoying the ability to copy and paste text, and recognizing how it saves time. They have created a pictograph, and through this activity they have also learned how to crop images and utilize a table.

The upper grades have been exploring their Social Studies themes in MLT. Third grade is creating a PowerPoint presentation about water, the water cycle, why it is important, and what we can do to conserve water. After exploring Connecticut, fourth graders are now researching other New England states. Fifth graders are about to research explorers who came from Europe to what is now North America.

When your child has brought home a project from MLT, please take time to look at the attached rubric. The rubric grades the project and provides an easy way for students and their parents to view the individual student's achievement on each project. It will also give you insight into your child's report card grade in this subject.

In MLT, we have been exploring Cyberbullying with the fifth graders, and will be expanding this to grades 2 – 4 as the pacing with other lessons allows. The anonymity allowed by current technology creates enormous potential for cyberbullying. This can happen through the computer, cell phone and online games. You need to set guidelines with your children about what they can share, and when they need to come to you for permission before going onto a site. If your child is starting to utilize social networking sites like Facebook, you need to discuss how to make appropriate choices for friends, just as they do in face-to-face contact. They need to know what to do if there is inappropriate information being circulated, or if your child is becoming a target of bullying. It is important for children to understand that there are more safeguards for them around bullying, and there are more repercussions if they choose to engage in bullying behavior themselves. If you develop this routine early, it will just become part of the culture of your home. Information has come home with your child, but if you want to check out the site for yourself, please go to <http://www.cybersmartcurriculum.org/>

There are several other sites which look at these issues. You can preview them and see if they have information that you want to share with your child also. We actively do this in school, but, as in all things, you are your child's best teacher. Clearly, computers are a significant part of the life that our children are entering, and

as with all life skills, we need to guide them in developing the tools with which to deal with them.



We are continuing to stay focused on being showing Respect for Self, Respect for Others, and Respect for School. Don't forget to review with your child how to show positive behaviors at school.

Our PBS Holiday store is December 22<sup>nd</sup>. Thank you to everyone who donated items to our holiday store. Students will purchase a gift for someone using their blue tickets. Remember that students earn these tickets for showing positive behavior at school. Students have been saving up their tickets for this activity and thanks to your support and contributions it will be a success! If you have any items after any cleaning you might do over the holiday break that you would like to donate to next year's holiday store please send those items in to the Office.



*TPT*

**Teachers and Parents Together**  
**Jennifer Flood: Co-President**  
**Laura Graves: Co-President**  
**Carrie Milslagle: Treasurer**  
**Anne Sharnick: Secretary**

## Teachers and Parents Together

The TPT hopes you have been saving up your Box Tops! We are currently running a Box Top contest. The top 3 classes will receive a prize for the most Box Tops collected in their classes. The winners will be announced in January. Remember, all the money raised from Box Tops helps support our school.

Our National Parents Involvement Night was a great event for all who attended. Students participated in many fun activities including creating a school quilt square for our school quilt, fun science projects, Zumba, and much more!



Our Book Fair was a success! Thanks to everyone who bought great books to support your child's reading.



Our Cultural Potluck Dinner was also well attended. Families came and enjoyed a night of great food from many different cultures. There was much socializing, eating, and even singing some holiday songs. Thanks to Sue Carlson who organized this entire event! Thanks to Anne Sharnick who created the recipe book.



Our next big event is the Snow Ball, which will be January 21<sup>st</sup>. This is a fun event that usually sells out quickly! Look for a notice about tickets that will be going home after the holiday break.

Thank you to everyone who has been attending our TPT meetings! We appreciate your support! Don't forget to come to our next TPT meeting: Tuesday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 in the Roger Sherman Cafeteria.

### Upcoming Winter event:

**January 21<sup>st</sup>: Snow Ball**



## *Math Minute*

**The Roger Sherman Math Team**

All students in grades 1-5 are working to improve the recall speed of their basic facts including, addition (gr 1-5), subtraction (gr 1-5), multiplication (gr 3-5), and division (gr 4-5). Students in grades 3-5 are all working towards becoming a part of our competition of facts called, "Are You Faster Than a Fifth Grader?" In late January students will compete to see who knows their facts the fastest. Also, posters entitled "Thinking Math..." cover the walls of Roger Sherman reminding students to think about math beyond their classrooms. The posters give teachers and staff opportunities to ask questions to the students and get them thinking about math. Parents can also ask questions from the posters.



**Thank you for supporting the  
March of Dimes, Reading  
Champions program.**

**Remember to check out our school  
website for more school information.**

**<http://sherman.meriden.k12.ct.us>**





