

around dysart

Exciting happenings at Dysart Unified School District

December 17, 2008

Ashton Ranch Elementary School



The drama club at Ashton Ranch performed, "The Uninvited Guest, The Goldilocks' Tale." The performance took place on Friday, December 5th at 6:00. The show exhibited the many talents of students in grades K-4. There was excellent acting and singing throughout the performance. There were also a lot of smiles and the pride of parents was evidenced. The students put on a second performance on Monday, December 8th for the students in grades K-4. The play was a success and we are so proud of our actors. Kudos to Mrs. Burnett, one of our parents. She wrote the play and created all of the costumes and sets.

Dysart Unified School District is assembling its first ever district honor band. Students from 18 of the 20 K-8 schools were selected for this ensemble. Congratulations to 8th graders Chioke Aarhus, trumpet; Miranda Moore, clarinet; and Alex Reyes, tenor sax, as well as 7th graders Drew Libberton, percussion and Jacob Riddle, clarinet, for being selected to represent Ashton Ranch in this band! They were nominated by Mrs. Bastian for their dedication, hard work, and playing ability. The honor band will perform on February 21, 2009.

Each year, the top band students from throughout Arizona are selected to perform in the Arizona Elementary and Junior High Bands. Students are nominated by their band director based on their dedication and playing ability as well as their hard work and effort in their school band. We are excited to announce that 6th grader Jasmine Martinez, clarinet and 8th graders Trey Dwinell, clarinet and Melissa Martinez, clarinet were selected for this prestigious honor! Congratulations!



Cimarron Springs Elementary School

Mr. McCauley's 5th grade class, just completed a unit on "Voices of the Revolution". In both Language Arts and Social Studies, the students have been learning about the American Revolution. The theme's objectives were focused around the importance of freedom, why people revolt, and patriotism. The students have learned how the American Revolution created a new country, the United States of America. Furthermore, they have studied and completed activities related to the original thirteen colonies. To wrap up this theme, the students created "Patriot Profiles". The students picked a patriot from this theme and created a poster profile, which is now on display in their classroom.

On Thursday, December 11th the Kindergartens at Cimarron Springs performed their annual Holiday Show. It was a wonderful evening with children singing and dancing. From the first song to the grand finale the children's smiling faces warmed the hearts of those in attendance. The school gym was filled with friends and families, who came out to show their support. This is just another way our fabulous community is showing its holiday spirit. This coming week they are gearing up for their Gingerbread House celebration, which will take place on Thursday afternoon.



Donna DeFreitas' 8th Grade Social Studies class is working on document based questions. This rigorous lesson allows students to interact with primary source materials on an individual level. As part of the unit, Ms. DeFreitas guided her students through The Bill of Rights and primary sources which surround The Bill of Rights. This opportunity to work with primary sources is significant because students spend much of their time working with secondary sources found in articles and textbooks. Each student created their own Bill of Rights and was able to write amendments based on which freedoms students felt they should have in school.

The students in Mrs. Murphy's self contained classroom went on a field trip to Peter Piper Pizza on November 21st as a reward for good behavior and manners in and out of the classroom. This opportunity was also used to implement life skill activities into the trip. The students took a tour of the kitchen and were shown how pizza dough was prepared, where pizza supplies are stored, and how pizzas are made. After the tour, the students became official pizza makers, when they were able to create their own pizzas!



Countryside Elementary School

Mrs. Christians' 3rd grade class has been learning about government this quarter. As a culminating activity, a mock trial was conducted by the students. The class decided to charge a fellow student for defacing school property! Students had to choose what court position they wanted, write a speech about why they feel they could do the job best, and make a campaign poster. The class voted students into the positions of: defense attorney, prosecution attorney, judge, bailiff, clerk, court reporter, and 10 students were summoned for jury duty. Students worked in groups and individually to write their scripts, questions and responses.

The day of the trial, students came dressed in business attire complete with notepads and briefcases! Both sides gave opening statements to the jury and proceeded to question and cross examine the witnesses. The defense team built their case around the idea of "mistaken identity" and had a surprise witness come and testify from another class that looked like the defendant. Evidence was presented and the Clerk logged it in as exhibit #1 and so forth. After the prosecution and defense rested, closing statements were given to the jury. The judge gave instructions to the jury before excusing them to deliberate in the hallway. The jury reached their verdict and read it to the court. The defendant was found guilty as charged! This was so much fun and the students had a greater understanding of our court system!



The Countryside National Junior Honor Society participated in an etiquette training class by Mrs. Hancock on Tuesday, November 25, 2008. Our members learned about table manners, proper grammar, socialization, and character. The group also provided a Parent's Night Out on December 5. There were games, crafts, reading, and snacks and of course a visit from Santa; who read a story to all of the children that attended.



Dysart Childhood Development Center



Santa Claus and his elf came to visit our center. They gave out gifts and sweet candy canes. The children were excited to talk with Santa, while others just listened. What an enjoyable day for all!



Dysart Elementary School



Linda Heck, 5th Grade Teacher was awarded a \$1,000 check for being a 2009 Rodel Exemplary Teacher Finalist. Mr. Chris Canelake from the Rodel Foundation visited Mrs. Heck's class to present her with a check. In addition, due to the partnership between Rodel and the Arizona Diamondbacks, each student, "The Hecksters," received some goodies to include a bright red Diamondbacks baseball cap! Congratulations Linda!



On Thursday, December 11th, the Parental Involvement committee hosted the annual “Mother and Son Dance”. Mothers, Grandmothers and Aunts were invited to attend with a boy student. Guests danced, the PTO sold refreshments and a photographer was on hand to capture formal photos of the event.



El Mirage Elementary School

El Mirage 7th graders participated in Peace Day on November 26th. Peace Day is an all day event wherein the students, staff and high school student leaders from Dysart High School explore diversity issues in the world, in the community and within themselves. The program ends with an activity that addresses bullying and each student makes a personal commitment to make a change to support a caring and connected school community.



After reading *A Trip to the Firehouse* the 2nd grade classes went on a trip to the firehouse. While there they enjoyed seeing where the firemen stay while they are on their 24 hour shifts. They saw the kitchen, bathrooms, and bedrooms. The students also got a chance to look at a fire truck, climb through the fire truck, and try on a helmet. When we returned to school we compared and contrasted what we saw in the fire house in the book and what we saw at the El Mirage fire house. It was a great real life trip.



Kingswood Elementary School

On Tuesday, December 9, 2008 Kingswood had visitors and volunteers from Help A Neighbor Group. The volunteers came prepared to help supply dresses and outfits for all kindergarten and first grade children with a new holiday outfit, including accessories. This is an annual tradition to have these ladies come to Kingswood and the children look forward to "shopping" with their dress makers. Each student is given one on one attention as they look for their new perfect holiday outfit to take home. Each outfit is hand crafted by a special volunteer. The Bell Stitchers volunteers sew all year long in hopes to give each child a new outfit. All t-shirts received for the boys outfits are donated by Charlie's T-Shirts.



Luke Elementary School



The 2nd graders have been learning about how the holidays are celebrated around the world. The students in Ms. Miller and Ms. Wrate's class have been busy making mini-pizzas to celebrate Italy. In Ms. Gossard's class the students are learning how to sing French Christmas carols. In Ms. Dickman and Ms. Jauregui's class the students have been making clogs filled with goodies to celebrate Holland. The 2nd graders will wrap up their "Around the World Holiday Celebration" unit with a special center rotation where the students will be learning and doing something special with each teacher.

Luke's Character Counts Club was happy to hand out character bracelets, bookmarks, and a certificate to the following Jets who have been showing great character all year long! Congratulations to--- Junior Garcia, Kierstynn Harris, Cassandra Lopez, Penelope Rodriguez, MonaLisa Chambers, Darlene Dittell, Brandon Nguyen, Anthony Gonzalez (Ms. Piniewski's homeroom), Evelyn Torres, Julian Lopez, Johnny Branche, Casey Kauten, Aleah Webster, and Chastity Chambers!!!!

Parkview Elementary School



On Wednesday, December 3rd, Parkview was honored to have the Fox 10 Whirlybird arrive and do the weather report from our campus.

The Media Year Book Club members were there videotaping the event and taking pictures for the yearbook.

Rancho Gabriela Elementary School



Congratulations to the following Rattlers who were selected to participate in the inaugural Dysart Unified School District Honor Band: Shay Delvalle, baritone, Anjelica Dichitang, flute; Isabel Ruelas, clarinet; and Andrew Wagner, trombone.

The Lady Rattler soccer team has enjoyed an undefeated regular season! They will play a consolation game on Monday to determine the third place winner.



First grade will be taking a journey on The Polar Express the week of December 15th. Students will read and discuss the story elements of The Polar Express throughout the week. On Thursday, they will board the train and travel around the world to learn about winter in other countries. After completing each activity, they will get a stamp on their ticket. On Friday, students will be watching the movie and then will compare and contrast the book to the movie. To get in the spirit of The Polar Express, students are being allowed to wear their favorite pajamas on the half day!

Sonoran Heights Elementary School



Band Director Deborah Forest is proud to announce that the following Hawks from Sonoran Heights Elementary were selected to participate in the 2009 Arizona All-State Festival:

- Paige Cotton, Alto Saxophone
- Zach Braswell, Trumpet
- Jonathan Kelting, Trumpet

Students were selected from 130 schools throughout the state, based on director nomination. The festival will take place on March 21, 2009 at Higley High School.

Congratulations go to the following Hawks who were selected to participate in the inaugural Dysart Unified School District Honor Band:

- Jonathan Kelting, Trumpet
- Jenna Nevel, Bass Clarinet
- Matthew Olloren, Percussion

“Bravo” to our musicians – we are proud of you!



Sunset Hills Elementary School

Mrs. Morey's 5th grade class participated in the Young Writers of America contest. The following students will be published in the 2008 Young Writers of America Poetry book and possible win other prizes. Each student that participated had to submit a poem that told about their world. The students were able to submit their poem using technology entirely but typing the poem on a laptop and using their Dysart D-Mail to submit the poem to the company. Of the 13 submitted, the following students were chosen. I am so very proud and excited for these students' achievements.



Alex Vargas
Denisa Mullai (not in the picture)
Natalie Woodruff
Deanna Varela
Morgan Spaulding

Kaleb Deatherage will also be honored for his superb submission in the next publication of the Young Writers of America Poetry book.

The Kindergarteners are comparing holiday traditions around the world as they wind down 2008. This study adds to our understanding that people are different, yet so many similarities bind us all together. Speaking of similarities, we have cut out many pine trees and "presents" (squares and rectangles☺) as we expand our understanding of symmetry and equal halves. We will bid adieu to our classmates with the annual Kindergarten Holiday Program. The program will be presented during three separate showings to the school as well as family and friends on Thursday, December 18, 2008. Please contact the front office for show times. The event is historically a standing room only occasion as the 5 and 6-year olds turn out in their holiday best to wish everyone Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!

Students in Mr. Johansen's 8th grade Social Studies class have been working on a World War 2 notebook. Students have studied and have been very successful in completing quality work on the causes of World War II, the Totalitarian Dictators, the major battles (Pearl Harbor, D-Day), the key people of the time period, and other concepts that relate to the World War II era. Much of this study on World War II has been completed in an Independent Student Notebook (or I.S.N.).

First grade joined together to sing beautiful wintery songs. We sang to the tunes of Jingle Bells, Jingle Bell Rock, Little Snowflake Fell Out of the Sky, Frosty the Snowman, Whirling Twirling, and Five Little Snowman. We enjoyed all of our families being together for the holiday season.



Thompson Ranch Elementary School

Thompson Ranch hosted its first ever Jaguar Jamboree on Thursday December 11. Parents and family showed up to support the music program and all the hard work the students had done. Rose Vorters, the music teacher, organized the entire event. The students diligently practiced singing a variety of educational and holiday songs in music class as preparation for the performance. PTA organized the selling of hot cocoa and popcorn, among other things. The amphitheater was decorated in festive holiday décor and the performance was such a success! Hats off to Mrs. Vorters for making the Jaguar Jamboree such a festive, holiday, musical performance!



The Lady Jaguars soccer team ended its season last week. They showed amazing teamwork, character, and passion throughout each and every one of their games! They stayed focused and determined throughout practice. They finished their season with a 4 win-5 loss record and fought hard all the way to the end. We are so proud of our Lady Jaguars!



Thompson Ranch staff participated in a professional development that centered on "Healthy Play". Kindergarten through 8th grade teachers learned a variety of techniques to help students understand that people are the most important part of any game.



Teachers experienced activities that get students learning and moving at the same time increase student learning and strengthen classroom camaraderie. Jaguars at Thompson Ranch can look forward to "healthy play" coming to their classrooms soon.

The Thompson Ranch Library Club sponsored a Family Night at the Barnes and Noble located at 13719 West Bell Road on December 1st. Students played games arranged by Beth Wofford, Community Relations Manager, while friends and family shopped. Six students won prizes for their participation. Mrs. Levings' class won the prize for the most students in attendance. The club also sponsored a Family Night at Chick-fil-A located at 13725 Bell. Alexis Wood is the proud recipient of a year with Chick-fil – A, 52 meals. She won the drawing held on December 1st during Family Night. Congratulations Alexis! Thank you everyone for your support of the library!



On the evening of December 4th, the Thompson Ranch Elementary School Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society held an induction ceremony in the library followed by a reception. The students were recommended by their teachers for their scholarship, service, leadership and character then selected by outstanding achievement: 8th grade: Zariela Olguin 2nd year, Miriam Urrea 2nd year, Jaqueline Laborin, Tatiyana Lee, Melissa Orozco, Araceli Saucedo 2nd year, Christian Soto, Alysa Sprau; 7th grade: Irma Mauricio 2nd year, Jazmin Bustillos, Jasmine Capco, Jennifer Carrillo, Allyssa Del Rosario, Nathaniel Delgado, Danny Gonzales, Jesus Guerrero, Rovahni Guilford, Carmen Gutierrez, Alexia Medina, Carlos Rios, Kiersten Slater, Ashley Spencer, Robert Sobarzo, Liliana Verdin.

Thompson Ranch's 21st Century Grant is working with Red Robin restaurant to bring "Red" to read once a month to the students in kindergarten, first, second and third grades. The first grade heard him in November and the second grade listened to him on December 5th in the library. Red brings with him certificates encouraging students to read ten books. Students are reading more while having fun! Thank you Barnes and Noble, Chick-fil-A, and Red Robin we appreciate your support!

Dysart High School

Congratulations to the DHS Spiritline, who, once again, did a fabulous job at their competition this weekend! They traveled to Mesa to compete at the USA Regional Competition on Saturday. They competed in six divisions, and did very well in all of them!

Sixth Place: Group Stunt

2nd Place: Mascot

2nd Place: Co-ed Show Cheer

1st Place: Performance Cheer

1st Place: Pom

The kids also earned Superior Ratings in Co-ed Show Cheer, Performance Cheer and Pom to earn bids in these three events to the National Competition in Anaheim, CA in March. Their next competition will take place at the AIA State Championships in January in Prescott Valley.

Please help in commending the Boys varsity soccer team on a nicely finished 3-0 victory over Bradshaw Mountain last night.

Congratulations to the girls' varsity soccer team for their thrilling victory over Coronado High School on December 10th. The Demons got two goals from Hilda Rodriguez and an incredible effort from goalie Allie Reints to beat Coronado 2 to 1. The Demons scored first but were unlucky when a ball hit off a demon defender and went into our goal to tie the game up. But a determined group of girls decided at half time that they were going to win the game and within the first minute of the second half Hilda netted her second goal and the one that would prove to be the game winner. The Demons then faced a motivated Coronado team trying to tie the game. But Allie's diving save at the end of the game secured a much deserved win for the Demons. The girls are participating in the Moon Valley Soccer tournament the rest of this week so wish them luck.

Please congratulate members of the Girls Soccer program. The girls participated in the Moon Valley Soccer Tournament over the weekend and finished with a 2 and 2 record which was good enough for a top ten finish. The girls beat 5A division I Westwood High School in the round robin stage (this was definitely the upset of the tournament). That win gave them a chance to play region rival Buckeye High school with 9th place on the line. Jessica Ramirez's goal was the difference as the Demons beat Buckeye for the first time in at least six years 1 to 0. The girls record now stands at 3 wins, 3 losses, and 1 tie. Way to go Girls.

The Dysart Premiere newspaper staff raised \$1,243.19 with their Toys for Tots fundraiser! We collected from first hour classes for over a week and each day collected more than \$100. The winning classes were Ms. Pulbratek, Mr. Garrett, and Ms. DiGrazia whose students raised more than \$360 alone. The Premiere staff will use the funds to purchase toys for the Children's Angels Foundation in conjunction with Hacienda Healthcare in Phoenix. Hacienda provides health care and social services to infants, children and young adults who have medical, physical and intellectual impairments. Several staff members will also be going to the hospital to help deliver the toys to the children. The Premiere staff would like to thank all of the teachers, students, and staff that helped support the Toys for Tot fundraiser and made it such a success!

Sundown Mountain Alternative Program



Sundown Mountain staff and students are exercising the character virtue of Citizenship by actively participating in a sock drive that will benefit local shelters. Yearbook students are hosting the first annual sock drive in hopes of making this a Sundown tradition.

Seniors from Dysart and Valley Vista High School met with Jostens representatives to prepare for their upcoming graduation in the Spring of 2009. Congratulations to our Seniors who have worked diligently to earn credits and graduate this fall.



Valley Vista High School



Students in the Mrs. Johnson's Medical Foundations classes at Valley Vista High School have been working on a school and home Health Challenge with staff members, students and family members. This was a 6 week challenge to help their "clients" set and achieve a health goal in any of the wellness areas. The students celebrated their clients with certificates and a ceremony on December 5, 2008 to congratulate them on their success. The students spent the day before the ceremony preparing the data they collected from their clients and putting them in the wellness categories to present during the ceremony. Some great statistics were staff and family members lost a total of 268 pounds, many clients started eating healthier, some accomplished physical fitness goals such as qualifying for weight lifting and or increasing their daily activity. The students were very proud of their clients for their success and overall happy that they as coaches helped over 150 people achieve greater health and wellness.





Rachel Matakas is setting-up a unique event at Valley Vista High School to recognize sponsors of the Teacher Cadets. She is inviting the teachers who worked with her Teacher Cadets for a special breakfast! "Teacher Cadets will be honoring each sponsor at the breakfast.

"The Nutcracker" performed by Valley Vista's Drama department, lead by Don Fuller, is a must see! The performances were held Thursday and Friday, December 11th and 12th. The students spent hours preparing for and delivering this memorable performance. The students did an amazing job of acting, singing and making the crowd laugh. The intermission performance by the Hip Hop team kept the crowd hyped up and ready for more. Excellent job Valley Vista!

Willow Canyon High School

New Year's may come and go, but one thing remains the same, the need for blood. There's no better time to donate than Nation Blood Donor Month. Call Ginger at 623-523-8004 to schedule an appointment to donate during the WCHS Blood drive being held Jan 14 from 7:30 – 12:30. All donors will receive a voucher for one free ticket to the 2009 FBR Open! For eligibility questions call 480-675-5497. Don't wait....Help save a life now!