



## SUPERINTENDENT'S ADVISORY GROUP

The following is a list of positive activities that the students and faculty/staff of all schools were involved in during the summer months and for the month of December/January, 2012.

### Luray Elementary School

**VPI – Preschool:** Preschoolers were excited to come back to school following their Winter Break. We began the month by learning about “Winter.” The children made size comparisons using snowballs while making their own snowmen. They learned about freezing and thawing. Snowflakes were painted and many stories about winter were read. The children made predictions about what would happen next in their winter stories. Winter is also the time of hibernation for many animals, such as bears. “Bears” were the topic of another unit. The children learned about hibernation. Factual as well as fictional stories were read and we compared the two types. In our bear stories, we focused on sequencing. We finished the month with a unit on “Fairy Tales.” The children compared different versions of the same story. We also talked about characters and identified the characters in each of our stories. Of course, along with each unit, we focused on a letter and the sound that the letter makes at the beginning of words.

Calendar and weather activities gave us additional experiences with graphing and patterns. We compared groups of objects and talked about concepts of more, less, and same. The groups were changed by adding or by taking away members of the group. The children are doing great at writing numbers and at counting. We even have some children who are counting to 100!

**Kindergarten:** In kindergarten, Mrs. Paul and Mrs. Raeburn's classes have been learning about liquids, solids, and gas. The teachers came up with a song to the tune of "3 Blind Mice" to help the children remember these terms. The classes learned about how water can change from a liquid to a solid (ice) and then to a gas (steam). The students also did an experiment in which frost appeared on a can...inside the classroom! In Kindergarten the students have also been learning about sinking/floating. We have used classroom items to make predictions about sinking/floating and tested out our predictions.

**First Grade:** The first grade teachers have been busy doing testing for PALS and the literacy notebook. All testing is completed and we are eager to get back to reading in our literacy groups. In math, we have been learning about geometry and are now starting our unit on fractions. In science, we have been learning about natural resources, recycling, and the solar system. We are very excited about the arrival of our new recycled playground equipment!!

Mrs. Johnson reports that she currently has two community members volunteering in her classroom and three parents volunteering throughout the week. She adds that it makes a difference with attention for the kids when they have another adult to read to.

**Second Grade:** After a nice, relaxing winter break, second graders were eager to get back and start learning! In math, they worked on two digit addition and subtraction facts. These facts were both with and without regrouping. They used many manipulatives and methods to understand this difficult concept. They enjoyed the challenge of mixing addition and subtraction facts together. In science, students began their unit on matter. They learned basic properties of solids, liquids, and gases. During this unit they enjoyed multiple experiments exploring the concepts.

**Third Grade:** Third grade teachers are using the 9 week math pacing guide assessments to develop math groups. We are excited that the new semester will bring additional hands in our room during our math instruction block. Students honored Martin Luther King, Jr. by writing a short paper about their dreams. In math, we have been practicing basic fact recollection through the use of Holey cards. We continue to see progress on Holey cards and have many students that have now mastered all four basic facts in less than 3 minutes! Aimsweb, PALS, ThinkLink, and DSA data is being used to create groups that better meet students' instructional needs. We are also switching across the grade level during RI to better accommodate the needs of all the students. We have been diligently using Reading Plus during our extra computer lab times. The students are excited about the program and take pride when they receive a certificate of achievement. Third graders are looking forward to celebrating the end of the month and the end of another semester by having a "Breakfast, Boogie, Bowling Party" on January 27, 2012.

**Fourth Grade:** In Virginia History, students participated in a scavenger hunt and pretended to be Harriet Tubman to experience the Underground Railroad and the feeling of being an escaped slave. In language arts, students watched the movie and read the American Girl book, *Felicity*. This book related to our Virginia Studies SOLs about the American Revolution. In math, students are using fraction strips to explore making equivalent fractions, comparing fractions and adding and subtracting fraction with unlike denominators. In science, students created a diagram of the Solar System including the planets and dwarf planets. The behavior of the fourth graders is improving with the addition of some positive behavior plans.

**Fifth Grade:** Students have been working on skills in geometry. The students were very successful in manipulating the protractor for the first time. Then we continue with our study of geometry by studying plane figures (polygons). The students used pattern blocks to make new shapes from other plane figures. Then they used marshmallows to construct the shapes. We have been studying matter, atoms, and elements. The students were able to use Goldfish and animal crackers to find the mass of those yummy snacks. Also, the students have been learning how matter is made up of tiny particles known as atoms. We then used our knowledge of elements to construct atoms with some more yummy food. Learning can be delicious! The new playground equipment is a great improvement to our playground. Fifth graders are looking forward to some improvements for their area also. The new RI schedule has improved and provides opportunities for more one on one attention for students needing extra help, as we "gear-up" for SOLs.

**Physical Education Department:** Classes have been in the gym most days due to the wet and cold weather. Upper and lower grades continue to do a variety of fitness activities before any games or activities are played. During the month of January, we have played a variety of games, but have concentrated on Volleyball and Volleyball related games such as "7-UP." We concentrate on having students keep active, have fun, and to learn and play new games as well as completing a good physical workout in the limited time that they have in Physical Education class.

**Library:** Grades 3-5 have been using atlases to review map skills such as a map key, compass rose, a scale, and grids. Students have also been using thesauruses to find synonyms for words. Fifth graders have just been introduced to an almanac. They are working hard to find answers to questions. The primary grades have been exploring winter themes. They read about polar bears and penguins. Second graders read a biography about Snowflake Bentley who studied snowflakes. We looked at some of his snowflake pictures that he took.

**Art:** The 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Arbor Day Posters are nearly complete and ready to send off. Art and music teachers are now working each day with Gifted and Talented students in a Readers'Theater project. We are working together on play and props for an upcoming production chosen by the students involved.

**Music:** Fourth and fifth graders are learning to play the guitar in music class. Ms. Frakes has a volunteer group of 3rd, 4th & 5th graders to form a Recorder Ensemble. They will be performing in the Music Extravaganza on March 15 at PCHS.

**Special Education:** Mrs. Elizabeth Irvin reports: We won the Old Navy/Terracycle Playground. We were 1 of 4 schools chosen in the entire country. WHSV-TV3 is coming to do a story and the Page News and Courier will do

a follow-up story in addition to the piece in last Wednesday's paper. We are set for installation on January 28th and 29th.

Mrs. Webb reports: We were thrilled to see positive results through our AIMSweb and Thinklink testing. Students are showing growth. We are excited that there is now a LANGUAGE! group running at Luray Elementary and look forward to watching the students growth in reading using this new program. New Responsive Instruction blocks are revamped based on students' specific areas of need.

Mrs. Logan reports: Mrs. Logan's class is pleased to welcome a new student. Luray Elementary School's students, with their warm greetings, have already made him feel quite at home. The other special education teachers and assistants have jumped in to provide their expertise concerning his special needs. The teachers, staff, and students provide a wonderful model for how a special needs student should be embraced by others. It is truly an accepting community at Luray Elementary School.

Ms. Hammer reports: A positive that I have is that I had a student go from a score of 7 to 32 on AIMSweb.

### **Shenandoah Elementary School**

Tara Beach's Shenandoah Elementary preschoolers have been very busy since we returned from Winter Break. We have been listening to lots of nursery rhymes and learning how to rhyme. We act out nursery rhymes using the felt boards that we have in the classroom and we play lots of different rhyming games. Sometimes we get really silly and Mrs. Beach or Mrs. Robbins will say a word, then we keep going around the room saying silly words that rhyme until we run out of words!! We always laugh about it! We are almost finished with our mid-year PALS testing and each student has shown improvement in some area of the test! So...we are very excited about that too! We have been participating in the Book-It program and contest that our school is having. It's called "Book-It Olympics". So far, we have earned 2 gold medals and 1 bronze medal for reading so many minutes!

In addition to learning more letters, numbers, colors, shapes and so forth, we have also been talking about the new season...winter! My, has it been cold, but where is all the snow?!? We have been discussing hibernation, migration and much more! We also read books and completed a Weekly Reader about Martin Luther King, Jr. We learned that he was a man of peace and was not treated fairly because of the color of his skin. As you can see, we are always learning new things in preschool and WE LOVE IT!

Ms. Jenkin's kindergarten class is doing well overall. She has half of her students counting to 100 by ones, fives, and tens. Seventeen students are able to recognize at least 24 letters of the alphabet. Twelve of her students know that many sounds as well. She has six students in her top group at this time. She has been able to move students up in groups because of skills they have learned in the past nine weeks.

Mrs. Trent's kindergarten students have been learning all about winter. Students are reading and writing stories, singing songs, acting out poems, watching educational videos, and many other learning activities to learn about winter. Students have learned how people, animals, and plants change and behave during the winter months. Since it is difficult for birds to find food in the winter, students enjoyed making bird feeders. Also, students have been completing mid-year assessments. Mrs. Trent is very proud of her students for making wonderful progress in all areas!

Mrs. Snyder's 1<sup>st</sup> grade class had one student who won one of the first place spots for the "What You Are Thankful" contest sponsored by the Page News and Co. - so our class won a pizza party. My students entered the JAC contest, with a theme of "Enhance the Present", and three of my students won a first, second, and third place for their drawings.

Ms. Bobbit's second grade class finished all of our mid-year assessments and **every** student has shown significant improvement! We have finished 4 projects in our Writer's Workshop. This month we are writing a story about a snowman who comes to life. We will use these stories for the school-wide writing contest. All of the students in the class have finally mastered 2-digit addition and subtraction!!!!

Here is an update on the Book-It Olympics:

### **December Winners**

PreK-2:

Bronze-Mrs. Painter's Kindergarten  
Silver- Mrs. Dean's Second Grade  
Gold- Mrs. Beach's

PreK-3-5

Bronze-Dr. Helsley's Fifth Grade  
Silver-Mr. Morris' Fourth Grade  
Gold-Ms. Keskel's Fifth Grade

Our school has read 467,905 minutes in all since October. Our goal is to read 1,000,000 minutes by the end of March.

Mrs. Lunsford, Ms. Mayes, and Mrs. Bush's third grade students are busy working on our writings for the writing contest. Each student is writing about what would happen inside his or her own snowglobe! The students are showing great creativity with this story!

The third grade is also working hard on multiplication and division. Students are using multiple strategies to solve problems and love sharing the different methods they use with the class! Students have demonstrated a great understanding of both concepts through the use of manipulatives. We have also used literature to work with these skills. The students especially loved the story "The Doorbell Rang", where they had to divide cookies into groups!

Dr. Helsley's 5<sup>th</sup> grade class has been learning about earth patterns, cycles and changes. We are investigating rock types, and how transformations of rocks occur. Students are also learning about the differences of weathering, erosion and deposition and how humans impact all of these areas.

Ms. Hensley, Mrs. Gerken, and Ms. Davis (a practicum student from Bridgewater College), introduced my fifth grade Language Arts students to domain scoring using anchor papers from the Pearson Perspective online training tool. The class discussed and completed activities on each of the three domains on which students are scored for their Writing SOL Test throughout the week leading up to our special class sessions with Mrs. Gerken. Then, in three groups with Mrs. Gerken, Ms. Davis, and I students used these criteria to highlight things that were done well and things that were not done well in the sample papers. Next, students assigned a score of 1 - 4 to the sample papers using a scoring sheet handout that I created. After that, students viewed the sample papers using the overlay feature on Pearson Perspective and discussed the actual score the papers were given and the reasons why the papers were assigned their real scores. This activity allowed students to understand how their papers will be scored and what areas they especially need to concentrate on when revising and editing their papers during their SOL Test in Writing. Students also really enjoyed evaluating other fifth graders' papers!

Dr. Helsley's 5th grade homeroom just received pen pal letters from a South Korean class. All students involved are very excited to be sharing information globally. Students will be learning cultural differences, writing differences and learning new ideas from each other.

We have finished tallying our Duke Dog Reading entries. As a school, we had 26% participation. Each student that participated will receive one ticket that admits 3 people to the JMU Women's Basketball games on Sunday, January 29th and Sunday February 26th. Each student attending either game will also receive a coupon for a free ice cream cone from Bruster's in Harrisonburg.

We had 2 classes with 100% participation. These 2 classes are Mr. Morris' class and Mrs. Wheelbarger's class. These 2 classes will receive special prizes from here at school and will receive an autographed JMU Women's Basketball poster for the classroom and each student in those classes will receive a free youth ticket to a select JMU Men's Basketball game.

Olympic Book It Reading Program: Shenandoah Elementary combined Pizza Hut's Book-It reading incentive with the upcoming summer Olympics to create a reading incentive program that has children counting each minute they read. Children are motivated to read by rewarding their reading accomplishments individually and as a classroom. Individual students may earn a pizza by meeting their individual reading goal. Classrooms may earn an Olympic medal competing with each grade level class..

To encourage greater *student participation*, Shenandoah Elementary School has former 1968 local Olympian, Tom Lough, supporting and encouraging this invaluable program.

**We have already read over half million minutes...Shenandoah Elementary** is proud of *our* Olympic BOOK-IT reading program!

### **Springfield Elementary School**

**VPI:** During December the four year olds worked hard on patterns. They colored candy canes with crayons to make a simple pattern. They taped red and green paper links together to make a patterned chain. They used big and little bells on pipe cleaners to make patterned jingle bell bracelets. They followed a pattern of green and red varied shaped beads to make Christmas tree wreathes. Every day they practice extending the pattern on the calendar. Besides patterns the class has also been busy learning to say, spell, and write their own names. The most exciting event in December was having a visit from Santa. Each child told Santa his/her name, had a picture taken on Santa's lap, and filled Santa in on their "wish" list. In cold January we introduced "W" to the class and are learning about the weather and winter things.

**Kindergarten:** Students have enjoyed learning about seasonal (winter) holidays (Hanukkah, Christmas, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, etc.) We had some wonderful parent involvement for our December craft/activity before Christmas. Parents came in to help distribute supplies and help children with the crafts. We have completed, or nearly completed our PALS assessments, and it has given us some really good feedback. Our students are doing better and have shown improvement in many areas. All students have enjoyed learning about their five senses. Each exploring taste, touch, smell, hearing, and sight.

**First Grade:** December was a short, but busy month for first graders. The students learned about communities, as well as how winter holidays are celebrated in other countries around the world. We also studied natural resources and how we can reduce, reuse and recycle to help our environment. Math skills that were introduced were graphing and place value. The children continue to use computation skills in addition and subtraction. Word Study, Literacy and Creative Writing are a part of our daily schedule. After an enjoyable winter break, everyone returned to school eager to begin a new year. We are beginning to study the second one hundred sight words. The students have all made considerable progress in literacy and word study. We are very proud of their success! They have been learning about Martin Luther King, Jr. and the contributions that he made for civil rights. We will continue to focus on other black Americans who have made a difference.

**Second Grade:** All students showed growth on AIMS web testing in reading and math and are reading on grade level. The 2nd grade and 5th grade were able to hear a very interesting presentation from a William and Mary College student who had spent a semester in Antarctica. She shared pictures and told about her trip. The students were very interested to hear about the penguins since we have finished reading Mr. Popper's Penguins as a class read aloud. The second grade class started off the month of December in math, learning about 2-digit addition with regrouping and finished the month with 2-digit subtraction with regrouping. This continued throughout the month of January. We finished up with an assessment of both skills and are starting our unit on money.

In Social Studies, the students wrapped up their unit on the Powhatan Indians and started their unit on the Sioux. The students watched a film about the Sioux and discussed the difference between the Powhatan and the Sioux ways of life.

In Science, the students finished up their unit on magnets. We started our unit on temperature. We did several experiments that required us to go to several places in the school building inside and out to read the temperature. The students had to write what they would do on different temperature days and draw pictures to

show this activity. The students presented this to their classmates. We are starting our unit on the states of matter.

During Literacy, the students read individualized reading books learning about different jobs, friendship, solving puzzles/mysteries with clues, cause and effect, classifying, weather and snow. Also, the students have been working on word study activities.

We finished up the month of December with many activities that required the students to follow several step directions. We made trees out of magazines and painted. We made tie-dyed snowflakes and the students wrote about a colorful blizzard. We also finished the month of December with our classroom winter party. We had several parent volunteers that attended and many parents sent in snacks to share. It was great to have this special social event. In January, we learned about Martin Luther King, Jr. and the students wrote stories about their dream for the future like Dr. King that is on display in the hallway. The students did a great job!

**Third Grade:** In Reading, third graders are doing quite well in their literacy groups. Students are reading fiction and nonfiction leveled books. We continue to complete Independent Reading Contracts. The students are working independently with their Reading Contract Folders, while the teacher is working with another group. The Reading Contract Folders include reading with a buddy, finding short/long vowel words in their book, character analysis, summarizing the book, and writing activities about the book. This has worked out very well and has kept the independent groups occupied with focus on reading skills pertaining to their book.

In Writing the students have been given different writing prompts to plan, write, revise, and publish. They are focusing on capitalization, spelling, and correct word usage. Their winter writing topic was titled, "What Would Life Be Like in a Snow Globe". After completing their writing the students made a snow globe and drew themselves inside.

In Math we are continuing to practice the multiplication facts 0-12 to keep them fresh in our brains. We have started fractions. The students are required to identify, name, and create models of fractions through tenths. We did an activity to find fractions of a group. We took Fruit Loops in groups of random amounts. The students were instructed to find what fraction was yellow, blue, red, green, and orange. In observing equivalent fractions, the students used fraction bars or fraction stacks to find which fractions were greater or equal to other fractions.

In Science the students investigated simple machines. They completed a lab in which they had to identify the simple machines in different objects. They created a compound lever using tongue depressors and brads. They also made a screw using paper shaped in an incline plane and wrapped it around a pencil. We are completing our matter unit. The students made oobleck and tried to determine if it is a solid or a liquid. They also completed a lab where they had to identify 10 mystery matters by their physical properties.

In Social studies the students are finishing their Rome Unit. They have learned about the government, architecture, and art. We made an arch and mosaic, along with sculpting a bust of ourselves.

**Fourth Grade:** Fourth grade math classes at Springfield have done very well with the concepts dealing with fractions over the last several weeks. We have enjoyed using fraction rods to show equivalent fractions as well as adding and subtracting fractions with like and unlike denominators. Students have been working in small groups to practice skills and also explain to each other how and why they got a certain solution to a problem. We continue to practice all of our math skills using the Math Madness workbooks and have turned it into a friendly classroom competition to motivate all to do their best and always show the proof for their answers. Students are always happy to use the computer programs Study Island and IXL to practice and reinforce their skills in Math.

Social Studies class has moved into the history of the Revolutionary War. Fourth graders were really excited to be talking about famous Virginians and their contributions to forming our nation. We have been expanding our knowledge from previous grade levels on people such as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. It's always a hit with the students to be able to read fun articles in our Virginia Weekly newspapers and do the activities that go with them. They also enjoy using the Virginia Trekkers online site to see pod casts from places

we are learning about around our state. Both classes continue to strive for perfect attendance and to stay eligible for weekly incentives for good behavior and work habits.

### **PRESENTS WITH A ( WRITING) PURPOSE**

Fourth graders were busy throughout the month of December creating literacy calendars for their families. Each month was represented by a different piece of original writing. The calendars provided opportunities for fourth graders to create narratives, rhymed, unrhymed, and patterned poetry, as well as practice other forms of writing. Students were able to organize and elaborate, purposefully shape and control the language used, polish elements of style, word choice, and sentence variation. Fourth graders became expert editors and effectively implemented subject/verb agreement, prepositional phrases, punctuation, and high frequency spelling corrections. The end result... a meaningful gift of personal and purposeful writing to share in 2012.

**Fifth Grade:** The 5th graders did an excellent job naming all the cell parts and their functions as part of the Jell-O cell activity, as well as finding the xylem in their celery sticks! All students were attentive and generated interesting questions during the guest speaker's presentation on research in Antarctica. During our study of angles, students did a wonderful job finding all the different angles in the letters of their name and describing the angles as obtuse, acute, straight, or right.

**Language Arts:** Recently, the 5th grade has been doing multiple tests to see how much they have improved since the beginning of the year. I was extremely happy to see that almost every student has improved in almost every aspect of their language skills. Some students were even able to move up to a different word study level. In addition, almost every student is reading on a higher level than they were at the beginning of the year. It is great to see that their hard work throughout the year is paying off!

**Social Studies:** Since the beginning of the year, we have started a new unit: Colonial America. In starting the new unit, the students are learning about the first colonies that were settled in the New World. In order to help them remember these colonies, I had the students make timeline chains. They used construction paper to make a chain. On each piece, they wrote the name of the colony, the date it was established, and why it was established. Then, we stapled the chains together, so that the students would remember the colonies in order! They were able to use these to study for their quizzes, on which they received excellent scores!

**Guidance:** During January, First through Fifth grades have had a guest presentation by Choices, Inc. Topics discussed include friendship, anger management, self-esteem, and accepting differences. Students have enjoyed the presentations and activities by Ms. Tina and Ms. Ebony. Thanks for sharing your time with us! Pre-K and Kindergarten classes have learned about responsibility and respect. These are big words for little people, but the students have grasped the concepts well. We have read a book about respect, watched a Clifford video on responsibility and done some wonderful coloring activities. Hearing, seeing and practicing respect and responsibility have brought these subjects alive for students and assisted in retention of skills.

**Library:** At Christmas we had readers to read to all classes and 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders ate latkes in honor of Hanukah. The 5<sup>th</sup> graders have worked on research from three sources: encyclopedia, nonfiction book, and website. They are researching an animal with its habitat, adaptations, and niche. The science teacher is having them type their final report during computer lab time. Fourth graders have used the encyclopedia to do research on an animal and have written sentences on Kidspiration about animals and their habitats. They also reviewed synonyms and antonyms. Third graders worked on identifying nouns, pronouns, and verbs. They also did research with encyclopedias of animals mentioned in Jan Brett books and have written a paragraph about a tall tale, Paula Bunyan, that was read to them. The second graders have answered questions about a Native American story. They've also played alphabetizing games. First graders have been drawing pictures and writing sentences about the story that was read to them. The kindergartners have been using describing words to identify Ten Dogs in the Window. They also wrote some words to go with pictures they had drawn. The 4-year-olds have been learning about what an author and illustrator do and what will happen next in the story.

**Mr. Hopkins and Ms. Bailey:** Our students continue to work toward achieving their individual goals. Each student continues to work on reading, writing complete sentences and paragraphs, and regrouping, as well as learning basic addition and subtraction facts. Additionally, our students are making progress on fluency and

reading for comprehension. They continue to improve in following the classroom procedures and expectations of the school day.

**Physical Education:** The goal of most individuals is to lead a healthy, happy life. Students are learning that fitness is a reward for leading an active life. As this New Year begins, students are setting personal goals. They have set goals for doing more exercises and have increased their running times for this New Year. Our common goal is to be more active everyday. Students are working hard to master their goals. Way to go students!!

**Music:** Our after school programs are going well. Patsy's Pans performed at the Mimslyn for a supper club back on December 20th and received a fifty dollar donation for their efforts. Everyone was so pleased with our new group. The choir is currently preparing for a competition trip in May. Regular classroom students have been playing all of our larger Orff Instruments and have particularly enjoyed the new gong. First grade students have been introduced to reading lyrics to music, as their reading skills from their regular classrooms have progressed. Second grade students have been introduced to their first wind instrument, the recorder.

### **Luray Middle School**

#### **Clubs:**

Campaigners for Christ continues to host prayer for those in need during our meeting times. We made sent ecards and home-made cards for those that were sick and which we had been asked to pray for. We have also been working on getting to know one another (as all grade levels have become involved) through games. Their favorite is Train Wreck.

The **Scrapbooking Club** has really created some beautiful memory books. The kids have learned about how important listening to family histories and preserving those stories in pictures really is.

**Mr. Shipp's Classes: Marathon Men**, our nine-week C.S.I. club, has ended. We spent the last four weeks learning about nutrients and new healthy foods. We concluded each small block with **WWE: Money in the Ring: Championship Push-ups**. Our winning group consisted of two young men who seemed to be able to do sets of 20 push-ups 'forever'!! So after the two "monsters" tired themselves out, they accepted other challengers. We found a new champion (or at least a powerful runner-up) the last week of Marathon Men. Our reigning champion was feeling under the weather that day- it happens.... So he lost the title. He has said several times that we need one more day of *Marathon Men* so that he can reclaim "*The World's Strong Man*" Push-Up Champion Title once again.

**FFA** worked on creating board games. Students selected a certain topic and made very creative board games. Some explored life on a pig farm, the adventures of a llama or alpaca as it escapes one farm to visit another, and even a beef farm from calving to the stockyard and beyond. Other groups worked on a game from the ignition to exhaust of a tractor, and one group worked on agricultural products in the different regions of Virginia. Board games will be used in club sessions as well as for the Food for America day with visiting fourth grade students. We're currently selling citrus fruit for delivery in March. See any club member to place an order.

**7<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts-** Mrs. Kelly's classes have recently created and played board games based on the novel The Westing Game, by Ellen Raskin. They had a great time playing each other's games.

FCCLA officers have begun preparations for the third annual Mister LMS beauty pageant which will be held March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the LMS auditorium.

Grade level information: **Algebra I** classes have been working hard on applying linear concepts to real world examples. We have also added on the task of learning about square roots, cube roots, and their relationships to exponents. Our next steps will involve exploring quadratic equations and comparing them to concepts already encountered over the past 9 weeks.

The **Pre-Algebra** class has been working on modeling integer operation and multi-step equation solving activities. They have utilized tiles and drawings to assist in visualizing the result of their math application. We have also included real-world word problems (discount, tax, tip, sales price, temperature changes, etc.) to ensure a solid application of the mathematical concepts.

In **language arts** we are in the midst of completing our Fairytale Unit. We are reading the original *Grimm's Brothers* and comparing them to the styles of tales from other countries, cultures, and time periods. We – all three classes- have almost completed our 50 units of *Reading Plus*. This is the seventh grade computer-driven reading comprehension program. We have enjoyed the rewards, as well as the growth. But moving on a new reading comprehension tool will be welcomed also.

**Core Plus** students are hard at work focusing on the composing component of the writing SOL test using strategies for planning to ease the drafting process. English 8 students reviewed for the Reading SOL test during the month of January and successfully demonstrated mastery of the skills.

**Humanities** students demonstrated proficiency in writing persuasive essays by writing essays for the Martin Luther King, JR essay contest.

**8th grade science** students applied the knowledge they gained about Newton's Laws of Motion when they built cars that could protect an egg in a front end collision. Some of the eggs were so protected they withstood a fall from a third story window.

The **6<sup>th</sup> math** kids have had a great time finding the center of balance using manipulatives. Every sixth grade student got to enjoy ice cream when we reached a goal for attendance. My CSI had to be kind to someone and share for MLK day. The response was very encouraging and uplifting. Nancy Jett

**Sixth grade Science** worked on learning lots about elements. Also, we had a great time observing and making predictions of the upcoming weather conditions. Students were surprised with the various ways to predict the weather including red skies in the morning or evening and noting patterns with animals behavior. Students also completed some great solar system writings of fictitious journeys to their favorite planet or planetary moon. They were a great combination of scientific fact with required literary components of fact, opinion, and figurative language.

My **Core Plus** students really enjoy interactive smart board lessons. They are more engaged in the learning process using this technology.

#### **Family and Consumer Science:**

Sixth grade classes have been learning about basic sewing tools and the correct usage of each. They have also been practicing sewing buttons and hemming stitches.

Seventh grade classes have been learning about choosing major and small appliances to match their needs, as well as to compare the price, features, warranty, and energy efficiency of appliances. Students have also learned about meal service, table setting, and table manners.

Eighth grade classes have been learning about the basic ingredients and steps in preparing quick breads. They have been enjoying preparing waffles, biscuits, popovers, and blueberry muffins. They really enjoy sampling their "creations".

#### **Page County Middle School**

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade:** 6th Grade knocked it out of the park preparing for the Social Studies SOL test. The science projects are finished - 6th graders embraced the assignment and did a great job. Behavior is improving across the board - the number of infractions is noticeably less.

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade:** 7th Grade Social Studies finished WWII timelines and gained a better understanding of that time period. They are also gearing up for their SOL. 7th Grade Science is wrapping up the semester. Mrs. Stockwell from JMU came and visited the students and taught them about bacteria. They had fun conducting experiments on their own DNA. 7th Grade English students are working on creating their very own dragon after reading the story "The Smallest Dragonboy". They also learned conflict resolution skills and valuable lessons about bullying through this story.

Mrs. Marcey's 7<sup>th</sup> grade English students have gone to court to prove they are right! While studying the organizational patterns that authors use in their writings, students were divided into "law firms" and assigned writing samples to defend in "court." Each sample used a different pattern. In order to win their case, law firms had to provide more than one piece of evidence for each sample. Another law firm acted as the prosecution and tried to prove the defense wrong, even if they were correct in their answer. A jury of their peers decided which side won the case (had the most convincing arguments); however, "Judge" Marcey decided which answer was correct. This project taught students to carefully evaluate and explain their work while putting them into a "real-life" scenario.

**8th Grade:** In the Computer Applications Classes students have mastered basic Microsoft Excel skills by learning how to produce a spreadsheet & illustrating their data with charts and tables. Students are currently working on a career unit which involves filling out a job application, conducting a career search, developing a resume, demonstrating interview techniques, and developing an application letter. Students have created an account on vawizard.org that gives them access to career/school searches, assessment surveys on values, interests, and skills, resume builder, and other useful information they will have access to during their secondary & postsecondary education.

**Mr. Mercer's Advisory:** Students collected items for the local nursing homes for Christmas. They were delivered before Christmas. Items that were collected and delivered were as follows: shampoo, sugar free candy, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, lotion, deodorant, baby powder, baby wipes, tissues, footie socks and finger nail clippers.

**PCMS Music Department:** Congratulations to the PCMS Music Department for an immensely successful Winter Concert! Great Job to Autumn Wild who will be representing Page County Middle School and the Music Department at the District Band event on February 4th!

**Art:** The 8th grade Art classes are painting ceiling tiles as a project to beautify the school. They are turning out wonderful!!!

**Library:** The most popular books at this time are: Skeleton Creek, Diary of a Wimpy Kid, Ways to Live Forever, The Strange Case of Origami Yoda and Chasing Lincoln's Killer. Students are also rushing to read 4 of the Virginia Readers' Choice books by the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

### **Luray High School**

**Ag Dept-**The Luray FFA Chapter sold over 700 cases of fruit for their annual fund drive. Members of the chapter planted trees and shrubs at White House Farms to establish a riparian buffer zone at one of their farm ponds. The FFA is planning to have a winter fruit sales drive beginning January 9<sup>th</sup> and ending February 24<sup>th</sup>. Valencia oranges, honey tangerines, and grapefruit are the three varieties in season. Strawberries are also being sold at this time.

The FFA placed second for the best civic float during the Town of Luray's annual Christmas parade. The chapter is also gearing up for several upcoming competitions to be held in February, horse hippo logy at Virginia Tech and the Skyline Stockmen's contest in Front Royal.

In early December, members of the FFA chapter planted trees and shrubs at White House Farms for a riparian buffer zone project. Members included Jessica Wittich, Dustin Nauman, Casey Burner, Zach Sabau, Tevin Bundy, Ben Jenkins, and Joe Carvel.

**Campaigners For Christ-**The Campaigners club put on a successful play Dec. 9 and 10 "A Cricket County City Christmas" to both the entire high School on Friday, and about 100 members of the public on Saturday.

At the Dec. 20 meeting members signed and had delivered Christmas Cards to Montvue nursing home for the residents.

### **Page County High School**

On Tuesday, November 29, a student art show titled "From Here to There" was hosted in the library. Light refreshments were served as guests browsed work by Alysia Rodgers, Wes Gray, Erin Wells, and Daniel Garcia.

Fifteen current students were honored on Monday, December 12 during the Page County School Board's recognition of students with perfect SOL scores (600). Student's received a certificate for their accomplishment.

Approximately 30 senior students and parents attended a Financial Aid Workshop held in the Auditorium on Wednesday, December 14. Participants learned information about the FAFSA form, state aid programs, and how to best research scholarship opportunities.

During the week of December 12th a pet drive for the Page County animal shelter collected 242 lbs. of dog and cat food, numerous cleaning supplies, blankets, toys and \$65 for the animals at the SPCA.

Congratulations to P.C.H.S band for their first place finish during the Stanley Christmas parade. The group received a check for a \$150 in honor of this award.

SOL Success! PCHS students received seven perfect scores during the fall semester round of testing.

Congratulations to P.C.H.S essay winners who placed in this year's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration: 1st place - Natalie Carroll; 2nd place - Grace Ott; 3rd place - Lina Garcia

### **Page County Technical Center**

**Cosmetology:** Students had an OPI Acrylic Nail class from an educator that traveled from Virginia Beach to PCTC on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Second year students had two Regis/Smart Style Recruiters present an employment workshop at PCTC on January 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Practical Nursing:** PNI students participated in a county wide disaster drill at PMH on November 16<sup>th</sup>. County wide EMS providers and hospital staff were involved with this drill. The students served in several roles as patients, family members, reporters, etc. Erika Rucker, LPN Program Director, was recognized in the newest edition of Lippincott, Williams, and Wilkins – "Textbook of Basic Nursing" for her review and input of this textbook.

**Health Assistant:** First year students will begin clinical rotation at Montvue Health Care Center on January 31. Second year students are working toward participating in clinicals at Whispering Pines.

**Auto Technology:** Students took a field trip to the Auto Show in Washington, DC on January 27<sup>th</sup>. They got the chance to see European Imports from Fiat to Ferrari, Japanese Imports as well as many others. Third year students repaired an automatic transmission in a Suzuki Forenza that the dealer had previously diagnosed as needing a transmission replacement.

**Electricity:** Congratulations are in order for Derek Breeden who placed 4<sup>th</sup> at District X Residential Wiring Competition held at Fauquier County High School on January 27<sup>th</sup> and hosted by IBEW Local 26. 16 students competed, and the three hour competition, which included a written test on the National Electrical Code and Electrical Calculations was by no means a simple undertaking. We are proud of Derek. Students are gearing-up to begin wiring Habitat Projects 20 and 21 this week. Students have toured the jobsite, completed the planning process and will begin installation February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Students are also planning to participate in a Green Building retrofit/renovation project at White House Farm. Students have toured the facility and are in the process of evaluating how a Green project looks in the context of historical preservation.

First year students have successfully split water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen and used the resultant electrical charge to power two small motors that are part of our new Alternative Energy Resources trainer.

Students used a low voltage transformer to create the process and will now proceed using a PV panel, a wind turbine, and a combination of the two to create the initial electrical charge required for hydrolysis.

We are working on acquiring sizeable grants with the goal of making Green improvement to our schools and educating a new generation of technicians for building the future. Mr. Sattva attended the United States Green Building Council's inaugural conference on the subject of Green Building Practices for Schools and is using the information he gleaned there to help students design a Green School that students will implement themselves.

**Packet (Alt. Ed.):** December proved to be a fast and very busy month with our Course Recovery Program. Our students were involved with preparing and wrapping gifts for four Angel Tree students. It is such a delight to be able to give back to others. We also did a Christmas luncheon together as a class with four parents bringing in food items for us to share together. Our students have also continued to participate in "Book Buddies" with Lori Ferrell's Head Start Program. Our class also made 3-dimensional snowflakes to share with each Head Start student for Christmas. This has been such a positive interaction for each group of students. Several of our students also continue to assist with Kim Matteson's class. We have been busy reviewing and testing for SOL's. Two of our seniors tested and passed SOL's, thus completing their SOL requirements in order to graduate this year. One of these seniors has completed all classes this semester and is now set for graduation! We wish her every success! In addition to these students testing for SOL's, four other students have taken five SOLs and successfully passed each of these! We are so proud of all our students and their diligent work. With the beginning of second semester, we welcome four new students to our ranks; at the same time, we wish three students success as they return to their home high schools after completing required courses allowing them to be on track in their academic careers! We will miss them and wish them well!

**PREK** - We had fantastic family support for Christmas Cookies w/Santa. Literacy groups are working very well. All EC staff have received clearance to work with Head Start. We've incorporated a mini-library in the unchroom. The PreK kids love Mr. Lynn.