



The Lion's Roar

Vernon Independent School District Newsletter

November 2007

Public School Curriculum and College Readiness

A report was recently published by the Commission for a College Ready Texas. The members of the commission were appointed by Governor Perry in April of 2007. The commission defined college readiness is the attainment of the core knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the first year of education after high school without the need for remedial/developmental education. The commission reports a disconnect between the high school curriculum and college entrance requirements. The commission report details several areas where public schools are need to improve.

Another group that has been working on this issue is the vertical teams comprised of higher education and public education members. These teams have been developing the college readiness standards. The College Readiness Standards being developed by the vertical teams are not the same as high school standards. Current high school standards have been developed to educate students for a variety of possible futures beyond high school. The College Readiness Standards are for the sole purpose to ensure that students possess the skills necessary to succeed in entry-level college courses.

The vertical teams will soon be taking the next step of ensuring that the current high school standards include instruction in the standards

that have been developed. The high school curriculum should still prepare students for a variety of futures but must also include the components necessary to prepare students for college.

The new requirement for all students to complete a 4th year of math and science will help with ensuring college readiness. However, there is one more piece that will have to be looked at and that is the current tests that colleges use to determine if a student is ready for college or in need of remedial courses. Currently there is also a disconnect between what is tested and what is taught at the high school there is also a disconnect between what is tested and what is required to be successful in college.

If you would like more information on the Commission's report or on the draft College Readiness Standards you can find them online at the following addresses.

<http://www.collegereadytexas.org/documents/CCRT%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/collegereadiness/Draft_CRS.pdf

McCord Elementary News

National Young Readers Day Celebration

By Janet Bristo

Students at McCord Elementary had a “dreamy” time on national Young Reader Day, November 13, 2007. The day was celebrated by coming school in our pajamas ready to hear bedtime stories. The stories were read by parents, grandparents, and friends in the community. It was a day full of “Sweet Dreams”.

We want to thank all of the wonderful volunteers who took time out of their day to share a story with a class. You are very much appreciated by all of the students and faculty at McCord Elementary School. We wish you many “Sweet Dreams”!!!

Judy Pattison
Stephanie Chesser
Tracie Haynes
Donna Stribling
Shanna McBride
Jennifer Foerster
Zachary Morrison
Tanner Kieschnick
Greg Tanner
Jeff Lanningham
Laura Lanningham
Marilyn Leasure
Clay Messick
Rance Adkins
Mikel Davis
Larry Crabtree
Carol Taylor
Travis Taylor
Tracy Taylor
Krystaline Robinson
Sandie Parmer
Marina Ramirez
Stormy Phillips
Hilari Garrett
Ed Marsh
Jeanette Marsh
Madge Henry
Melody VonTungeln
LeeAnn Cook
Dave Winn
Whitney Watts
Samantha McGee

Michelle Hodges
Melanie Smith
Alma Maldonado
Jackie Collums
Tom Woody
Tom Wilson
Steven Stanley
Katy White
Ally Graf
Ed Garnett
Lisa Herber
Sue Davis
Kevin Young
Maria Trinidad
Robby Spencer
Laura Roth
Charlotta Ranjel
Missy Mayfield
Michael Stevens
Trisha Dillingham
Kris Garrison
Heather Conkling
Christi Kinney
Kenneth Bersche
Jennifer Castleberry
Lois Stanberry
Twaleena Watson
Adrian Brints
Steve Fleming
Sylvia Mahoney
Danny Prather
Elizabeth O'Neal

Pre-K Thanksgiving Feast

By Pam K. Bell

The McCord Pre-K observed our Thanksgiving feast on November 19th this year. Mrs. Roberson's and Mrs. Slaggle's classes contributed fruits that were combined to make a salad, while Mrs. Bell's and Mrs. Streit's classes provided roasting ears and Johnny cakes. We learned about the first Thanksgiving, having

made Indian and pilgrim attire and table decorations. We had large and small group discussions about what we all had to be thankful for in each of our own lives.

Central Elementary News



Third Grade is All A-Flutter!

By Cindy Woodard

Central's third grade hall is going through a metamorphosis -- literally! On October 24th we received over 100 caterpillars and have been observing the process of them becoming butterflies. Our caterpillars started out just over 1 centimeter long. Within a week and a half, the fuzzy creatures had grown to over an inch long and had molted 4 or 5 times. After the fifth molt, the caterpillars crawled to the top of their container, attached themselves to the lid, and formed a chrysalis. By the time you read this, we should have a rabble of Painted Lady butterflies flitting about! It's been a lot of fun learning about how butterflies eat, how they see, how they evade predators, and tons of other fun facts about this beautiful flying insect. Along the way we've sharpened our observation skills, made predictions (hypotheses), and investigated all sorts of butterfly related topics. Perhaps some of us will become lepidopterists!

Central Students Give Back to the Community

By Pam McSpadden

At Central, students are taught the value of giving to others, and this past week, our students demonstrated that they have learned that lesson well. Central School held their annual food drive during the week of November 5-9. In all, Central students collected more than 800 items of food that will be donated to the United Samaritan Services of Vernon. Every class did a great job, and the winning class was Mrs. White's Class. They collected 76 items of food. As one 2nd grader said, “We need to care about people.” Other students stated that it made them feel good to help people, and Mrs. White's class says “Happy Thanksgiving Everyone.” Central students may be small, but they have very big hearts.



Mrs. White's Class among the many food items Central students will donate to the USSV. Central students learned this week the positive feeling that comes with giving and helping others.

Central Students "Take 3 Steps Back"

By Pam McSpadden

Almost all students at Central Elementary said that they had been taught not to talk with strangers, and this week they learned and practiced what to do if a stranger approaches them. Using the Yello Dyno curriculum, students learned to say "No Sir, No Way, No How" if a person they don't know or trust offers them some kind of treat. If the stranger tries to get the student to go with him or her, the students learned to "take three steps back and run like the wind." The student's role played several situations to practice what to do and say and even learned a dance to practice the three steps back and running. It's a lesson parents and educators wish they didn't have to teach, but most of all, we want our students to be safe.

Central Students Say "NO TO DRUGS"

By Pam McSpadden

During the week of October 22-26, students at Central Elementary celebrated Red Ribbon Week. During this week, students had fun dressing up in different costumes to remind them of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. For example, on Monday, students wore caps to school to remind them to "Put a cap on drugs!" On Tuesday, students wore pajamas to illustrate

that "Drugs are a Nightmare!" On Wednesday, students wore sunglasses to school to show that "Drugs are Shady!." On Thursday, students "Roped Up Drugs" by dressing in their western clothes. On Friday, Central students showed their school spirit by wearing maroon and white and to remember that Vernon Lions Don't Take Drugs! In addition to dressing up, students learned four responses they can give to any person who offers them drugs. First, they should say "No" loudly and firmly. Second, they can suggest another activity. Another good response is to leave immediately. Finally, students were taught to find an adult they trust and tell them. We always hope that our children will not face drug use in their lives, but if they do, at Central, we want them to know of the dangers of drug abuse and how to say "No." The choices they make now can affect their entire lives.



Students in Mrs. McLennan's class
"Put a Cap on Drugs!"



Caleb Newell and Austin Young
"Rope Up Drugs" during Red Ribbon Week



Central students agree "Drugs are Shady!"

Central's New After School Reading Program

By Stephani Swan

At Central Elementary we have started an exciting after school reading tutoring program. We are using the Read Naturally computer program. This program has been used with great results in improving student fluency rates and comprehension skills. Janice Manlove, Central's Principal said, "I have almost 100% participation from my teachers in agreeing to do after school tutoring. They always go the extra mile to help the students in any way they can." After school tutoring started in October and will last until May.



Shive Elementary News

Articles Submitted by Kristin Oznick

Shive UIL Try Outs

Every fourth and fifth grade student had the opportunity to try out for the various UIL teams. Teams have been selected and are preparing for their events. UIL Competition will be held at Tower Elementary in Burkburnett on December 6, 2007. Shive is looking forward to a successful year in UIL!

Shive Christmas Program

Shive Elementary will be having the 4th and 5th grade Christmas Program on December 11th at the Wilbarger Auditorium. Our new music teachers, Diane Koch and Aaron Burr, have been working hard to prepare the students for the musical program. In addition, Shive PTO will be having a Silent Auction from 5-6 pm before the program. Several businesses have already donated some great items to be auctioned off! Shive welcomes the community to come participate and support the auction, and enjoy the Christmas Program!

Shive AR/Honor Roll Celebration

Shive will be having an AR/Honor Roll Celebration on Monday, November 26th. We will be honoring 4th grade students that earn 17 or more AR points this six weeks and 5th grade students that earn 21 or more AR points this six weeks. We will also be honoring all students that have made the "A" or "AB" Honor Roll. Each student that is recognized will receive a certificate and reward. Fourth graders that earn 100 AR points, and fifth graders that earn 126 AR points will get to attend our annual AR Trip to Castaway Cove in May.

Cookie Dough Fundraiser

Shive held a cookie dough fundraiser this past six weeks. Thank you to everyone in the community that purchased from our fundraiser! The money raised will go towards Shive's Accelerated Reader Program.

GT Students Research Native American Tribes of Texas

This year, the fourth grade GT students will be following the guidelines of the Texas Performance Standards Project, *We Are Texans*. One of the main components of this program is teaching students how to conduct research. The 4th graders have just completed the research portion of their first project, the Native American Tribes of Texas. Each group has researched a specific tribe that lived in Texas and is now working on a presentation of that information to the rest of the class. This will include an oral presentation and models or pictures of five different artifacts that would represent that tribe.

Those Who Would Be Leaders in Education

By Marilyn Ferguson

We can rationalize the failures of the past
or we can learn from them.

We can complain about the troubling
inadequacies of the present
or we can face them.

We can talk and dream about the glorious
schools of the future
or we can create them.

If we want children to learn to think and read,
we must show them thoughtful people eager
to take in new information.

If we want them to be brave and resourceful,
let them see us risking a new idea or finding
a way.

If we want them to be loyal, patriotic, and
responsible,
let us show them that we can be true to
our deepest principles.

If we want new and better schools,
we will have to be new and better people.



Vernon Middle School News

G/T Students Attend Robotics Workshop

Articles Submitted by Linda Borchardt

The G/T students of Vernon Middle School attended a robotics workshop at the Region 9 Service Center in Wichita Falls. Students constructed Lego robots, and used computer software to program their robots to perform assigned tasks. Some students attended the workshop on October 16th, while others attended October 19th.

VMS Pep Rally

Vernon Middle School conducted a pep rally on campus Friday, October 12th to recognize athletes in fall sports, and to honor those students with perfect attendance during the first six weeks, and to honor students who made the "A" honor roll (Principal's List) and the "A/B" honor roll. The VMS Band performed.

Multi-Cultural Festival

Vernon Middle School held its annual Multi-Cultural Festival on Wednesday, October 31st. Students celebrated "Cultures through the Decades." The Festival had a variety of booths from different decades throughout American history, such as the Colonial Period, Western Expansion, and each decade since the 1900's. Booths included games and food from each designated time period. Students worked with their advisory class to create their assigned booth. The National Junior Honor Society sponsors this event and helped set up for the festivities.

National Junior Honor Society News

National Junior Honor Society at Vernon Middle School decorated pumpkins and took them to Shive Elementary to place in the classrooms during Red Ribbon Week. The members gave a message to encourage others to stay away from drugs.

Also, the National Junior Honor Society put together a display by the front office that includes pictures and names of military servicemen that are family members and friends of Middle School students and staff.

VMS Yearbook and Newspaper Sales

By Susan Kenner

The Growl yearbook is still on sale at middle school. Students may pre-order their yearbook and school DVD in Mrs. Kenner's room (211) during lunch or after school. The cost of the yearbook is \$15.00 and the DVD is \$10.00.

Students should see a yearbook staff member to get a card to turn in to receive a special "prize" when they pre-order.

Pre-order by December 20th for a chance to win a digital camera!

The second issue of the school newspaper, **The Squeak**, was sold during 8th period on Monday, November 19th. Journalism students have been busy writing their articles and taking pictures. Commercials aired during lunch each day before the sale.

VMS Library News

By Mary Castleberry, Librarian

The Social Studies classes of Mrs. Janet Pierce began a unit of study about Texas Independence and the writing of the Constitution, and students were introduced to a myriad of reading materials from our Vernon Middle School Library to kick off the unit. Books that included stories about the lives of Jim Bowie, Davy Crockett, William Barret Travis, Stephen F. Austin, Santa Anna, and Sam Houston, were selected. Another book chosen was **The Immortal 32** by Rita Kerr, an historical fiction account of thirty-two men who answer Colonel William Travis's plea for help and cross enemy lines to help defend the Alamo in 1836. Other historical fiction books included **A Line in the Sand**, **When the Corn Grows Tall in Texas**, **Shhh – We're Writing the Constitution!** and **Will You Sign Here, John Hancock?** Non-fiction books included **Our Independence and Constitution**, **The Great Little Madison**, and **What's the Big Idea Ben Franklin?**

Guinness World Records 2007, **Guinness World Records 2008**, **Ripley's Believe It or Not, Special Edition 2007**, and **Who Wore What Best Number With Distinction** (Sporting News) are reference items which students enjoy while browsing the VMS Library. J.K. Rowling's

books continue to be among the most popular items circulated, along with our latest *Junior Library Guild* books.

In honor of Veteran's Day, a DVD entitled "*The 8th of November*" was shown over the school-wide media system via our VMS Library. "*The 8th of November*," is the story of our own 2006-2007 eighth-graders from Vernon Middle School who participated in "Prints of Peace," an honorarium created for United States Veterans. Each eighth-grader places his/her painted handprint on a large banner, and then signs the mural to show support of our country's military troops and Veterans. The banner is displayed in front of the administrative office of our Vernon Middle School. This year's eighth graders plan to participate this Veteran's Day with another "Prints of Peace," and hopefully, this is a precedent established for future eighth-grade classes.

Vernon High School News

Red Ribbon Parade

By Sarah Lehman, Stella Johnson
& Shirley Moerbe

Wagons, tricycles, and wheelchairs were decorated for a parade that was held November 2nd, the last day of Red Ribbon Week. Cassandra Garcia, Nina Edmonds, and Colt Lovell were all dressed in red, including their wheelchairs. Their wheelchairs had red paper flowers, red streamers, red balloons and signs saying 'Stomp the Steers' and 'Stay Drug Free.' These students greatly appreciate the opportunity to participate and interact with their peers.

VHS Roarin' Lion Band News

By Stephen Morgan

TMEA All-District Honor Band Auditions

Ten members of the Vernon High School Roarin' Lion Band competed in the TMEA All-District Honor Band auditions held at Hirschi High School on Saturday, November 3rd. Earning positions in the band were: Alex Mendoza, 11th chair clarinet; Austin Schaffner, 12th chair trumpet; Daniel Alaniz, 4th chair horn; Brady Craighead, 3rd chair trombone; Pedro Moreno, 4th chair trombone; Jeremy McLain, 1st chair baritone; Arturo Camacho, 1st chair tuba; Mykel

Byersmith, 2nd chair tuba; and Ethan Alexander, 5th chair tuba. These students will rehearse with and perform in concert with the All-District Honor Band on Saturday, January 26, 2008. I'm very pleased with how well our band students competed. Any time you have fifty percent or more of your students make the district band is a good year, and we placed ninety percent of the students we took! Every student from VHS placed in the top half or higher out of all of the students in their section at auditions. For a band student to make the All-District Honor Band is the same level of accomplishment as a student athlete being named to the All-District team for their sport.

All-Region Honor Band Auditions

Eleven Vernon High School Roarin' Lion Band members competed in the Association of Texas Small School Bands All-Region Honor Band auditions held in Bridgeport on Saturday, November 10th. Earning positions in the Symphonic, or top, band were: Jeremy McLain, 3rd chair baritone; Arturo Camacho, 2nd chair tuba; and Mykel Byersmith, 3rd chair tuba. Earning positions in the Concert, or second, band were: Alex Mendoza, 3rd chair clarinet; Daniel Alaniz, 6th chair horn; Pedro Moreno, 1st chair trombone; Brady Craighead, 3rd chair trombone; and Ethan Alexander, 5th chair tuba. These students will rehearse with the region bands on January 18 and 19, 2008, and perform in the All-Region Honor Band Concert on January 19 at Argyle High School.

I'm very pleased with how well our students placed in the region band auditions. There were over 700 students involved in the auditions, and for us to place eight students in the two region bands is very good! For a band student to earn a position in one of the two All-Region Honor Bands is the same level of accomplishment as a student athlete being named to the All-Region first or second team for his sport.

In addition to earning positions in the All-Region Honor Band, three students, Jeremy McLain, Arturo Camacho, and Mykel Byersmith, qualified to compete in the ATSSB Area Band Auditions which will be held on January 5, 2008, in Argyle. The Area band auditions are the final round of auditions to determine which students will make the ATSSB All-State Honor Band. To be able to participate in the area auditions is the

same level of achievement as for a track or tennis student to qualify for the finals competition at the regional tennis or track meet.

From the Desk of Vernon High School Principal Clay Tarpley

As our school year continues the seasons are changing. Volleyball ended their season with an appearance in the playoffs. The Lions football team has won a district championship. Boys and girls basketball are at the beginning of their campaign. Numerous band members have received many accolades. The changing seasons have finally brought cooler temperatures. Unfortunately, these cooler temperatures have caused some confusion about enforcement of the district's dress code.

In order to maintain a safe and orderly environment, students are required to store large bulky coats in their lockers during the school day. Students are allowed to wear their coats to school. However, it is our desire to keep these large bulky coats out of the classroom where the temperature is controlled. Your cooperation and support with this effort is greatly appreciated.

"Fall Semester" Exam Schedule

January 2008

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

1st Period Exam 8:10 – 9:40

2nd Period 9:45 – 10:20

3rd Period 10:25 - 11:00

Resume Regular Bells

Thursday, January 17, 2008

2nd Period Exam 8:10 – 9:40

3rd Period Exam 9:50 – 11:20

Lunch 11:25 – 12:25

4th Period Exam 12:30 – 2:00**

Friday, January 18, 2008

5th Period Exam 8:10 – 9:40

6th Period Exam 9:50 – 11:20

Lunch 11:25 – 12:25

7th Period Exam 12:30 – 2:00**

** Buses will run at regular time (3:35)

VISD Child Nutrition Services

Annual Campus Holiday Meals

By Tammie Newcomer,
Director of Food Services

Yes, it's almost that time of year! Below are the dates for each campus when the VISD Food Service Department will be serving the Annual Holiday Meal.

Tuesday, December 11th – McCord Elementary

Wednesday, December 12th – Central Elementary

Thursday, December 13th – Shive Elementary

Friday, December 14th – Middle School & High School

Hope you plan to attend!

District Information

Articles by Marylin Leasure,
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum
and Instruction

Highly Qualified Teachers

Vernon ISD reported this fall that the district is served by 100% highly qualified teachers for grades PK-12 in the core subjects and also certified that 100% of the core classes are taught by highly qualified teachers.

Benchmark Tests

Benchmark tests are being given periodically at the campuses in the core subject areas. These benchmark tests are based on the curriculum taught as of the beginning of the school year and will indicate to teachers how the students are able to apply their learning on TAKS-similar questions. This data also helps identify which students may need to have an intervention through extended time for reinforcement of these skills and objectives.

Family PLUS Meetings

Family PLUS meetings are scheduled throughout the school year. The meetings for parents and guardians are held once or twice monthly at the Boys and Girls Club with child care provided and a snack or light meal. If you haven't received information please contact the district office at 553-1900 extension 239 or extension 228.



District Newsletter

Copies of this district newsletter and back issues are also available online at www.vernonisd.org under the District Newsletter link. The next newsletter will be published on January 23, 2008.

Vernon Independent School District
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