

GMS TIGER TIMES

January 2014

Volume 2, Issue 2

Julie Green, Editor

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Math & Literacy Carnival — February 19
- Family Night at the Monarchs— February 23
- Bingo Night — March 14
- Mother Son Movie Night in April
- Spring Concert — April 23-24
- Grandparent & Special Friend Day — April 25

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WE LOVE A CHALLENGE SCOTT THOMPSON, PRINCIPAL

In his book, *Strength to Love*, Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

Today I set out to write an article for Tiger Times about all the ways our students choose to challenge themselves. This quotation seemed relevant for two reasons. First of all, it was only this past Monday that we celebrated Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and remembered his important work around the issues of civil rights and social justice. Secondly, I believe that there is a direct connection between the habit of not only accepting, but seeking out challenges at a young age, and the adult inclination to grapple with and resolve difficult issues, the kind of challenge that Martin Luther King was talking about.

Our students love a challenge. Last year our student council came up with the idea of having a school spelling bee. They knew it would be

difficult to stand in front of their peers and try to conjure the spelling of words like *ferocious*, but they wanted to do it. This year, one of the first orders of business for the new student council was to have a 'math bee.' For many years, our fourth graders have elected to participate in Tournament of Readers, another voluntary activity involving extensive extra reading with live team contests centered on the content of the reading. Nearly a third of our 3rd and 4th graders come to school early every Wednesday to be in the school chorus. The PTO is currently sponsoring six Destination Imagination teams in order to help meet the demand. The Chess Club meets during recess time, and when one walks into a chess match, the focus and intensity are immediately apparent. This spring, the PTO will begin Lego Club to involve more students in an activity which is fun and engaging, but requires at the same time perseverance, concentration, and problem solving skills.



Scott Thompson

Our students are already applying their love of challenges to addressing social issues. In the past year, our students have engaged in activities to support:

- The Litchfield Food Pantry
- The Angel Giving Tree Program
- Marguerite's Place – transitional housing for women and children
- Public recognitions of MLK Day, Veteran's Day, Earth Day
- One Fund Boston
- The Muscular Dystrophy Association
- The American Cancer Society
- Relay for Life
- Cards for patients at the VA Medical Center

GMS students say, "Bring Us a Challenge!" and then rise to the opportunity to help out. We commend their generosity, their dedication and commitment.

Find us ONLINE at: [www.http://gms.litchfieldsd.org/](http://gms.litchfieldsd.org/)

NOTES FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

CONNIE FARO, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

The winter cold is upon us – one of the coldest winters in several years the weather people tell us! It doesn't matter to GMS students – they work hard no matter what, and they do enjoy indoor recess as well!

I had the opportunity to attend a workshop on behavior management for elementary students and would like to share with you some ideas presented. Sometimes your child may become upset with or angry about something that happened. Rather than confront him/her, here are some statements that you might say that would have a calming effect.

- ***“I know this is a difficult time for you right now. Hang in there.”***
- ***“I understand how you feel. I would be upset too.”***
- ***“Do you need to be alone for a while?” This gives the child some time to calm down before dealing with the issue.***

Our fourth grade student council held elections for officers for the 2013 -14 school year on Thursday, January 23, 2014 during their lunch meeting. Prior to the elections the members submitted to Ms. Faro and Mr. Thompson a letter explaining his/her intention to

run for an office and why s/he would make a good officer. Our student council officers this year are:

President – Brendan Boschi

Vice-President –
Brooke Stoncius

Secretary – Emily Neily

Treasurer – Trevor Carty

Congratulations to them – they will do a terrific job as we plan events for this year. Some upcoming events they are planning are a math Olympics for fourth graders in the spring and coming soon they will be selling “Griffy” sweatshirts to warm us up during this very cold winter.

Nurse *Notes*

SUSAN G. SEABROOK, RNBS

I would like to inform parents of the alert from the State of New Hampshire regarding the increase in Norovirus in NH.

Please record on the absentee line if your child had had high fevers, vomiting or diarrhea as well as strep or other contagious diseases. I track certain symptoms anonymously on the NH State influenza survey. Also please

remember to keep students home until symptom free for 24 hours and please send personal water bottles for your students.

Vision screening has been completed by the Lion's Club and I am rescreening referrals to assure the results prior to referrals. If your child has had a recent eye exam, please send the report to me to enter in their health record.



As always, our playground can be windy and children should be appropriately dressed each day. If temperatures permit, our students enjoy outdoor recess and they should be warmly dressed.

Thank you and call me with any questions.

Please read article regarding increase in Norovirus in NH.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/818783>

FUNGO BRINGS FUN TO THE STUDENTS OF GMS

CHRISTINE TATE, GMS READING SPECIALIST

GMS students were lucky to have Fungo from the Fisher Cats visit December 13th to kick off the Fisher Cats Reading Program. Every student who reads 5 books outside the curriculum earns two free tickets to a Fisher Cat's game!



Students simply fill out the card they were given and mail it on or before March 14, 2014 to:

**READING CHALLENGE,
1 Line Drive,
Manchester, NH 03101**

GUIDANCE PERSPECTIVES

JOCELYN ROBINSON, SCHOOL COUNSELOR
TARI SELIG, SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST
AUDREY WILLIS, SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST INTERN

Welcome to the Guidance Department at GMS. Now that the holiday rush is over and as a new year starts, it's a great time to remember how important spending time with your family is. One way to spend quality time together is to remember how valuable family conversations at the dinner table can be. It is important to have family time where each family member is feeling connected and valued. Try to mix-up the conversation topics so that you are not just focusing on the mundane (what time is basketball practice tomorrow evening, coordinating plans) and open up the conversation.

Here are some helpful hints:

- **Turn-off all electronics – TV's, iPods, iPhones, etc.**
 - ◊ Parents need to model good behavior and show that this time is valuable and important by putting away their phones and not answering the phone during dinner.
- **Slow down and really listen to what your children are saying to you.**
 - ◊ Ask clarifying questions
 - ◊ Occasionally re-state what your child says so it shows them they are listening and understanding
- **Be creative with your questions –**
 - ◊ What was the best part of the day?
 - ◊ Were you creative at any point today?
 - ◊ If you could be a superhero, what superpowers would you have?
 - ◊ If you were a parent for a day, what would you do? If you were a child for a day, what would you do?
 - ◊ What character in a book most describes you?
 - ◊ What are the qualities that make a good friend?
- **Be specific with your questions –**
 - ◊ Tell me about what you are doing in science at the moment.
 - ◊ What was the hardest math problem you did today?



- **Start with the positive and accomplishments**
 - ◊ Tell me the best thing that happened in class today.
 - ◊ Tell me the funniest thing you saw today.
 - ◊ Tell me about something that was hard for you and how you were able to work out the problem.
- **Bring up the past – talk about and relate what is happening now to your children's grandparents. Use family stories.**
- **Talk about your own problems or difficulties (in an age appropriate manner) – talk through how you solve problems as a model for your children.**
- **HAVE FUN! Meal time should be enjoyable. If it has been a long day and everyone is stressed – keep the conversation light. Have a 'fun' meal – have a picnic on the floor complete with blankets on the ground and plastic ware.**

4th GRADE

FOURTH GRADE TEAM

Second quarter is almost done here in 4th grade! Each class is hard at work exploring new topics and participating in fun, educational programs.

The fourth graders enjoyed their recent fieldtrip to Concord. We visited the State House and the New Hampshire History Museum. At the state house we sat in the oldest legislative meeting hall in the USA. Here our representatives make important decisions about NH laws. While we were there they were changing the old voting system and putting in new, high-tech voting boxes and score boards. It was real neat to see that! Some students then met the new governor, Maggie Hassan. She was in the middle of an important meeting with her executive council, but she interrupted it to meet us! The NH History Museum was also exciting. We sat in a wigwam and felt animal pelts, saw a real Concord Coach, and explored an old fashioned store. We learned so much!

In math the fourth graders will soon begin learning long multiplication and division. Please encourage your child to practice their multiplication and division facts at home to make this process easier. Some students have been using Xtra Math at school. This is a free, online program to practice math facts. Please encourage your child to use this program at home as well.

The Tournament of Readers Program is well underway. We are so proud of the Tournament of Readers participants for giving their time to read and compete in the program. Reading these books will also count for reading books toward the New Hampshire Fishercats Reading Challenge. If the students read five books, they can earn two free tickets to a Fishercats baseball game. They will get to go on the field and hang out with the mascot, Fungo!



The Granite State Fit Kids program has begun! This is a seven week program designed by a Nashua doctor to teach the students about how their body works as well as about being healthy and making healthy choices. Each week the students will engage in hands-on activities to help learn and motivate. Each student will keep a log of the daily exercise they do. We hope the program motivates our students to be active and make healthy choices throughout the entire year.

Finally, we would like to thank all the parents. We appreciate all you do in our partnership to make 4th grade a successful year for your child!

Donations: tissues, disinfectant wipes, non-perishable snacks, pencils, pencil top erasers

2nd GRADE

SECOND GRADE TEAM

In math, the second grade classes have been busy working on place value and addition of larger numbers using mental math and regrouping. Thank you to our parents for their continued support in helping our students master the addition and subtraction facts to 20. Our second graders are expected to answer each fact in three seconds or less! Please remember to work on this as part of homework each night.

In Language Arts, we are increasing our reading fluency and accuracy through daily practice. Remember it is a great idea to read aloud to your child to model appropriate reading

speed, as well as good expression. We are also working hard to write our own opinion pieces using appropriate written expression and writing mechanics.

Our students enjoyed learning about several Native American tribes from across the different regions of the United States during our Thanksgiving Social Studies unit. Our "Holidays Around the World" tour was a success! We enjoyed stories, crafts, and facts about the holiday traditions of China, Japan, Mexico, France, and Sweden.

In Science, we learned about plants. Two non-fiction stories in our reading

books, "The Secret Lives of Trees" and "From Seed to Plant", helped us learn about plants as living things and the resources we use that come from plants.



We would like to remind our students to wear appropriate snow gear at recess this winter season. Please label your child's snow pants and other items, which hang in the hallway and could get confused with a classmate's.

Lastly, if you would like to donate tissues or cleaning wipes to your child's classroom, it is greatly appreciated!

3rd GRADE

THIRD GRADE TEAM

The third grade students have been having a lot of fun learning about multiplication. Please keep working with your child at home to help them master the multiplication facts. You can play games together or have them practice their facts on the computer, as well as use flash cards to work on mastery. The classes are now beginning to explore division. The students are learning that division can be used to find the number of groups or the number in each group. We are using models to understand the

process, as well as seeing how we can use multiplication facts to solve division problems.



Upcoming reading stories will be focusing on "storytelling." We will be reading folk tales and fables, many of which come from other cultures. Lessons will focus on skills such as compare and contrast, summarizing, and author's purpose.

Our social studies theme for the third quarter will be westward expansion on

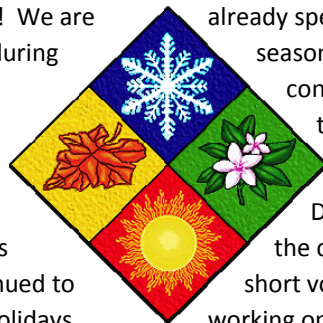
The Oregon Trail. We will look at why the pioneers moved west and the many difficulties they faced along the way. Science lessons will focus on geology. We will learn about the layers of the earth, and things that can cause slow and fast changes to earth's crust. The students will also learn how to identify rocks and minerals. Third grade is the place to be for a great deal of exciting learning!

1st GRADE

FIRST GRADE TEAM

All of our first graders continue to work hard each day! We are very proud of them! Our math classes are an exciting place to be. Each day, we practice our addition math facts. The children are beginning to learn their subtraction math facts too! We are using our Cuisenaire rods during many of our math lessons. The children are also enjoying their new Math Journals!

During our Social Studies lessons, the children continued to learn about the different holidays celebrated throughout the year. In November, we read many books about the first Thanksgiving. During December, the children studied the holidays of Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa. We recently spent some time reading all about Martin Luther King, Jr.



In Science, we have been working on our living and non-living unit. The children have been busy classifying the different pictures into the correct categories. We are also learning all about the four seasons. We have already spent time learning about the seasons of fall and winter. We will continue to learn more about the four seasons as the school year continues.

During our reading lessons, the children have learned all the short vowel sounds and are now working on the long vowel sounds. We continue to work on word families with each new story. Everyone enjoys our making words activities. Many interesting stories have been read during the past few months. Both Fantasy and Non-fiction stories seem to be favorite ones for a lot of our first graders. Don't forget the GMS Reading Team's motto: The more you read for fun, the better reader you become!

The Book Fair and the Holiday Store were both a big success. The children enjoyed the variety of books at the book fair and the many gift choices offered at the Holiday Store. Assemblies were plentiful in the past few months. We all enjoyed the Veteran's Day Assembly and the Holiday Concert. Next month, local author Marty Kelley will be visiting the first graders. Everyone is so excited about the upcoming Winter Carnival. Come and visit our classrooms on February 19th to learn some fun reading and math games. Mark this date on your calendar for an exciting night of fun activities!

The first grade team would like to thank the parents for the time they spent attending the November parent conferences. We would also like to thank all the families who have generously donated classroom supplies throughout the school year. They are very much appreciated!



KINDERGARTEN TEAM

In math, we have been working on writing our numbers as well as counting to one hundred. We are exploring a unit on shapes. We are learning about both flat and solid shapes. We will be starting to work on addition (N+1, N+10 and ways to make 10). We will be using our Cuisenaire Rods (colored rods that correspond to numbers 1-10) to help us learn our addition facts.

In reading, the students have worked hard to associate each letter with their sounds. We are working on using sounds out to write simple words. Please remember to read each night with your child!

Home/School Connections:

Mrs. Adamakos and Mrs. Sweetser are very excited to teach some

great math and reading games at the Winter Carnival on February 19th (snow date February 20th).

Home/School Challenge:

See if you can list five words that start with each letter of the alphabet. (Example, A – apple, alligator, B – ball, bat and boy.)

LIBRARY NEWS

MELINA PREVEL-TURMEL, LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALIST

And the winner for the 2013 New Hampshire Ladybug Picture Book is Little Dog Lost by Monica Carnesi. This book won by a landslide in the state as well as in our school for the preschool through third grade students who can vote for this award. Fourth graders still have time to read the New Hampshire Great Stone Face Nominees to vote in April for their favorite.

The kindergarten classes have been listening to stories of how animals prepare for and survive the winter. These stories coincide with the themes that are being studied in the classroom.

The first grade classes have been introduced to the wonders of nonfiction literature. The students in these classes have been listening to various nonfiction selections while learning about red-eyed tree frogs, polar bears, whales and penguins and how to use a table of contents. We have also been comparing fiction and nonfiction books.

Our second grade classes have been focusing on alphabetical order so that they can become more independent with finding books in the Everyone and Fiction sections of the library. This skill will also help them with looking up words in a dictionary and will help them with our encyclopedia unit.



The third and fourth graders at GMS have been focusing a great deal on the nonfiction section of the library. All of the classes have been learning about the Dewey Decimal System of Classification.

Thank you to all of the people who volunteered to help out during the book fair. Some people worked more than one shift to make it happen! It is much appreciated! This fundraiser

brought in slightly more than \$2,000 for the library to use to purchase materials and equipment for the students, parents and staff to use.

Please help your child to remember his or her library book by looking at the school calendar to see which days there are library specials. If the book is placed in the backpack the night before, then the book will be returned on time and he or she will be able to check out a new book. Even if a child wants to renew a book, it needs to be brought into the library to do so. Thank you for your assistance!

You can look up books with your child in advance to help him/her make good book choices during library time.

The web site address is

<http://library.litchfieldsd.org>.

You might even find a book that you are interested in reading as a parent. Feel free to e-mail me with a request, and I can send the book home with your child or it can be picked up at the front office.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION NEW YEAR = NEW OPPORTUNITIES

KERRI SULLIVAN, PTO PRESIDENT

What a great first half of the school year we have had so far at GMS. The PTO has been busy bringing exciting programs and activities to the students and staff. As we look to the second half of the year the PTO has a huge favor to ask of you: Sometime in the next few months, set an hour or two aside to help GMS out. Watch for the PTO Parent Updates each month to see the opportunities there are to be a part of the fun!

At the end of 2013, the PTO expressed our thanks to faculty and staff at GMS with Holiday Cheer. Everyone was given a Barnes & Noble gift card to enjoy during Winter break along with a note thanking them for helping our students learn and grow. The thank you notes we received truly expressed how grateful they are for everything we do throughout the year.

Our "Shop with Scrip" program was a huge success as well. Families purchased gift cards to places they shop frequently through Shop with Scrip and a percentage will go directly to GMS. The school made a little over \$650 in a few

short weeks. This is an ongoing program and people are encouraged to continue purchasing the cards to use for places like CVS, Walmart, and Target. A little planning can make for a great donation to your students. Check out the website at www.Shopwithscrip.com or contact Tiffeny Mackinnon for ordering info.



Top Left: Mrs. Leary's Class and their Flu Fighting Donations; Top Right: Holiday Store; Bottom Left: Mrs. Johnstone's First grade class and their donations to Marguerite's Place; Bottom Right: Faculty and Staff sing along on the day before vacation

Recently the PTO helped GMS fight germs by hosting a "No Flu for You" Day. Room parents organized their classes, inviting them to bring in donations like tissues to keep their classmates healthy as well as little things like tea and fruit to help keep their teachers healthy. The

students had fun and the teachers were surprised by the thoughtfulness. It's not too late - donations of germ fighting items are always appreciated and needed.

The PTO continues to bring learning opportunities into the school. Our second graders will get to explore the night sky when the Star Lab returns to GMS. The NH Historical Society will visit the Fourth Graders with a presentation about everyday life in the colonies and school life. Other events are also in the works for grades one and three. These programs help enhance the classroom learning for all our Children.

Upcoming Family Events include a GMS Day at the Monarchs Hockey game on Feb 23. Information will be coming home soon! March 14 will be the fabulous BINGO Night.

The PTO is having a great year thanks to FAMILIES LIKE YOU!! Your willingness to volunteer truly helps make GMS the best place for our kids! Thank you all so much!



BOX TOPS REPORT

JENNIFER BOURQUE, FUNRAISING COORDINATOR

Our progress with Box Tops continues through the Winter. Thank you so much to all of the families that participate in this program that helps to fund the PTO budget. So far in this school year, we have collected over 18,000 box tops. We have a goal of 50,000 box tops for the current year and need your help to get there!

The next submission date for box tops is March 1st so let's have a HUGE push in February and get those box tops in!



The following contests will be going on for the months of February, March and April:

- February—(1/27 through 2/22)—
For every 25 box tops submitted, be entered to win a family movie package!!
- March/April—(3/1 through 4/26)—
Classroom with the highest participation wins a pizza party
- April/May—(5/1 through 6/2)—
For every 50 box tops submitted, be entered to win a chance at a BIKE!!

Some additional box top reminders for you: Box tops are most easily submitted utilizing the sheets of 10 sent home (please limit

the number of box tops to only 10 per sheet) or by sending in via Ziploc bag in groups of 50.

PLEASE BE SURE THAT ALL SUBMISSIONS ARE LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S FIRST AND LAST NAME AND TEACHER'S NAME.

Finally, please note that Labels for Education is a separate program. Please submit these separately.

Should you have any suggestions for other fun ways to drive the box top program, please feel free to contact me at jjutras@msn.com. Thanks again for all your support!!

MUSIC DEPARTMENT SCHEDULE

JAN.-JUNE 2014



♫ Large Group Music Festival:

- ♫ GMS Chorus — Saturday,
March 15 at Goffstown High School

Litchfield District Fine Arts Festival :

- ♫ Rehearsal Day — Tuesday,
March 18 (Chorus & Recorders)
- ♫ Choral Performances —
Tuesday, March 18, 6:30 pm
- ♫ Instrumental Performances —
Thursday, March 20, 6:30 pm

♫ GMS Spring Arts:

- ♫ Grade 2 – Wed, April 23 at 9:30 am
- ♫ Grade 3 – Thurs, April 24 at 9:30 am
- ♫ Grade 1 – Thurs, April 24 at 1:00 pm

♫ Grandparents and Special Friends Day:

- ♫ Grade 1 -- Fri, April 25 at 9:30 am

♫ Great East Music Festival/

Canobie Lake Park:

- ♫ GMS Chorus — Friday, May 30 —
Performance at Hood Middle School
in Derry, N.H. at 10:55 am.
- ♫ Canobie afterward.

♫ 4th Grade Recognition Day:

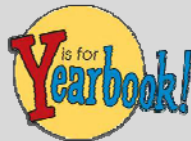
- ♫ June, 2014 --- TBA

AFTERNOON PICK UP IN THE GYM

We have made some changes to our procedure for afternoon pickup in the gym.

1. When you go to the gym in the afternoon to pick up your child, a staff member will have the clipboard for you to sign out your child. Remember, a picture ID is needed when signing out your child.
2. After signing out your child, parents should gather along the wall to the right of the entrance door and form a line around the gym.
3. Students will be called to the gym at 2:50 and will sit on the stairs in front of the stage or go to their parent if the parent has already signed them out.
4. Once you have connected with your child, you should exit through the blue door in the far right corner of the gym.
5. If you are picking up a group, your group should wait behind your group's sign and the black line near the gym's far wall until all other students have been picked up.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. Mr. Thompson and Ms. Faro



FOURTH GRADE YEARBOOK

Share your photos of Class Events
(PAST & Present) for the Yearbook
SEND PHOTOS TO KEYSULLIVAN@COMCAST.NET

FEBRUARY IS LOVE YOUR LIBRARY MONTH

Does your family have library cards to Litchfield's public library? If not, you should know they are free and entitle you lots of great reading, information and entertainment.

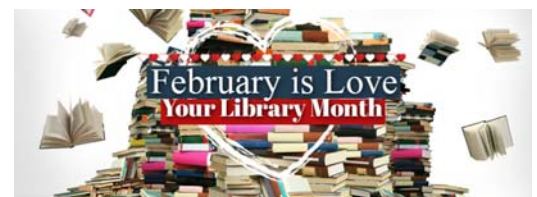
To celebrate Love Your Library Month in the Young Readers' Room, the Friends of the Library are holding a "Why I Love My Library" drawing contest for kids ages 3—5, and writing contest for children ages 6—12. In addition, children receive raffle tickets each time they visit the library and perform a "mystery activity" in February, earning them chances to win a fabulous prize. The more you visit, the more chances your kids have to win!

In addition to these Love Your Library Month activities, the Young Readers' Room offers:

- Wide selection of new books, magazines, and movies (often available the day they come out!)
- Free Wi-Fi
- Monthly Make 'n Take crafts,
- Puzzles, computers, games, bead tables
- Special programs and activities

On-going programs for children include:

- **Book Babies** for ages newborn—18 months (Fridays at 10:30am)
- **Tiny Tales** for toddlers ages 18—36 months (Fridays at 11:30am)



- **Preschool Story Time** for kids ages 3 through kindergarten (Tues at 10:30am or Weds at 12:30pm)
- **Pajama Story Time** (1st Thurs of each month at 6:30pm)
- **Book Bunch**, a book club for kids in grades 3—5 (3rd Weds of each month at 4:00pm)
- **Page Turners**, a book club for kids in grades 6—8 (2nd Thurs of each month at 2:30pm)

We hope to see you soon!

Aaron Cutler Memorial Library, 269 Charles Bancroft Highway, Litchfield, NH .

www.cutlerlibrary.blogspot.com (603) 424-4044