



# Roger Sherman Elementary

November/December 2011

## Principal's Corner

L. Moss

Have a Happy Holiday Season and enjoy the time off with your family and friends. School will begin again on Tuesday, January 3, 2012.

Some things to do during the vacation:

- Ø Read and discuss a good book
- Ø Play some board games as a family
- Ø Go outside and play
- Ø Play card games



## Pre-K and Kindergarten

S. Conway, M. Rarey, R. Nutcher, K. Kalber

December is the month of giving and celebrating. We have had many opportunities to help other people in this season of giving.

The preschool classes are participating in offering donations to the Marines in Afghanistan, and attending the Second grade fund raiser, "Alex Lemonade Stand," to help support childhood cancer research and benefit children stricken with cancer.

Mrs. Rarey's preschoolers baked and made "breakfast to go," bags for Meriden's Soup Kitchen. As well as doing chores at home to earn money to donate

to the Heifer Organization so that they can buy chickens for a family far, far away in hopes that they can raise chickens and eggs to support their family and eventually, the whole village.

We are also learning and discussing all the holidays in December.

Our Preschoolers are excited to sing two holiday songs at our annual holiday concert on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. We have been practicing the songs and anxious to have our families come watch as we sing on stage!

It feels so good to help and do things for other people!

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 having 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 measurement. We will begin identifying 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

There is a stir in the air, chattering here and there. Seems the season is near. Still the work must be done, as we wait for that special one. So the reading and writing continue with letters to Santa and wishes for many. New words to learn and songs to sing as our Holiday Concert will soon be here. Practice we must to sound our best, Mrs. Kaplan will do the rest. Retelling a story, who and where it takes place. What's the problem, the plan, and will it be solved? Connect we must to character feelings, whether delighted or proud, grumpy or grouchy. There is so much more than just reading those words. In math we are counting not just the days until Christmas but wanting to know how many tens will appear. We group them together by tens and ones, in the end we will know just how many we have. This all makes our counting so easy for us. So it is on ten and on twenty, on thirty and forty.... And wishes to all our families and friends, for a very happy holiday season!



Learning about Bullies with Ronald McDonald.



## Second Grade

K. Baransky, A. Jensen, J. Crouse

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. Thank you everyone for your support. You helped us raise \$401.00 for research for childhood cancer.



We have started our Pioneer unit in Social Studies. We have been learning about what is a necessity for someone to take on their journey West.

We have also been very busy learning about adding with regrouping. This has been a difficult unit for us to learn. Be sure to ask us how to add two digit numbers.

Mrs. Baransky's class and Mrs. Owen's class are working on their communication skills by sharing how to weave. Thank you to Mrs. Moss for all of her work in teaching our buddies this exciting activity!



### *Third Grade*

**B. Higley, K. Wilson, B. Cabell**

Third grade students have completed a focus on making connections in reading. The students have made self to text, text to text and world to text connections. Every connection included a feeling. Ask your child to make a connection after finishing their nightly reading homework. Use this guide...In the story \_\_\_\_felt \_\_\_\_ because\_\_\_\_. I felt \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_ and I both felt \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_. Remind your child to connect to the feeling of the character and the author's message as well.

The new focus in reading comprehension is on *nonfiction texts*. Students are reading factual books and learning information from them. Students will describe the elements of nonfiction

books such as the table of contents, index and glossary. They easily notice bold print words and captions describing photographs. The students will learn to explain diagrams, maps and charts found in many nonfiction books.

The 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.

**Your children are becoming active, engaged readers and it is exciting to see the growth!**

In writing we are very fortunate to have our own, Mr. Cabell, modeling excellent writing strategies for all classes on Tuesdays each week. All classes have been learning how to add descriptive details to their writing by using the adjective, adjective, noun strategy as well as the adjective, adjective, noun, verb, adverb strategy. Students have been using dictionaries and thesauruses to find precise adjectives to enhance their writing. Students are currently working on beginning a paragraph with a main idea followed by at least three descriptive sentences.

In mathematics the students have begun a unit on *multiplication* and have learned how to create **arrays** (an arrangement of objects 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.

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. Ask your child how many tickets they have earned and compliment them on showing respect for themselves, others and Roger Sherman School!

The third grade students have worked very hard this first term of the school year and many are anxiously awaiting 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 2012.

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 2012!**

*Fifth Grade*

S. Owen, A. Abbott, R. Tellez

The fifth grade students had the opportunity to take part in two field trips within the last month. The first trip took them on a journey back in time as they visited Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts. Sturbridge is portrayed as an early colonial village set in the 1830's.

The students had the opportunity to experience life as a colonist by visiting such stops as the blacksmith, the potter, the shoe shop, the tin shop, and the schoolhouse. They saw animals, farmers working the land, wood choppers, and women working in the homes. They were able to witness a real musket firing and took part in classes that taught them about weaving, making natural medicines, baking, and creating stained glass pictures. Based on the responses from the students, a good time was had by all! Students were overheard saying it was the best field trip ever!

Field trip #2 took the fifth graders to the local cemetery to learn about local history. We were fortunate to have the opportunity to work with students from Maloney High School, who led the fifth graders on a scavenger hunt throughout the cemetery. Students were responsible for looking for different historical references by reading and analyzing information found on tombstones and memorials. Students learned how to value and respect the cemetery itself, and the history that could be learned from visiting one. In the end, the students shared their surprise over what they had experienced. Many admitted to being scared of cemeteries until learning how important they are in learning about history. Although the field trip is not a common outing for most students, everyone agreed that it was an interesting morning spent learning about history in an entirely unique way!

The grade five students have made it through term 1 successfully! They have done a lot of learning and are working hard on making respectful choices with self, others and school. We are looking forward to continued success as we move into term 2.

The fifth grade teachers would like to thank all the families for coming in for first term report card conferences. It was wonderful to meet so many supportive, caring families. Together we can help your children to achieve all their goals! Please look for upcoming information about our next "Grade Five Parents Club" meeting. The families and students that attended our December meeting enjoyed playing math games and activities together, while snacking on some yummy pizza. It was a fabulous night for families and teachers!

We hope you all have a happy holiday and a restful vacation. We can't wait to see you back in January to start 2012 together!

MLT



Mrs. Muir – MLT

Most Kindergarteners have mastered how to log onto the computer, and how to use a mouse and keyboard. They are also typing their first names using upper and lower case letters, and are inserting WordArt. They are also learning how to open folders on the desktop and find icons that open Internet programs. First graders are now using Microsoft Office. They are currently creating their own PowerPoint show. They are creating new slides, copying and pasting images, and adding color. In response to a classroom project, some are also learning how to type a letter. Second graders created a table to sort carnivores and herbivores, and then extended this knowledge to create a web that included omnivores. 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.

Fourth and fifth grades are exploring a website called Glogster. Instead of simply creating a document that is printed out and then submitted to a teacher for grading, glogging allows students to create a project that can now be seen by all the members of the class. In addition to their class project, many students have pursued their own topics. Independent topics have included the human brain, Rosa Parks, religious themes, cows, dogs, computer games, favorite books, authors and movies, and popular singers. Students are even uploading music, photos and videos. After exploring Connecticut, fourth graders are now researching other New England states. Fifth graders are researching 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 fourth and fifth graders, and will be expanding this to grades 2 – 3 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.



**PBS Team**



Our December PBS activity is the holiday store! Students who choose to participate paid 15 of their yellow tickets to attend. Students can go shopping and purchase items for their family members for the holiday. Thanks for donating small gift items that students can purchase with

their yellow Sherman Star tickets. We appreciate all donations that help make this event a success! If you're going through your things after Christmas and have some items that you don't want any more you can send them in with your child or bring them to the Office for next year's holiday store.

We are really focusing on being respectful to others by speaking respectful language and not using put-downs. All classes had a lesson in their classroom about using kind words to others.

Remember our three main expectations: 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.



**Michelle Haag: President**  
**Melanie DeBaise: Vice-President**  
**Laura Graves: Treasurer**  
**Anne Sharnick: Secretary**

### **Teachers and Parents Together**

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 a Zumba demonstration. Thanks to Sue Carlson who organized this entire event! Thanks to Miss Lynch for teaching us Zumba!

Thank you to all who sold Butter Braids! The top students will receive a special lunch! All of our money raised goes right back to the kids to support

educational assemblies and activities.

SAVE THE DATE! Our next big event is the Snow Ball, which will be January 27<sup>th</sup>. This is a fun event that usually sells out quickly! Tickets are \$5 and space is limited! Look for a notice about the Snow Ball that will be going home after the holiday break.

The TPT hopes you have been saving up your Box Tops! Remember, all the money raised from Box Tops helps support our school.

The TPT provided the students with a play featuring the characters from the novel The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe. Some students were selected to be a part of the show.



Students participating in The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe.



*Math Minute*

**The Roger Sherman Math Team**

As we head into the holiday winter break students have been working hard in several areas of math. Fifth graders have

completed their unit studies in multiplication and division and are now beginning geometry. Fourth graders are working on division after completing their unit in multiplication. Next, they will begin to study probability. In third grade, students are beginning to work with concepts in multiplication after studying challenging elapsed time. Second graders are working on graphing after completing their long unit of study in addition with regrouping. First graders will begin to work on non-standard measurements when the new year begins after completing units of addition concepts and place value. Kindergarten students are studying coins and money and working on numbers 6 & 7.

Roger Sherman will be holding another fact competition for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders at the end of January. The competition is Fastest Factor, where students will race against each other in the recall of their facts. Third graders will compete to answer 50 addition problems; fourth graders, 50 subtraction facts; and fifth graders, 50 multiplication facts. This is the second year Roger Sherman students have competed in this recall of facts based on accuracy and speed. Students are excited and looking forward to the competition in late January.



## Meet the Roger Sherman Mathletix teams!



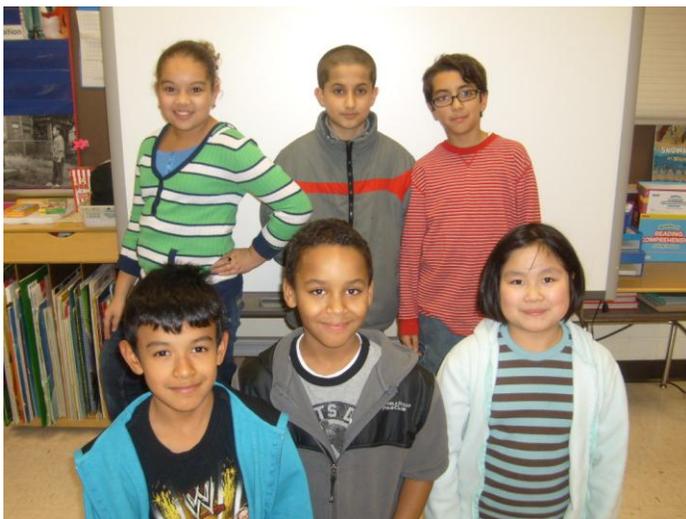
Grade 3 Team

Jocelyne Horan, Jaden Myles,  
Garrett Kronenberger, Elyssa West,  
Emma St. Onge, Angel Mercado



Grade 5 Team

Monserrat Tsuzuki, Kimlyn Vo,  
Daniela Fuentes Mercado, Chloe  
Lefebvre, Erika West Joshua Medina



Grade 4 Team

Shoaib Noori, Adriana Reyes, Lynna  
Vo, Isaiah Felix DeJesus, Giovanni  
Solis, John Finelli

**Remember to check out  
our school website for  
more school information.  
[http://sherman.meriden.  
k12.ct.us](http://sherman.meriden.k12.ct.us)**



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