

Station 15 News

Student/Parent
Newsletter for
Mr. Snapp's 6th
Grade Class

Issue Number Eight

November 3, 2008



Elfin Forest Hike Wednesday

Our walk to the Elfin Forest with our buddy class will be this **Wednesday, November 5**. We'll leave **Baywood at 9:15 and return around 11:30**. We'll be back before lunch so there's no need to pack a sack lunch. The kids should bring their backpacks, water bottles, wear comfortable walking shoes, and dress for the expected weather. As I'm writing this – Friday, 10/31 – Weather.com is saying that the rain will be gone by Tuesday and Wednesday will be sunny and 64°. We'll see. If it rains the trip will be postponed.

Black Hill Hike with Buddies

On **Friday, November 21**, we will be taking a trip with our buddy class to Black Hill. Black Hill is located in Morro Bay State Park, behind the golf course. Besides being a fun activity to share with our buddies, this will be a "tune-up hike" for our next trip, the hike up Valencia Peak.

We'll be traveling to and from the park via parent drivers, so **PARENT DRIVERS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED FOR THIS TRIP**. Please check your schedules and consider driving if you can. Parent drivers don't have to hike with us; you can drop us off and return to pick us up later. **If you can drive let me know and I'll send home a driver's form.**

We'll leave Baywood at 8:45 a.m. We'll drive to the parking area on the road just southeast of the golf course clubhouse. We'll hike up the road through the golf course to the parking lot at the end, where we'll meet our little buddies. From there we'll walk up the trail to the top of Black Hill. At the top we'll read together, enjoy the view, take pictures, and do some singing.

We'll return to school by 11:30 a.m. Since we'll be back by lunchtime, **the students will not need to bring sack lunches**. However, they are welcome to bring snacks.

The students should wear comfortable walking shoes, and dress appropriately for the expected weather. In case of rain the trip will be postponed. Parents are cordially invited to join us.

Mini-Society Tuesday (Tomorrow)

We're going to have our first Mini-Society day tomorrow, **Tuesday, November 4, at 10:30**. Mini-Society is an economics simulation activity that also includes elements of

how the legal system works. The kids have been earning paychecks throughout the year. They get paid simply for showing up at school, and can earn additional "money" by applying for and being awarded classroom jobs. They also can have money deducted from their paychecks for infractions, such as being tardy, getting yellow slips, etc.

On Mini-Society days the kids are allowed to bring old toys, games, and other "treasures" from home. They buy and sell their items with the Mini-Society money they receive. They'll learn about things like supply and demand, pricing, marketing, etc. At the end of each Mini-Society session we'll have time for discussion. We'll talk about what went on, and I'll draw parallels between our Mini-Society and the real world.

The items they bring to sell must be within the following guidelines:

- They must be surplus things from around the house. I don't want them buying anything from the store and bringing it to sell.
- They are not allowed to bring food items to sell.
- They must not bring anything without parents' permission.
- They are not to bring anything belonging to a sibling without his or her permission.
- They may not bring anything that is inappropriate for school, such as CD's with inappropriate lyrics, items with advertising for alcohol or tobacco products, etc.

One of the lessons of Mini-Society is the importance of being self-reliant, responsible, etc. For that reason I usually don't remind the kids the day before Mini-Society to bring their stuff the next day, and **if they pack up their stuff but forget to bring it to school I don't allow them to call parents**. If they don't bring any items to sell they can still participate and have a good time, but they'll have to wait until the next Mini-Society day to sell all of their treasures.

Another lesson is the importance of not losing things. The kids have been given several weeks' worth of paychecks. If they lose them I will give them replacements, but not until the day after Mini-Society.

Mini-Society is fun, but I don't want it to get in the way of other academic activities. For that reason, I don't allow them to get their Mini-Society money out and count it, play with it, etc. during class (except during Mini-Society, or if I've given them permission.) I've told them that if they get their money out at any time other than Mini-Society and play with it, I'll take it and won't give it back. (Self-control is another valuable lesson!)

Thank You Mrs. Silva!

I want to express our thanks to Mrs. Silva for putting together our apple pie/ice cream party. She had a large number of these parties to organize that day. What a job! Anyway, the kids had a great time and enjoyed the pie and ice cream very much. Thank you Mrs. Silva! Thanks also to Rene Delk for helping serve.

Behavior Reminder – Start of a New Trimester!

I have reminded the kids that today is the start of the second trimester. That means that their behavior starting today will determine whether they earn an invitation to our class sleepover or not.

An invitation to the sleepover is a reward for good behavior. I think kids who behave themselves and stay out of trouble are often given short shrift in school. Teachers, out of necessity, spend an inordinate amount of time dealing with kids who misbehave. Often there are incentive plans designed for these kids. Kids who always behave properly sometimes feel neglected.

Teachers appreciate kids who stay out of trouble. They make our jobs easier and everyone's lives more pleasant. I came up with the sleepover as a special reward for these kids.

The Sleepover

The sleepover will be on **Friday, March 13** (after the end of the second trimester,) starting at 6:00 p.m., and will end when the last child is picked up the next day, no later than 9:00 a.m. We'll order pizza from Round Table for dinner (kids can also eat at home before they come or bring something else with them for dinner.) We'll alternate between the library, where we'll play games – video games as well as other kinds; and the multipurpose room, where we'll play basketball, hula hoops, etc.

We'll sleep on tumbling mats in the library – girls in one area and boys in another. Before we go to sleep we'll all watch a video together (something appropriate.) In the morning my wife and I will make pancakes for everyone, before the kids go home.

We won't get much sleep that night. If your child needs to get to bed at a reasonable hour because of a baseball game the next day or some other reason, he or she might need to go home early. I'll discuss those details in another issue.

As of today, all of the kids have a blank slate. Whatever behavior issues they may have had in the first trimester don't apply to this. Here are the criteria for earning an invitation:

- A student can have only one yellow slip. (Green slips don't apply; that's why I differentiate between behavior infractions – yellow slips – and responsibility issues – green slips.) Getting two yellow slips disqualifies the student.
- If a student is sent to the principal for misbehaving, he or she will be disqualified.

- If a student is sent to the office for a timeout I consider that the same as one yellow slip.
- If a student is suspended from school he or she is disqualified. It doesn't matter if it's a 2-hour suspension in the office or if he or she is sent home.

The 2nd trimester ends on Friday, February 27. Any infractions up to and including that day will count. The following week will be the start of the 3rd trimester, and all slates will be wiped clean again. In the last trimester the reward for good behavior is an invitation to the Camporama.

Barbecue Tickets

Today is the start of our biggest fundraiser towards Camp Ocean Pines of the year – the barbecue. If the kids sell enough tickets we may not need any other fundraisers. Your child was supposed to bring back the form last Thursday stating whether he or she had permission to sell tickets. Those who got their permission slips in early were given tickets on Thursday and have already started selling them.

The fundraising committee is hoping that each 6th grader can sell at least 10 tickets. In previous years they have been pretty easy to sell. Most adults seem to welcome the chance to skip cooking on a Friday night and help the 6th graders at the same time.

Please plan on coming the night of the barbecue – **Friday, November 21** – to help - parents as well as kids. The Kiwanis Club will be doing the actual barbecuing. Parents are needed to pack the dinners and supervise the kids. The kids take tickets and deliver the dinners to the people in their cars. People will also be needed for set up and clean up. Someone will be calling or sending home a signup sheet.

Big thanks are due to John Cookson and Jami Wampler for being in charge. Thank you!