



FOREST KNOLLS KNOTES

March 4, 2011

Message from the Principal

As many of you know (especially parents of third, fourth, and fifth graders), MSA is coming! The teachers and students have done an outstanding job of preparing for these important assessments and we expect all our students will do well. We need your help by making sure that your child(ren) get a good night sleep and eat a good breakfast each morning. Students must be at school on time. This is very important because students will not be allowed to enter classrooms once the testing has begun. Please note that, besides test score performance, Forest Knolls must meet a 94% attendance rate in order to meet Adequate Yearly Progress. Again, Forest Knolls typically does well in this area, but we need your continued support in making sure that your children are here and ready to learn each school day.

I want to thank all the parents and staff who came to the PTA meeting on Tuesday, March 1, 2011. It was a great turnout to hear Dr. Marshall Spatz, Director of the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning under the Board of Education and Ms. Bronda Mills, Community Superintendent, explain the current budget situation for MCPS and what as a school community parents could do to insure the financial support of Montgomery County Public Schools both at the local and state levels. We thank both of them for an informative presentation.

I hope to see many of you at the Silent Auction, Friday, March 18, 2011. The Silent Auction is a great time for parents to get to know each other while making a contribution for a worthy cause. The PTA uses much of the funds generated to provide opportunities for our students and teachers. If it is at all possible for you to come out on Friday evening, please do so as we are going to have a great time.

MSA is coming!

This year, the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) will be held in March. The dates of the test are as follows:

Grade	Reading Day 1	Reading Day 2	Math Day 1	Math Day 2
3	Monday, March 7	Tuesday, March 8	Friday, March 11	Monday, March 14
4	Monday, March 7	Tuesday, March 8	Friday, March 11	Monday, March 14
5	Wednesday, March 9	Thursday, March 10	Tuesday, March 15	Wednesday, March 16

Below are some tips for preparing your child for testing:

1. Children should have a minimum of 9-10 hours of sleep each night. It is difficult for children to concentrate when they are tired. Additionally, your child will likely not have homework on various nights throughout the testing window so they can relax in the evening.
2. Eat a good breakfast. Healthy food keeps the brain going.
3. Dress in comfortable layers. It is difficult to predict the weather, or how hot or cold a classroom might be on a given day.
4. Feel free to talk to your child about MSA in whatever way works for you. Some children do better when they know what is coming, or when they can debrief about what they did that day. Others would rather not talk about testing and too much discussion would build their anxiety. You know your child best so please help them to feel as comfortable as possible.

Don't Forget to Spring Forward



Just a reminder ... Daylight Saving Time (DST) begins at 2 am on Sunday, March 13, 2011. Please make sure to change your clocks in preparation for "springing forward on the 14th."

ASA

Registration for ASA clubs ends today. Late registrations will not be accepted. The dates for the clubs are below.

Tuesday dates:	March 29, April 5, 12, 26, May 3, 10, 17, 24
Wednesday dates:	March 30, April 6, 13, 27, May 4, 11, 18, 25
Thursday dates:	April 7, 14, 28, May 5, 12, 19, 26, June 2

Kindergarten Orientation

Kindergarten Orientation will be Thursday May 5 and Friday May 6. We will need help with photographers, guided tours, distributing flyers, and more. Remember that if you have a child who is currently in kindergarten, your child will not have school that day. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Mrs. Burnsky or volunteer coordinator Laurie Forte at Laurie_L_Vogler-Forte@mcpsmd.org

Peacekeepers of the Month

William Lopez, Audrey Newton, Noah Davenport, Kyle Newby, Joshua Alvarenga, Zoe Duni, Maria Gillespie, Kai Yeager, Julian Hutchins, Luke Sanelli, Ben Crawford, Maya Grebowski, Will Laitinen, Jasmina Petkoff, Merale Kavar, Ashley Gomez, Ashley Villatoro, Emily Harline, Maggie Caffrey, Sedona Hansen, Denise Reyes, Mark Sanelli, Beza Nigatu, Dominic Sanelli, Nicholas Boboshko, Alvin Huynh, Rachel Heney, Ryan Layman, Katherine Reyes

Newspaper Activities



As an interested parent, you may have asked your child's teacher what materials you could use at home to reinforce reading skills. No doubt the teacher offered many good suggestions. There is one learning resource that might not have been mentioned-the newspaper. It is full of items which appeal to every reading taste and interest, and you don't have to go searching for it because it is probably in your home already.

The habit of reading the daily newspaper should start early in a child's life. The newspaper is worthwhile for a child to read because it:

- ◆ Encourages reading for fun and information.
- ◆ Helps sharpen important reading skills.
- ◆ Broadens the variety of material read.
- ◆ Helps children become aware of the daily events happenings around them.
- ◆ Allows your child to widen his or her understanding of local, national, and international issues.

As a parent it is important that you spend some time with your child in order to take full advantage of all the newspaper offers. Here are some good ways you can use the newspaper with your child. These activities appeal to a wide range of ages and can be varied to the reading and age of your child.

1. Clip out an interesting news story and cut the paragraphs out. Ask your child to read the paragraphs and arrange them in a logical order. For younger children you might use the panels from a comic strip.
2. Ask your child to read a short editorial printed in your local newspaper and to underline all the facts with a green pencil and all the opinions with an orange pencil.
3. Pictures fascinate children of all ages. Capitalize on this interest by clipping out various pictures contained in the newspaper. Depending on age level, ask your child to tell you about the picture, or list adjectives to describe the entire scene.

4. Do you take your child to the movies? Have your child first look up the movie page by using the newspaper index. After the movie has been selected, have your child study the picture or text in the ad and tell you what he / she thinks the movie is about.
5. Have your child pick a headline and turn it into a question. Then the child can read the article to see if the question is answered.
6. Ask your child to clip food coupons from the newspaper for the weekly grocery shopping trip. First, it's a good idea to talk about which products you use and which you don't. Then the child can cut out the appropriate coupons and separate them into such categories as beverages, desserts, and breakfast items. You can then redeem the coupons at the store.
7. Pick out an interesting article from the newspaper. As you are preparing lunch or dinner, tell you child that you are busy and ask him/her to read the article to you.

Box Tops News Keep clipping box tops! We need 150 more to reach our goal of \$750 for the year. Box tops can be sent in a bag or envelope; they do not need to be attached to a collection sheet. Please double check the expiration dates, expired tops can not be submitted. Please send them in and help us reach our goal. The money earned helps to support various programs at our school.

Communication Arts Scientific Illustration Exhibit: News from Mrs. Michal

Communication Arts Program News



Digital Art Self Portrait by Shiloh

The Forest Knolls Jr. Press Corps is currently in-production with a multitude of print and electronic journalism projects. This school year has proven to be a very exciting and rewarding program for our 158 first through fifth grade members. In fact, our number of participants far exceeds the size of our communication classroom so each grade level has been divided into two separate teams of journalists. Our third through fifth grades have been in-progress since the fall and this winter we welcomed our first and second grades.



“Still Life of Shells” Photographed by Charlie

Our first and second grade journalists rotate in four week periods around Mrs. Michel's reading classes. By doing this, our young reporters have the opportunity to work on specific multi media projects that are often designed in parts that build upon each other. At the present time, first grade journalists are working on photo and digital art portraiture accompanied

by narrative writing. They are learning how to use the digital camera as well as a graphic software program. Second grade students are learning about the role that photo journalism plays in their lives. They are observing the work of well known still life photographers and emulating their styles and color palettes. The photos of our student photographers inspire their narrative writing. Students take turns pairing in journalism teams to discuss and critique their digital and written work just like professional journalists.



Kids Card Company Designer Photographed by Anna

Third grade press corps members completed a project in which they learned about the purpose of public service announcements often referred to as PSA's. Students worked in teams to write and produce PSA's about our food drives for the Manna Food Center, and our *Kids Card Company* to raise money for the building of a well at a small rural school in Kenya, Africa. In addition, they researched and produced environmental PSA's about our responsibilities as global citizens. Many of these PSA's aired on the morning radio show and some of these also will be used on posters and upcoming Kids News Network (KNN) TV shows. Our third grade journalists have just embarked on their first experience in television as they write and produce two news shows. One show focuses on the theme of recycling while the other focuses on ways children are making a difference in the world.

Fourth grade journalists have been immersed in the fields of archaeology and anthropology along the Chesapeake Bay. They toured the Smithsonian's *Written in Bone* exhibit at the Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C. where they learned about the original settlers in the St. Mary's City and Jamestown colonies. Our young reporters took copious notes and wonderful photos. They are using these resources to script and produce a documentary about how these discoveries have given us clues to the past in the Chesapeake Bay regions of Maryland and Virginia. Once the script and photos are finalized, students will share their work with an anthropologist at the museum to make sure their information is accurate as well as interesting to an audience of their peers and the school community. The press corps will divide into teams to arrange the photos in sequential order, lay down the soundtrack, design the credits, and edit the piece for final production.



Printer's Text Blocks at the Newseum by Matar

Fifth grade journalists went on-location to the *Newseum* in Washington, D.C. to experience how news and information captures the history of the world through print and electronic media. Students were well prepared to tour this high tech interactive museum that chronicles the history of news gathering and reporting from the 16th century to modern day. Armed with journals and digital cameras, the press corps toured specific galleries that gave them insight into the history of the news, introduction of electronic news, photojournalism, world news, and how the media covers historical events. Upon return to school, these reporters spent many weeks reviewing and discussing their findings and sharing their photos. Each reporter had the opportunity to choose his or her favorite part of museum to describe. Students were given deadlines to turn in their articles and photos. For the next few weeks, they will be revising their work in teams to prepare their final text. Once the text is in place, they will choose photos from their own student digital photo bank to support their writing. Their final project will

be a digital book and exhibit tracing the history of news reporting and the role of journalists in capturing and preserving historic events.

The Jr. Press Corps looks forward to presenting their work to our Forest Knolls community in June at our annual Multi Media Night. As soon as the date is confirmed, we will publish it in the Knotes. We always welcome guest speakers in print and electronic media to give our students the opportunity to learn from experts in the field of journalism. If you would like to volunteer as a guest speaker, please contact Mrs. Michal, Director of the Forest Knolls Jr. Press Corps.

Prekindergarten / Head Start Programs

Registration is now available for fall MCPS PreKindergarten and Head Start programs. Registration is open to income-eligible families with children who will be three or four years old by September 1, 2011, including children with disabilities. Walk-in applications will be accepted Monday through Thursday, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, at Rocking Horse Road Center (4910 Macon Road, Room 141, Rockville, Maryland, 20852). For more information, call (301)230-0676.



National School Breakfast Week

In conjunction with the School Nutrition Association, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley has declared March 7 through March 11, 2011, as **National School Breakfast Week**.

FKES KNOTES - PTA CORNER, MARCH 2011

- 1. THE FIRST LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN WAS A SUCCESS...THE SECOND LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN WILL SOON BE UNDERWAY!!** The good news is our collective voices were heard – when we work together for Forest Knolls, people take notice! Last month's letter writing campaign to MCPS and the Board of Education prompted Ms. Bronda Mills (Community Superintendent), and Dr. Marshall Spatz (Director of the Department of Management, Budget and Planning) to join us for the March PTA meeting. Mills and Spatz provided a detailed budget presentation and answered thoughtful questions from parents and teachers. A lot of information was provided and the path forward was clarified. **But, our work is far from over.** The PTA needs you to do two things to help maintain Forest Knolls' trajectory of excellence.

First, in coming days, the proposed Board of Education budget will go to the County Council where the final funding decisions are made. It is critically important that we continue to speak up for Forest Knolls. Shortly, you will receive sample letters to our County Council members and the County Executive. As you did with the first letter writing campaign, **please complete and sign the letters.** You may then either mail them directly to the addressees or return them via backpack to Renée Hutchins, PTA Vice President (c/o Ms. Burnett/Jay Hutchins). We will make sure they go out.

Second, please also keep your eye out for PTA notices about upcoming dates for budget hearings before the County Council. Forest Knolls needs to **show a strong presence at the budget hearings** to let the Council know just how much we care about our children and a quality public education. We are off to a GREAT start. But, we need for all of our parents to remain engaged. Let's keep the momentum going!!

- 2. DON'T MISS THE PTA'S BIGGEST FUNDRAISER OF THE YEAR!! THE 6TH ANNUAL FKES SILENT AUCTION: GARDEN OF DELIGHTS – FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 2011, FROM 6:30-9:30 P.M.!** You will have a chance to bid on more than 250 exciting items. Please look through the catalog, which will be coming out the week prior to the event. Extra copies will be available in the office. Some of the fun things available at the auction include passes to Walt Disney World (valued at \$500); ski lessons and snow tubing packages; many restaurant and other gift certificates; summer camps for your kids; signed sports memorabilia (including a hockey stick from the Washington Capitals!) and tickets to sporting events; local hotel stays; special events with teachers; and so much more! For a sneak peak, visit <http://fkespta.org>.

The fun begins at 6:30 p.m. Enjoy great music and a large selection of heavy hors d'oeuvres and drinks for dinner, all included in the cost of tickets: \$10 per person or \$15 per couple. Childcare is offered through Kids After Hours (KAH) for \$5 per child, which includes a pizza dinner and snacks. (Please, no children in diapers). A night out with KAH is as much fun for our children as the auction will be for the adults! Decorations have been made in part by our children's amazing artwork. It's a wonderful event that supports our school. **Our success depends solely on your attendance and generosity - see you there!**

- 3. FAMILY SCIENCE NIGHT – April 1, 2011:** Forest Knolls families are invited to come enjoy a fun-filled evening of science fair projects, hands-on science demonstrations, and a Mad Science show for all ages. Student projects and

demonstrations will be on display in the gym beginning at 6:30 p.m. The Mad Science show begins in the all purpose room at 7:30 p.m. Don't miss out on this exciting PTA-sponsored event!

- 4. **FLES:** The Introductory Spanish (K and 1st Grade) Class will have its Open House on Thursday, March 24th at 7:55 AM. Interested parents and staff are invited. Parents of students in the class are strongly encouraged attend to see what their children have been working on.

Beginning (2nd through 5th grade, Thursday afternoon) and Intermediate Spanish (3rd through 5th grade, Tuesday morning) will continue to work through April. **Questions?** Contact Committee Chair Kirsten Frank (kirstenfrank25@yahoo.com)

5. **ASA (After School Activities)**

The current winter session is coming to an end and a new exciting Spring session is about to start in the last week of March. Registration deadline is today, Friday, March 4! This winter's Latin Dance session is extended until March 9. An informal Latin Dance performance is scheduled on that day at 3 pm in the All Purpose Room. Parents are welcome to come and watch. Please continue to send a healthy snack with your child on ASA days. For any ASA inquiries, please contact Astrid Ingenlath-Diaz at moo.diaz@verizon.net

6. **Staff Appreciation**

This note is in regards to the big National Staff Appreciation Week in the first week of May. You may wonder why I am facing the planning of this event so far out, but there are reasons. One of them is that my co-chair Chris Frank regrets deeply that she had to step down from her position as co-chair. Last year, with the help and support of our community, we were able to show our appreciation of the entire FKES Staff by providing a breakfast, an International lunch buffet and a mock-tail hour, in addition to other big and small tokens and gestures across the week. I am greatly appreciative that Michelle Reed-Kretowski offered to take the lead of all three food & beverage functions, please be open minded for a possibly new theme. Please support Michelle with your helping hands for set-up, clean up and your culinary creations, store bought goods donations or monetary contributions. In order to sustain what has become a much looked forward to tradition, I am asking for your help with a few other surprise treats in the planning, please contact me if you would like to contribute to this great opportunity to show our parent appreciation to our wonderful and caring staff members. Please contact Astrid Ingenlath-Diaz at moo.diaz@verizon.net.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, March 18	Silent Auction - 6:30-9:30
Friday, March 25	Open House - 9:00-10:30
Thursday, March 31	No School, Professional Day for teachers

