



## Skamania School Newsletter November 2016

Skamania School District 2  
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### **Dates to Remember**

**Friday, Nov. 18**  
Dram Club presents  
"The Fairy Tale  
Network"  
9:15 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

**Nov. 23, 24, 25**  
Thanksgiving Holiday  
**No School**

**Wed., Nov. 30**  
End of First  
Trimester

**Mon., Dec. 5**  
Winter Music  
Presentation &  
Book Fair  
7:00 p.m.

**Dec. 19-30**  
Winter Break  
**No School**

**Mon., Jan. 2**  
School resumes

### **First Trimester 2016-17**

#### **The First Trimester is Nearly Over!**

It often seems as though the first trimester just zooms by, and this year is no exception. The first trimester ends on November 30, so families can expect to see report cards before winter break begins.

#### **Way to Go Wednesdays**

For the past two years, we've been focusing on learning more about our world and our nation—the geography, people, customs, and other interesting facts. This year our focus is on Washington State.

In September we started off with some "getting to know you" activities, and also learned about the central region of the state.

In November the focus was on the state's coastal region. We learned

about Native American customs, the geography and economy of the area, and looked at historical events.

Coming up in December, we'll be learning more about the Puget Sound region. There are some very fun activities being planned for December 16th!

#### **New Staff Members**

We have welcomed two new staff members this year, and have welcomed back a former teacher in a new role.

Louisa Kane and Adrianna Yugovich are working with students in classrooms, and Louisa also drives a morning and afternoon bus route.

Donna Basham, who retired as a classroom teacher at the end of last year, has returned to teach art every Tuesday.

### **Drama Club**

#### **Drama Club**

The Beginning Drama Club has been meeting since the first week of October. Twenty students in kindergarten through fourth grade, plus four older stagehands, have been working hard and having fun. They have been learning some of the basics of acting and stage productions as they practice for their performance of "The Fairy Tale Network." The play will be presented at 9:15 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 18. Please plan to come and enjoy

the show at either or both performances!

Advanced Drama Club, for fourth through eighth grades, will start up toward the end of January. Their performance (the play is yet to be determined) will be the week before spring break.

Both Drama Clubs are led by Erin Knittle and Emily Hopple, who appreciate the many volunteers who help with staging, costumes, and the many other tasks that ensure a great performance.

## Kindergarten, 1st & 2nd Grades

The Kindergarten, first, and second grades are all together in one class this year and having a fantastic fall. To try something new and different, the students work in teams of four to earn daily points. There are five teams and five kindergarteners so it works out that there is one kindergartener on each team. The teams get points for working together, answering questions correctly, being helpful, and following directions quickly. At the end of two weeks the team with the most points gets a prize and the choice of staying together as a group or mixing with the others to form new groups. So far each winning team has chosen to mix with the others to form new groups. It has been a fun way to get to know the strengths of each person in the class.

We are piloting a new Language Arts program called Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA). It has two components; a skills strand that focuses on sounds and the letters that make the sounds as well as grammar rules and conventions, and a listening and learning strand in which the rich stories are read aloud to the students. So far we have heard and discussed Fairy Tales and Folk Tales and we are now learning about the Ancient Greek Civilization and will study myths.

## 3rd & 4th Grades

The school year is off to a fabulous start. The amazing 3rd and 4th graders had very busy first trimester. We started the year off with some team building activities. Their favorite was building a toothpick and marshmallow tower.

In Social Studies, we started out learning all about maps and the different regions of the United States. We have now transitioned to a unit study of Lewis and Clark. The students are learning about the importance this expedition had on the settling of the west.

In English Language Arts, the students have read numerous nonfiction articles and have been using Google Classroom to answer reading and writing journal questions associated with their



In science we have learned that sound is made of vibrations and that both tension and length have an effect on pitch. We have been experimenting with different instruments like the xylophone, kalimba, and the mini gut bucket and have been taking notes in our science notebooks. We are almost ready to design and conduct our own experiments with sound.

In Math the kindergarteners are learning about ten frames and practicing writing numbers, the first graders are learning about money and the second graders are developing fact power so they can beat the calculator every time. We are all learning about fact families and number grids and we created a large bulletin board to show off what we can do with patterns.

With Mrs. Basham in Art we learned about the lines on a pumpkin and tried to draw what we saw. Then our class got to go to the pumpkin patch at the Skamania County Fair ground and pick out a pumpkin of our very own. Many students used that pumpkin to create a character from a book and brought it to school to share on Halloween. There were some great characters and the students did a fabulous job telling about the stories that feature these characters.

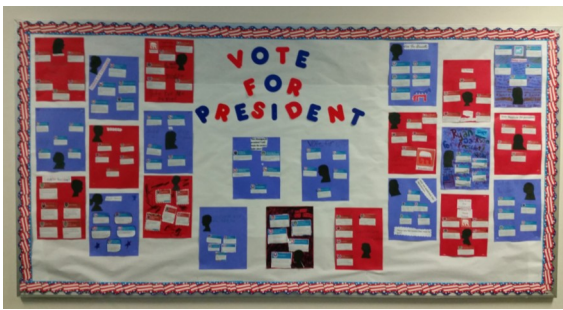
literature book. As a whole class, we are engrossed in a literature unit study using *The BFG* by Roald Dahl.

In Science, the students designed and built different go-carts and tested their designs on various sizes and angles of ramps analyzing which attribute would cause the go-cart to go the greatest distance. Their biggest challenge was trying to have a self-propelled go-cart travel 2 meters.



## 5th & 6th Grade

Wow! Where has the time gone??? The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders have been very busy this autumn. The first week of September, October, and November we have been studying about the election process with curriculum and online games from the iCivics website. We learned how to evaluate candidates, what the steps are in the election of a president, and about the role of the electoral college in the presidential election. The students wrote a guided opinion essay regarding the abolishment of the Electoral College. (Very interesting, considering the outcome of this year's election.) They were very involved, and have demonstrated greater knowledge and interest than I had regarding elections when I was their age!



In between working on civic engagement, we also studied the impacts of the ancient Roman Empire. This fit in magnificently with our new English Language Arts curriculum, in which we read the novel *"The Egyptian Game"* and are now reading the biography *"You Wouldn't Want to be Cleopatra"*. Our writing has focused on making inferences about the characters in both stories and supporting that with text evidence.

The 6<sup>th</sup> graders have studied statistical questions and explored how to use statistics to support your side of an argument, and how to evaluate what evidence someone is using in their argument. They have also started exploring rational numbers, and most recently have worked with different models for ratios. Ask your child to explain the different models!

After studying prime and composite numbers and reviewing addition and subtraction of whole numbers and decimals, the 5<sup>th</sup> graders have extended their understanding of multiplication to decimals. They reviewed/learned 3 different methods, giving them a good "bag of tools" for use in multiplying numbers.

In Science we have studied the transfer of energy, how light energy flows, and the states of matter. Did you know that a 4 gram sponge can absorb over 50 grams of water???

## 7th & 8th Grades

The 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders are off to a great start! We have recently finished reading, "A Wrinkle in Time." It was an exciting book and we learned a lot of new vocabulary. In Social Studies, we are learning about the presidents, the democratic process and voting. We took a field trip to the Skamania County Courthouse where we met several of our elected officials and learned about their jobs.

We are working with the FOSS science kit of Energy, Machines, and Motion. We recently learned about the simple machine of the lever and how it can be used to make a job easier. We are looking forward to building more machines like a fan car and learning about the motion of a Roller Coaster.

In Math, the 7<sup>th</sup> graders have been solving multi-step problems with decimals and integers. We are currently working on adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing with fractions. The 8<sup>th</sup> graders have been working with integers and algebraic expressions and are currently learning to use the Pythagorean Theorem to find missing measurements of triangles.

## Music

In September, the Music Education Classes at Skamania School received a \$1000.00 gift from the Fraternal Order of Eagles #1744 in Stevenson. Mrs. Godwin and Mrs. Hodapp both express tremendous gratitude for the generous donation. The gift will be allocated to enhance music instruction or opportunities for Skamania students.

Morning Music Classes have been highlighting Camille Saint-Saens "Carnival of the Animals," a suite of 14 musical vignettes he composed as a spoof for his friends. As each movement is introduced, we have explored the correlating instrument from the orchestra.

Circle the date! On Monday, Dec. 5, Skamania Bands, Choir and General Music classes will present their Seasonal Concert. The program begins at 7:00 in the gym and will be followed by our Scholastic Holiday Book Fair. Please join us for an enjoyable evening.

As part of Skamania School's commitment to character instruction, Skamania classrooms have been focusing on "Generosity." In keeping with this character trait, students and staff are participating in a school-wide "Penny Drive" that began on Nov. 7. The Penny Drive allows students to experience how contributing a little can accomplish a lot. Donations from this year's Penny Drive will benefit local families. The Penny Drive concludes on Nov. 18, 2016.



## FIRST Lego Robotics

The interest in our robotics teams grew so much this year that we have added a third team. We have 23 students participating, from 4th through 8th grades. One of our teams is an all-girl team!

This year's theme is "Animal Allies." Teams are working to identify a problem that affects the interaction of animals and humans, and then coming up with a solution to the problem. They also learn to program a Lego robot to accomplish tasks.

Team competitions will be held in Parkdale, Oregon on Sunday, Dec. 11.



*The "Rocket Turtles" team working on a dog-proof garbage can holder.*



From Our Archives

