Mattole Valley Charter School

Newsletter

To Share and Celebrate our Vision

February/March 2008

Greetings,

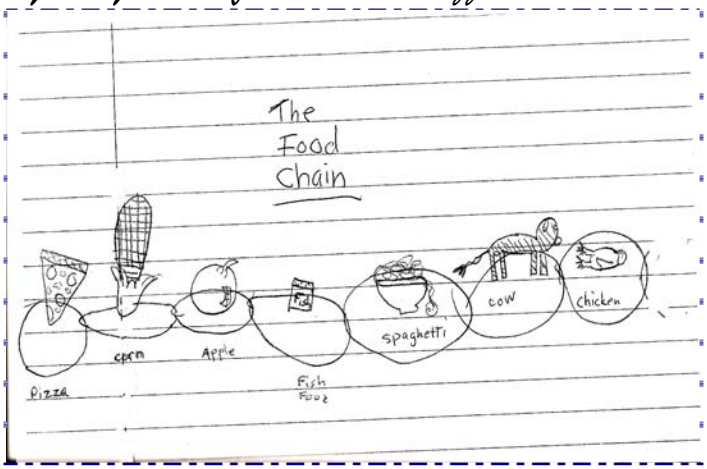
Hope you all had Good holidays and Presidents' Week. Here it is almost Easter, and Daylight Savings Time starts March 9th! Sorry to get this out late. I was waiting for a couple of things that never came in, but there's some great news in this edition, so I hope you enjoy it. With Easter so early we're in for a long haul the last two and a half months of school. Everybody hang in there!

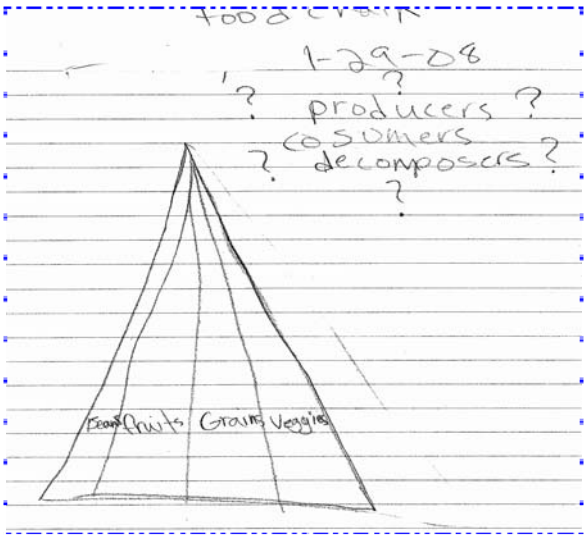
Southern Humboldt News

In January, Siena Klein's older students visited the Caltrans construction site at Confusion Hill in Leggett. They were treated to a tour by the head engineer since our science teacher, Tom Grover, was a friend of his. They learned much about the construction, materials and environmental considerations about this huge project.

Funnies

Some third and fourth grade students recently completed a science unit on ecosystems and food chains. As an entry level assessment they were asked to explain what a food chain is. Here are two cute responses .Please note that the beginning on the food chain is Pizza!



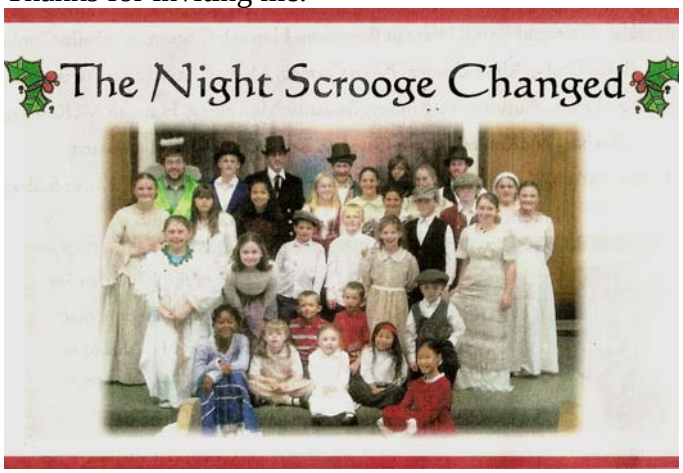


Star Students

We all know we have some talented kids at MVCS. Mary Goodrow had 11 students performing this holiday season. In the Messiah Choral Arts Academy there were Autumn, Gracie, Mistea, and Rebekah Cardelli, and Jakob and Zoey Clark performing "Christmas Fantasia."

Autumn, Bethany, Hannah, and Rachel McKinney, and Crystal Spinas performed in an original version of the holiday classic, "The Night Scrooge Changed."

I attended one of the performances of "Scrooge" and really enjoyed myself. The singing was great, and it really helped to get me into the holiday spirit. Thanks for inviting me.



Mattole Valley Charter School
Math Center Classes
Algebra 1
Introduces algebraic concepts; emphasizes the theory and application of variables, graphing, linear equation and inequalities and quadratics: solving problems using quadratic equations, calculators and computers.
Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 am - 10:30 am
Algebra 1 - 1st Semester Material - ONLINE COURSE
Tuesday & Thursday 10:30-11:30 am
Pre-registration is required
Instructor: Teresa Creech, email: tlcreech@sbcglobal.net
Open Math Labs
Your student can attend our Math Lab at no additional cost to you or your student accounts. Our highly skilled tutors staff all Open Math Labs. We host several computer stations with the most up-to-date software for practice as well as concept retention and introduction. Our lab is stocked with manipulatives as well as some of the most qualified staff in the Pacific Northwest region.

Our schedule is on a 'drop in' basis, so there is no need to pre-register for a class or feel required to attend a certain day at a certain time for weeks at a time. Most Open Labs are simply that: a time where you or your student (that's right, teachers, parents and students are welcome) can come to get help with a concept or just explore another mathematical subject prior to teaching your student. Beginning in November we will offer a Friday afternoon Open Lab with an Elementary level Mathematics focus. Come on by and check us out!
Open Lab Schedule:
Monday & Wednesdays 3:00 - 5:00 pm
Friday 9:00 am - 12:00 - Middle School Mathematics Focus
Friday 12:00 - 2:00 pm - Elementary Mathematics Focus
Friday 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm - Open Lab

So who's that new kid on the right?

Well, it's not a student, though she looks pretty young in this picture. That's Erin Roseberry, one of our newer ESs. Erin's learning center, The Rays, finally found a good home in Fortuna at the same site with Jodie Bechtel's Willowbrook and Julie Smith's River Valley Learning Centers. Good luck Erin!

Here's RST, Nancy Tout working with a student at Willowbrook.

Willowbrook Celebrates Pajama Day!

Jodie Bechtel and some students pose for a photo, during the annual Pajama Day. It was a relaxing and fun day from the looks of things. High school student aide, Mitchell Plants also has a casual pose with Willowbrook students.(below)

4 Simple Rules

Winter can be such a good time for reflection, and to change course with projects that aren't going as well as you'd hoped by mid-year. It is also a great opportunity to make plans for next year.

Cultural Anthropologist Angeles Arrien says there are only four rules in life:

1. Show up
2. Pay attention
3. Tell the truth
4. Don't be attached to the results.

Incorporating thinking skills into curriculums in an era of standardized tests is a challenge, but teachers across the country are making reasoning abilities a priority. In this information economy, many educators argue these skills will be more vital than ever.

Art for all times!
Students in Cathy Wright's High School art classes experienced both traditional and high tech techniques as they entered into the digital age with a visit from Debbi Sholes who introduced students to drawing and editing with a digital stylus and Adobe Photoshop and Correl Software. Kids had a lot of fun changing each others' faces.

Calendar:

WASC: Accreditation Committee Visit
March 30th through April 2nd.
March 30th Welcome Reception 3 PM @Sonoma St
March 31st Committee visits sites in Northern and Southern Humboldt
April 1st Meetings with Staff & Students
April 2nd Final Meetings and Findings
Contact Gwen or Jennifer if you need specific details about what your role is in the accreditation process.

ES meetings:

Humboldt – March 14 @ Sonoma St. 1:00PM
Siskiyou – March 14 @Yreka 10:00AM

Testing:

CAHSEE 3/11 (L/A) 3/12 (Math)
Contact Lynda Speck to set up times for your students at the Sonoma St. Site.
If any of your 10th grade students missed the CAHSEE in February, it is mandatory that they take the test 3/11 and 3/12.

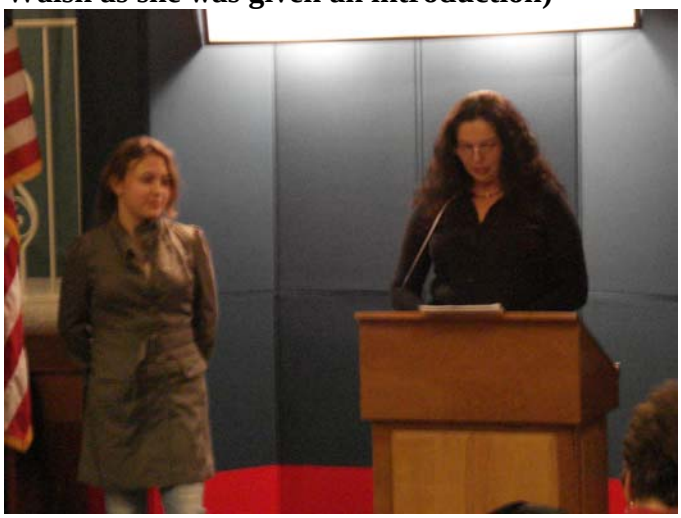
Calendar Continued:

Testing: April 22 – May 16th STAR test Window
CAHSEE May 6th and 7th
NWEA tests May 1st through June 12th.

Rising Star Awards

I had the extreme pleasure of attending Humboldt County Office of Education Rising Star Foundation's First annual awards banquet which recognized and honored the county's top students.

Every student there was amazing, with exceptional academic achievements and leadership and community involvement, but none more so than our own Essene Lily Waters. (Lily is pictured below with Counselor Shakati Walsh as she was given an introduction)



Lily has been attending college classes as part of her high school curriculum since she was a freshman, and will start college next fall as a junior. She has a GPA of 4.6, plays the cello in local orchestras, and represented California in the National Junior Olympics in the sport of fencing. Lily excels in academics because she truly loves the pursuit of knowledge; one of her goals is to become a research chemist. Lily also stands out to me as being a truly nice person who happens to be a lovely and smart young woman. It has been my pleasure to get to know her a little bit.

The following is an excerpt from

Thinking Is Literacy, Literacy Thinking

byTerry Roberts and Laura Billings

Growing Lifelong Thinkers

As Francis Bacon wrote more than 400 years ago, "Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man." Each stage in the literacy cycle involves thinking about a system in a different way, and all the stages are joined in synergy; it's not enough just to read about an interesting idea, or to discuss it informally, or to write about it without preparation. Rather, to teach students to think in a consistent and deliberate way, we have to practice thinking in concert with the full range of literacy skills—probably in the order that Bacon himself prescribed.

There remains, of course, the challenge of assessing student thought so that we can measure it as it matures. In teaching thinking as a function of literacy, we assess the process as well as the product, collaborating with students to identify their strengths and weaknesses as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners so that we can continue coaching those skills through successive cycles. In addition, we assess the product of thought in a way that teaches thinking, meaning that we evaluate student writing at the end of the cycle through rubrics that define what clarity, flexibility, and coherence look like in written form. Finally, we take into account the increasing complexity of the systems that students are asked to think about, so that we can show them how to address larger and more intellectually demanding concepts over time.

Our experience has convinced us that thinking can be defined, taught, and assessed. More important, creative and coherent thought is an attribute of a life-long learner. By teaching students to think, we prepare them not only for employment and citizenship, but also for leading abundant lives.

When we require our students to simply regurgitate memorized facts on standardized exams, we build analytic test-taking expertise, writes Robert J. Sternberg, a Tufts University psychology professor. Assessing students for creativity and practicality in addition to analytical skills gives a more complete picture of student abilities and more accurately predicts academic success in college.

(Anybody who's interested in reading the full article, which gives a description and details of how to put these ideas into lessons, let me know and I'll email it to you. Cathy)