

The SkyLark.

Prairie Sky School's Newsletter
November 2011

Key Dates

Tuesday, November 1

Geo-caching morning

Wednesday, November 2

Dunlop Gallery Visit

Thursday, November 3

Hiking morning

November 7-9

Peace Week

Thursday, November 10

No School – PD Day

Friday, November 11

No School – Remembrance Day

Thursday, November 17

Hiking morning

Friday, November 18

No School – Parent/Teacher Interviews

Saturday, November 19

Kim presents at Daughters of Africa

Tuesday, November 22

Bushwakker Steak Night Fundraiser

Wednesday, November 23

Globe Theatre afternoon

Friday, November 25

No School – Parent/Teacher Interviews

Saturday, November 26

Deadline for SOEEA Winter Camp

Saturday, December 3

Mother Nature's Child – Film Fundraiser

Head, Heart, Hands

Deep thanks to Lorrán and Kim for their time, energy and love in preparing the Head, Heart, Hands reflections for each of our children. Thanks also for the magical painting experience at parent night, and for the very helpful discussion on some of the approaches being used at Prairie Sky School. Thanks also to all the parents who attended. There will be no parent evening this month due to the Parent/Teacher Interviews on the 18th and the 25th.



School Safety

St. Mary's has graciously permitted us to install a temporary wire fence along 15th Avenue to prevent any unintended exuberance from extending onto the sidewalk or street. The fence has been almost fully installed. It is not impassable though, and is somewhat fragile, so please help our students learn to treat it with care and respect.

Fundraising Update

The **Shopping Card Fundraiser** is a promising partnership between PSS and three local health food stores: *Nature's Best*, *Eat Healthy Foods* and *Dad's Organic Market*. You should have received forms from school this week, but in case you misplaced them or would like to direct friends/colleagues to this fundraiser, please visit: <http://prairieskyschool.com/fundraising>. Thanks to Jill and Jenelle for the time and effort they have put into this initiative. And sincere gratitude to our three supporting businesses.

Our **Bushwacker Steak Night** is coming up on **November 22nd**. Thanks to Michelle and Jill for making this one happen. Details will be forthcoming. Please mark your calendars.

The **Apple Fundraiser** was another great success this year due to efforts by Kim and generosity from Nature's Best. We raised close to \$600. Thanks to Kim and all families who generated purchases.

The **Monster March** was also very successful, generating over \$1,000. Thanks to Jill, Jenelle and Kim for facilitating this, to Katherine, Lorrann and Jeff for helping get the children ready for the march, to all families who assisted in getting sponsors and mostly, thanks to our able, active and enthusiastic students who made the march a reality.

Daughters of Africa Event

Kim will be speaking at the Daughters of Africa event on **Saturday, November 19**, at the Regina Performing Arts Centre. Kim will be sharing her experience as a mother of children with special needs, and will talk about starting Prairie Sky School. We are very lucky that PSS will be the recipient of 33% of the proceeds of this event. If you would like to attend, please call 757-6533 or 569-8688 for tickets (\$35.00 per adult). The evening will also include a "Taste of Africa" buffet, entertainment, a silent auction and a dance.

Teachers Report

*Leaves are falling all around
Leaves are falling on the ground
A tiny leaf just hanging on
Has yet to fall, still warmed by sun
As the children laugh and play
The leaves bring games and time away
A blanket of warmth, the snow will come
To cover the leaves when fall is done*



It feels like school is getting busier and we are working hard like the animals gathering all the knowledge we can before we cuddle up for winter. The children are full of energy like the squirrels, but so keen to learn and share.

Our Grade 5/6 class is immersed in the study of acoustics during morning main lesson. Their main lesson books are full of what is called the phenomenological approach to physics. This is where

they experience the phenomena of their world, much the same way as Goethe did. They are learning expository writing which allows only what is directly proven to be expressed. They are practicing word problems, long division and fractions during math practice time with Mr. Moser in the afternoon. They have at least one math problem for homework on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The next topic we will enter is economics and business math!

Our Grade 3/4 boys are flourishing in their math practice and have begun to explore the world of grammar through construction of sentences. They have composed the world's shortest sentences and have entered the realm of poetry as they learn about nouns, verbs and adjectives. Penmanship through cursive writing practice is part of daily work. Whittling is so rewarding, that they wish we did it more often! November will find them regaled by the story of Beowulf and rendering it in their main lesson book.

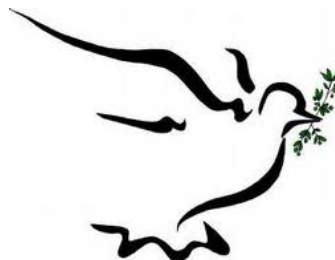
The Grade 1/2 students are expanding their reading and spelling abilities while they open their hearts to stories of beasts and saints. They particularly enjoy hearing how the characters overcome fear and adversity through kindness and responsibility. These stories will provide valuable references as the children develop and reckon their own 'bestly' tendencies with their 'saintly' nature. Grade 1's are mastering letters and their sounds, while the Grade 2's are writing a lot and learning about word families in the process. Their next study block will be mathematics so they can expand the horizons of problem solving and numeracy.

The kindergarten class is heading up our Life Skills program. Many members of our community have enjoyed the 'fruits of their labour'. Soup and bread day is becoming a highlight of the week, and our handwashing cloths are bright and clean because of their joyful work. Friendships are developing for these young students and they often like to join the grade 1/2 main lessons to hear stories, draw and try out their aptitude for numbers and letters. There is a glow in their cheeks and a glint in their eyes as they play and explore outside together!

Our upcoming storytelling theme for the afternoon is fairy tales, which will culminate in a visit to the Globe theatre to see Robin Hood on November 23rd. We will look at the characteristics of this type of story and compare and contrast various versions of unconventional stories that the children may not have heard before.

Our afternoon theme this past month has been social/science (which will continue in November). We are looking at changes in the seasons, hibernation patterns of animals (visit to the museum), and identity (who are we?). The children naturally find webs within each domain, sensing the interconnected we have with the weather, the animals and ourselves. During winter months, this self reflection will be a strong base as we go deeper into exploring where we fit within our school, community and the wider world. We will also be doing some fun peace activities during Peace week on Nov 7-9th where we will mostly focus on racism.

Next month we will continue with social sciences as we explore how a nation is built and treaties.



The daily rhythm has changed a bit this month so we are including a schedule in case you would like to attend, or come and share a gift or talent you might have in a specific subject.

Key: Older group (O), Younger group (Y), Both (B), Multi-aged levelled groupings (M)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>AM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening Circle focusing on coordination, math and languages (B) Reading Buddies and Math Skills (M) Main Lessons as indicated Handwork (Y/B) (knitting & weaving) <p>PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brain gym (B) New Spelling word intro (Y) Guided reading (Y) Math Practice (O) Gym game (B) Theme lesson (M) Music (B-M) 	<p>AM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening Circle (B) Math Skills Practice (M) Soup Day (Y) Main Lessons as indicated Handwork (Y/B) <p>PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Story telling (B) Reel words (word making with letters on a reel) (Y) Math Practice (O) Writing books (Y) Cursive handwriting (O) Movement exercise Theme time 	<p>AM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening Circle (B) Math Skills Practice (M) Laundry Day (Y) Main Lessons as indicated Handwork (Y/B) <p>PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act out story/drama (B) Spelling test (Y) Work on writing (Y) Math practice (O) Gym game (B) French lesson (M) Snack (B) 	<p>AM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening Circle focusing on memory and integration Nature Hiking (B) Whittling (B) <p>PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand work during story time (B) Reading logs (O) Word games (Y) Inquiry project and community time (B) Yoga (B) 	<p>AM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening Circle focusing on reflection and creative expression Main Lesson challenges & homework assignments (M) Painting Day (B) <p>PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book exploration (B) Art project or handwork (B) Project work time (B) Snack and movement break (B) Meditation (B)

Looking forward to learning and living together,
Lorran Wild, Kim Weiss and Jeffrey Moser

SOEEA Winter Camp – Register by November 26th!

SOEEA (Sask Outdoor Environmental Education Association) is hosting a winter camp event from noon on December 3rd to noon on December 4th at Echo Valley Provincial Park. There will be initiative games, healthy and creative cooking in the outdoors, winter survival, hiking, skiing, kite flying and more. All meals will be provided. Detailed information and directions will be given and car-pooling arranged. The cost is very reasonable. Registration information can be found by checking out the SOEEA website: www.soeea.sk.ca. Ms. Wild and Ms. Weiss will be going for sure!



SOEEA Report from Kim

Urban kids for Urban Agriculture:



The Prairie Sky/St.Mary's Urban Agriculture Project was a fantastic experience for many of our students and community members alike. We would like to THANK SOEEA and Sask Lotteries for supplying us with the funds to make this project possible. The project was not only an important demonstration of meaningful physical activity, and deepened appreciation for food and gardening, but of a strong community building something beautiful to share and learn with together.

The Learning:

The students were keen to spread the soil, choose and plant their favourite varieties of seeds and eagerly watch them grow. The older class helped make the budget by visiting Canadian Tire to price out seeds and gardening equipment. They also measured the land, made sun charts to document the sun's patterns to choose the best location and called various landscaping and building stores to price out the soil and lumber needed. The younger students learned about parts of the plants, caring for a garden and helped start the seeds inside before planting.



Frequent visits from Audrey helped us plan out our garden, decide on spacing and learn about different techniques we could use for the garden. We tried companion planting, square foot, and most of the garden was a raised bed. We decided that we didn't have enough variety of materials to do lasagne gardening this year. We planted marigolds, and other insect attracting flowers along side our vegetables, which added to the aesthetics. Many insects enjoyed munching on our vegetables and the squirrels particularly liked the squash.

Part of the garden was dedicated to a community shared agriculture project. All the vegetables were harvested by the students and the plant parts composted back into the garden for next year. We visited an organic farm and went to the local farmers market. The food was stored and made into dishes for the community potluck. In the fall, we started soup Tuesdays for the students, church community and parents.

The project was successful in many ways:

- ✓ Multiple learning experiences (building, growing, caring and harvesting the garden);
- ✓ Following a project through;
- ✓ Getting to know our neighbours (lots of people stopped to talk when we were outside gardening);
- ✓ Strengthening partnerships with each other (church, community and school);
- ✓ Providing ingredients for Soup days (Tuesday lunch at Prairie Sky);
- ✓ Creating sustainability for years to come.



Trouble Shooting and Planning for the Future:

- A lot of the work was the preparation and building of the garden. There were many weather and scheduling delays so the actual planting was done quite late in the season. Now that the ground work is done, we hope to continue our project for years to come increasing our goals for improving the social and natural environments such as making partnerships with more gardeners, local food shops, and our neighbours.
- Another issue we encountered was that the garden was not watered evenly as to a glitch in the underground sprinkler system over the summer, which lead to blossom rot. On returning to school in September, the students were very interested in the garden once again; identifying the vegetables, investigating which insects or mammals had stolen or eaten various plants, and noticing the blossom rot on the tomatoes which lead to a lesson in calcium and minerals in the soil and caring for the garden (including even watering).
- One of the things we didn't do was complete the sign for the garden so community members could learn about the project and share in the produce. Next year, we plan on visiting the Harvest Moon Festival with all the students in the fall to learn about their permaculture techniques, innovative chicken coups and take part in food-based educational workshops.

We are so blessed for the opportunity to start our garden and we hope that our partnership with SOEEA will grow as our learning continues to grow!

Grow on,
Prairie Sky School and St.Mary's Anglican Church

