



VFES MONTHLY REPORT

April 2013–Team Updates

Kindergarten:

The month of April seems to have flown by. We completed our Pet unit and jumped right into Earth Day activities. The students created a tree by making a tree rubbing, then traced their hands and arms, cut it out and painted a background. Working on their fine motor skills they added details to the tree such as leaves and flowers with crinkled tissue paper. To complete the project they wrote about a tree in their yard. From trees we moved on to seeds, flowers, worms, and rain. Check out our hallway that is decked out with umbrellas the students painted.

In math we learned and practiced counting to 100 by 2's, 5's and 10's. From there we moved on to addition and subtraction. In Science we covered concepts that had to do with Earth Day like recycling and taking care of our plants and trees because they are important to our environment. We also covered weather and the water cycle.

The highlight of the month was our Earth Day festivities. At the stations we learned about how oil spills affect the environment and the animals that live in the ocean as well as how difficult it is to clean up. At the craft station the children reused cereal boxes and other craft materials to make Earths and picture frames. At the worm station the children learned about worms and their importance in our gardens. At the games station the children learned about recycling and at the planting station the children learned how to help our environment by planting a sunflower seed to take home and a flower in front of the school sign by Walker Road. This was a wonderful learning experience for both students and all of the adult volunteers we had. We thank all those who participated. We could not have provided this unique learning experience without the help of all our volunteers.

First Grade:

The flowers are in full bloom and so are our first graders. During the month of April, we completed our study of the rainforest. The children spent the first part of the month learning about the insects and arachnids that live in the rainforest. We even created a few to add to our murals. The second half of the month was dedicated to green efforts. During this time, the children learned about reusing, reducing and recycling to help keep our earth clean! In Social Studies, we are studying African Animals. The children are learning many interesting facts about the animals they may find on an imaginary safari. During Large Group Reading, we have been working on retelling a story. The children are very good at finding the beginning, middle and end of a story and telling the important parts. This strategy is practiced with all of the books that we read! The first grade teachers and students would like to thank Mr. Nation for a fabulous music program. The children enjoyed learning Japanese and African songs and even had the chance to play their handcrafted African instruments. We are very proud of our first graders!

Second Grade:

April was an exciting month in second grade! Our visit to the Franklin Institute was fantastic! Students experienced hands-on exhibits throughout the day. We visited Space Command, Amazing Machines, Franklin Air Show, The Train Factory, and Electricity. Of course no visit to the Franklin Institute is complete without a few trips through the giant heart! After lunch, we all enjoyed the Night Skies show in the planetarium. This is a wonderful place for second graders to visit, as many of the exhibits relate to the topics studied in science and social studies. Next month, we will go to the Irvine Auditorium for a play, based on the popular children's book, Click, Clack Moo. We continue our study of space in science and are excited to be presenting a choral program called Interplanetary Jammin with our fantastic music teacher, Mr. Nation! As a language arts connection, students created aliens from other planets or galaxies and wrote creative pieces about them. We recently ended our Exploration unit in social studies and will soon begin our study of immigration. Final book shares were due on April 30th. Students have made great progress in writing book reports and in public speaking. They can't wait to present their writing to families during the Writers' Tea on May 30th! We hope everyone enjoyed April as much as we did!

Third Grade:

This month third grade students have been busy. We kicked off the month of April with our PTO sponsored "Art Goes to School" event. Students learned all about different artists and time periods. Students also saw how different painting styles were used to create so many different types of art. It was a very well organized activity that our student really enjoyed.

On April 17th students traveled to Conestoga High School to watch a cultural arts performance put on by the high school theater arts program. The play entitled, Landry and the Three Gifts, was extremely well done and our students enjoyed the experience.

Third grade students also took part in PSSA testing. From April 9th- 16th our students took a series of six tests (three in mathematics and three in reading). Teachers and staff alike were extremely proud of the effort and work put forth by our students.

May will be another exciting month as we have the Spring Fair on May 3rd, the Bee Man assembly on May 16th, and our PA Play on May 30th! We are looking forward to all the fun activities!

We started the month of April with Art Goes to School. We would like to thank the Cultural Arts Committee for sponsoring, and coordinating this wonderful event. We would like to thank the PTO and the Cultural Arts Committee again for having Thomas Jefferson come to visit the fourth grade. Thomas Jefferson gave us the inside scoop about how he was picked to write the Declaration of Independence, and the impact he made on our young and growing country.

The field trip to Valley Forge National was a huge success, and we want to thank Mrs. Narcisi, and the rangers that were our tour guides while we were at the park. The rangers who took us on our bus tours gave us great insight on what life was like for the Continental Army when they encamped there during the winter of 1777-1778. They taught us how important the wintering at Valley Forge was for our young army.

The PTO did another wonderful job on the Ice Cream Social, and the fourth grade students had all their P.A.L. projects on display for everyone to enjoy. The culminating activities for Electric Circuits from science were also on display for everyone to enjoy. The students worked in teams to build and wire “buildings” for light, and the teams really showed their creativity, and ingenuity with each of the “buildings”. We hope everyone who visited our hallway during the Ice Cream Social had a fun and educational experience.

Special & Support Area Updates

Music

All of the students at Valley Forge Elementary have been very busy learning about various musical styles, genres, and composers. In kindergarten, students are learning how to read rhythms from a musical staff. They are also using their creativity to create rhythms on various percussion instruments.

Our first graders recently performed a wonderful concert including music from two regions they learned about this year, Japan and Africa. Students sang several traditional songs from each region. They also made African percussion instruments that they used during the concert.

In second grade, students are hard at work preparing for their concert on May 8th. The second grade performance ties in with their science unit focusing on the solar system. Students are learning a variety of songs and dances to accompany each part of the solar system. They also recently completed a wall timeline showing the different periods of music history.

Third graders are learning songs about Pennsylvania in preparation for the Pennsylvania play. These songs help them learn the geographic regions, history, and culture of our state. They are also learning to read notes on a musical staff, as well as sing multiple parts at one time.

In 4th grade, students are practicing for their upcoming musical, entitled *The American Dream*. This show ties in with the 4th grade social studies curriculum, as the show dramatizes the early discovery of America up through the Revolutionary War. We are learning songs in a variety of styles and genres for the show.

The Valley Forge Band, Chorus, and 3rd/4th Grade Orchestras are also preparing for the spring concert on May 14th. The theme for the chorus part of the performance is Music Around the World, and presents music from many locations and cultures. The program includes music from South America, Africa, Europe, and the United States.

May Events

- 5/2 Special Olympics at Coatesville High School
- 5/3 Spring Fair
- 5/7 VFMS Principal/Counselors meet with 4th Grade Parents
- 5/8 2nd Grade Concert
- 5/9 Trike-a-Thon
- 5/14 Spring Concert with Band, Choir, and Orchestra
- 5/15 Volunteer Breakfast and PTO Meeting
- 5/16 3rd Grade - "Bee Man"
- 5/16 4th Grade Students visit VFMS
- 5/17 4th Grade Concert
- 5/21 No School for Students Instructional Staff Inservice
- 5/22 2nd Grade Field Trip to Irvine Auditorium
- 5/23 1st and 2nd Grade Field Day
- 5/24 3rd and 4th Grade Field Day
- 5/27 No School - Memorial Day
- 5/29 Conestoga Relays at CHS
- 5/29 Kindergarten Field Trip to Elmwood Park Zoo
- 5/30 3rd Grade PA Play
- 5/30 2nd Grade Writer's Tea
- 5/31 Raindate for Field Day

