Grand Ledge Public Schools

VOLUME 21 – ISSUE 20 – February 10, 2017

Willow Ridge

James Gee, Principal

DATES TO REMEMBER

February 10	Daddy Daughter Dance 6-8 pm
February 13	Third Grade Music Program – 6:30 pm
February 14	Valentine's Parties
February 17	Popcorn Day
February 20	President's Day – No School
February 21	Hungry Howie's Fundraiser Night
March 10	Half Day – Dismissal at 12:05
March 13	Fifth Grade Music Program – 6:30 pm
March 20	PTA Meeting – 7 pm
March 21	Hungry Howie's Fundraiser Night
March 22	Talent Show Tryouts – After School
March 24	Spring Carnival 6-8 pm
March 31	No School
April 3-7	Spring Break

The Principal's Pen

Student Council continues to work hard fundraising for our gaga pit. Suckers will be sold starting next week at a cost of 75 cents per sucker. The PTA has graciously already donated around $500 towards the new playground addition. The students are very determined to see this happen. Donations are welcome and I will keep you posted on our progress.

I have been notified of concerns regarding drop off in the morning. Some concerned parents are noticing that some folks that are dropping off the children to school are not adhering to speed limits and safety measures and are putting their child and other children at risk. We all would be devastated to have a child injured being dropped off or picked up. Please exercise patience and care to avoid such a catastrophe.

This week we are taking a peek into Mrs. Austin's 2nd grade classroom. Here is what is going on:

In honor of February, the children dug deeper when learning about what President's Day is all about. Through a variety of reading materials the children have been researching two of our nation's presidents, Lincoln and Washington. While completing these research activities, the children have had many opportunities to discover what made these two presidents stand out more than the rest. From the "Father of Our Country" to an honest man who fought for equality, the children were amazed at how much history has taken place hundreds of years ago and still lives on today. During Daily Five, the second graders used their knowledge to compare facts about Lincoln and Washington along with writing an opinion paper pertaining to what laws a "kid president" would pass with supporting details as to why those laws are a must! The learning has been endless as the children challenge themselves to learn more about not only what these two presidents have done for our country but also others as well. Great learning Mrs. Austin's Second Graders!

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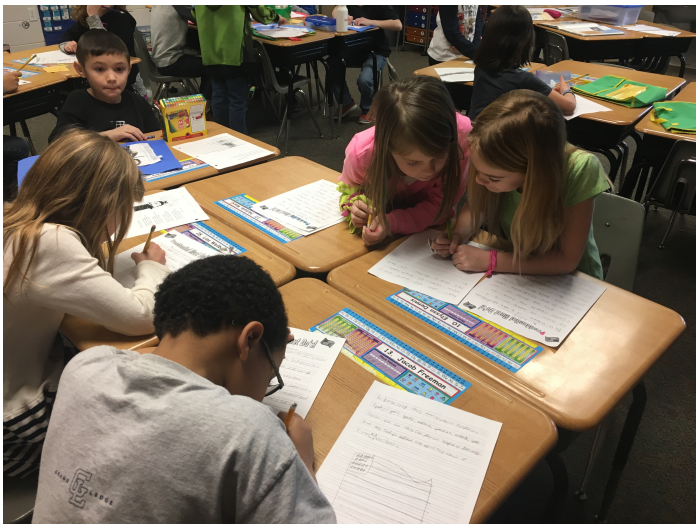

Student Council News

Student Council has received approval to purchase a Gaga Ball Octopit for the playground. Gaga Ball is similar to dodge ball and is played within a confined pit with a series of straight walls, usually 3-4 feet tall. In order to make this purchase a reality, we will need to do a variety of fundraising. First up is a sucker sale Feb.13 – Feb. 17. Suckers will be sold in the library for 75 cents each. Smencils will be sold in March.

If any Willow Ridge family members have any fundraising ideas that they would like to share with Student Council, please contact the office or email Mrs. Vance at vancem@glcomets.net.

Our next Popcorn Day will be Friday, Feb. 17. Each bag is 25 cents or 3 Box Tops.

Please get your Box Tops turned in by Friday, February 24. The classroom with the most Box Tops will win a Pizza Party. All Box Tops turned in by 2/24 will be going towards our May Box Tops check. Every Box Top is worth 10 cent$ and they sure do add up!

Talent Show try-outs will be on Wednesday, March 22 after school. Students need to pick up an application from Mrs. McMartin-Finkel. The Talent Show is scheduled for Monday, May 8.

Used Eyeglasses

Cub Scouts Pack 657, on behalf of the Lions Club of Grand Ledge, is collecting used eyeglasses. These are checked and sanitized and given to those in need. A collection bucket will be available in the Main Office until February 17.

PTA News

Thank you to everyone who helped with planning and putting together our Daddy Daughter Dance! We know the girls and their dates will have a wonderful night because of your help. We also want to say a HUGE Thank You to Mrs. Snyder, who did a fabulous job of organizing the event this year.

Carnival planning is underway. Mark your calendar for Friday, March 24. Each year we ask for your help in making this event a success. In addition to volunteers to run games, we also appreciate your donations of candy for our candy walk room, pop for our pop toss room, and plastic shopping bags for carnival goers to carry their loot.

New this year in the pop toss room: players will throw the ring around a 2-liter to win a can of the pop of their choice. Cans are easier to store and carry, and less expensive to purchase in large numbers. As you do your shopping these next few weeks, if you see a sale on cans of pop or king size or theater box candy, please consider picking up a few items to donate. We will begin accepting donations the week of March 6.

SchoolMessenger Communications

Grand Ledge Public Schools wants to ensure our parents and students have the access they want to all district communications. If you would like to sign up to receive our SchoolMessenger communications via text, simply text YES to 67587. As long as your phone number is in our system and associated with a student, you can receive our SchoolMessenger messages via text. This was designed as an “option” for our parents/students as we did not want to automatically send text messages that might cause someone to incur charges.

Please remember to keep the office informed of any changes to your home phone, cell phone, street address, and e-mail address.

Emergency Clothes

We’ve given out a lot of our extra clothes during the recent muddy spell. If your child has borrowed anything, please launder it and return the items to the office. If your child tends to get muddy at recess time, please send in an extra set of clothes that they can keep in their locker. Also, we have run out of girls size 7/8 pants and boys size 10/12 pants. If you have any you would like to donate, please send them to the office.

Absences and Leaving Early

- Please contact the office by 3:30 pm if you are picking up your child early. This allows adequate time to notify your child and their teacher of the change. Please come to the office, check in with the secretary, and wait for your child to come down to the office.
- Students should not be dropped off before 8:40 am. Proper supervision is not in place before that time. All students who don't take the bus home should be picked up at 4:00 when school dismisses. We have a lot of students waiting for rides long after the bell rings. We understand that things happen, traffic congestion, etc. Please give us a courtesy call if you are running behind. Thank you for your cooperation.
- If your child is going to be absent, please call the office at 517-925-5775 or the 24-hour attendance line at 517-925-5812. If your child is going to be late (and needs to order a lunch), please call in by 9:10 am. You may leave the information on the 24-hour attendance line. Please leave the name of your child, their teacher's name and the reason for their absence on the message. If your child has a fever, is vomiting or having diarrhea, please note that in order to return to school they must be free of their symptoms for 24 hours. Thank you!

Free MSU Engineering Event

MSU is hosting an educational, informative, fun event on Saturday, February 25 called Introduce a Girl to Engineering. This event is for 4th-8th graders, is filled with hands-on activities, and is FREE. Registration is required and chaperones may bring up to 5 students. Registration deadline is February 1 or until max capacity is reached. Register at http://www.egr.msu.edu/wie/k-12/programs-outreach

Oliver

The Blue Light Players will be presenting Oliver at the Hannah Center in East Lansing. Four Willow Ridge students are performing in this musical – Brynn Pratt, Katelyn Schupbach, Isaiah Thorpe and Gabriella Van Walsum. The show will be performed on February 24 & 25 and on March 3 & 4 at 7:00 pm. Reserved seat tickets are $15 and can be purchased at www.bluelightplayers.com.

Grand Ledge Jr. Comets Softball

Registration for the 2017 summer softball program is now open. Practices will begin when the weather permits (typically after spring break) and games start the last week of school. Please visit www.jrcometssoftball.com to register (early registration deadline 2/28/17 - $100 … late registration 3/1-3/23 - $125 … all payments due by 3/25 to hold your spot on a team). Evaluations will take place at the HS gym on March 25. **Important note for 2017 – At this time we are ONLY accepting 8U registration for returning players. All new 8U players are encouraged to sign up through Community Rec at www.glathletics.com. If you have questions, please contact Dave Sage at djsage31@msn.com.

Girls on the Run

Our Counselor, Ashlynn Piecuch, will be the head coach/building liaison for Girls on the Run. It will be Mondays and Wednesdays from 4:00-5:30 starting February 27 here at WR. It will end with a 5K at MSU on May 21. Students eligible are girls in grades 3-6. You can register at GOTRMidMichigan.org.

Online Volunteer Registration

Grand Ledge Public Schools remains committed to ensuring the safety of its students. Persons interested in volunteering at any of our schools (including chaperoning a field trip) should log on to the Volunteer Registration Form located under the Parent / Student Resources Tab on the district's website at glcomets.net. Once the requesting volunteer submits the form and shows identification at the school office, the district's central office will complete a background check through the Michigan State Police. Following a successful background check, volunteers are placed on an approved list of volunteers and can volunteer in any of the Grand Ledge Public Schools buildings or chaperone a field trip. Volunteers must check in at the office each time they are going to be in the building to receive a visitor badge. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this procedure.

Snow Days / Lunch Menu

In the event of a snow day, the menu for the day students return will be what was planned for the snow day. The scheduled menu will resume the day after we return. This is done to have the least amount of waste.

Coed Spring Soccer

GL Community Recreation is offering coed soccer leagues this spring for ages 4 years to 3rd grade. Practices start the week of April 3rd. Games begin April 15th (6 weeks)
Leagues Information:
Mini Comets (3/4 yr olds)
Little Comets (Kindergarten/1st Grade)
Junior Comets (2nd/3rd Grade)
Registration Information:
Fee - $40 (includes a team jersey)
Registration Deadline - March 10th
For more information and to register online visit our website www.glathletics.com (click on the Community Recreation tab)

Coed T-Ball

This program runs twice a week for 6 weeks. The first 2 weeks are practices, last 4 weeks are games (4 practices, 8 games). We offer 2 different leagues: Monday/Wednesday OR Tuesday/Thursday. Practices and Games are held in the evening at Holbrook & Hayes. Practices start the week of May 30th. Games begin the week of June 12th.
Registration Information:
Fee - $40 (includes a team jersey and hat)
Registration Deadline - May 5th
For more information and to register online visit our website www.glathletics.com (click on the Community Recreation tab)

Boys Baseball

This program runs twice a week for 6 weeks. The first 2 weeks are practices, last 4 weeks are games (4 practices, 8 games) Practices start the week of May 30th. Games begin the week of June 12th. Grade Determination: the grade you are currently in for the 2016/2017 school year.
League Information:
Machine-Pitch (1st/2nd Grade) – Mon./Wed.
Kid-Pitch (3rd/4th Grade) - Tuesday/Thursday
Kid-Pitch (5th/6th Grade) - Monday/Wednesday
Registration Information:
Fee - $40 (includes a team jersey and hat)
Registration Deadline - May 5th
For more information and to register online visit our website www.glathletics.com (click on the Community Recreation tab)

Music Boosters Officers Needed

Grand Ledge Music Boosters are seeking officers for 2017. Any parent of a Grand Ledge Choir/Band student is eligible. Visit GLMBA.ORG to express interest.

Girls Softball

This league runs on Mondays and Wednesdays for 6 weeks. The first 2 weeks are practices, last 4 weeks are games (4 practices, 8 games). Practice locations are GLHS Softball Complex, Hayes & Delta Center. Games will be held at the GLHS Softball Complex. Practices start May 31. Games begin June 12. Grade Determination: the grade you are currently in for the 2016/2017 school year.
League Information:
Coach-Pitch (1st/2nd Grade)
Coach-Pitch (3rd/4th Grade)
Registration Information:
Fee - $40 (includes a team jersey and hat)
Registration Deadline - May 5
For more information and to register online visit our website www.glathletics.com (click on the Community Recreation tab)

For Questions Please Contact: Jen Daly ~ GL Community Recreation Coordinator
dalyj@glcomets.net (517) 925-5440

Grand Ledge Area District Library Activities

Build a Cardboard Sled
Saturday, February 11th from 3-5 pm

Create a cardboard sled for the Fun on the Rocks Cardboard Sled Races or your own fun! Please bring cardboard and your ingenuity. The library will supply the duct tape and paint for decorations.

Paws for Reading
Wednesday, February 15 from 6 – 7 pm

Dogs love stories too! Practice reading aloud in a no-pressure environment with a certified therapy dog. This program is open to preschool to high school ages. Please phone the library at 517.627.7014 to register for a reading time.

Grand Ledge Pony Baseball

Registration is open for the 2017 season. Registration fees are $100 until February 22nd. February 23-March 10 the registration fee is $115. Mustang and Bronco players wishing to tryout for a travel team must play in the Spring Pony League. Visit: glyouthbaseball.org today to register your son. Make sure to check the website for important dates.

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2017

Counselor's Corner

GROWTH MINDSET

Our school-wide counseling lesson in January was about mindset. In grades 1-4, we read the book, "The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes," by Gary Rubinstein. In grades 5-6, we began with an engaging activity that involved tossing objects and identifying negative thoughts. This exercise allowed students to recognize that many of their peers have similar thoughts or worries surrounding school, friends, and life. Students discussed the feelings they associate with failure and making mistakes, whether it be about school, friendships, sports, or another activity. We discussed how our brain is like a muscle, and it actually grows the most when we struggle to understand an academic or social concept. When we think thoughts to ourselves such as, "I give up, I can't do this, everyone else is smarter than me, I don't like school, etc.," we limit the possibility for maximum brain growth. We talked about the characteristics of people who we consider "smart," and recognized that these people are usually hard-workers who encompass a growth mindset, and are not afraid to try, fail, and try again. Students in grades 1-4 worked together to complete a growth vs. fixed mindset sorting activity, and grades 5-6 watched a video, which you can view **HERE**. To end our lesson, all students identified a positive, growth-mindset statement that they will say to themselves instead of "I can't do this." Students were taught that what we *think* affects how we *feel*, which determines our outcome (how we act, or what we strive to achieve). Having a growth mindset makes it easier to learn, feel confident, and keep trying!

Ongoing Programs

6th grade Girls' Lunch

Fridays at lunch/recess with Ms. Piecuch and Mrs. Mikulec. Last week, we watched a short video from the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty. You can watch this **HERE**. We discussed how media doesn't always portray reality, which can sometimes instill unrealistic expectations about our own self-image. We discussed the power of valuing inner qualities over outer appearances! :)

Small groups, Session I: January 23-February 27

The following groups are currently running:

Social Skills (1-6)
Coping Skills (1-6),
Organizational/Study Skills (4-6)
Body Image/Self-Esteem (6th girls).

Classroom Lessons

February Topic: Kindness

GIRLS ON THE RUN

Coaches: Ms. Piecuch and Ms. Anastos (MSU student teacher)

Dates: February 27-May 21, when we will complete a 5K together at MSU.

Days: Mondays and Wednesdays from 4:00-5:30 p.m.

What is GOTR? A learning, activity, and self-esteem based program for girls in grades 3-6,. GOTR's mission is to inspire girls to be joyful, healthy and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum which creatively integrates running. You can read about the organization **HERE.**

Why is it important? Girls face social pressures and conflicting messages about how they should act and who they should be. ***Studies show that by adolescence, girls' confidence drops about twice as much as boys'.*** Friendships become more complicated and challenging, girls' perception of their academic ability declines, the likelihood of anxiety and depression increases and participation in physical activity plummets. It doesn't have to be this way. We believe that EVERY GIRL is inherently FULL OF POWER and POTENTIAL. By knowing they are the leaders of their lives, these are the girls who WILL CHANGE THE WORLD. - GOTR

I want my student to participate! Sign up **HERE**. (GOTRMidMichigan.org)

Random Acts of Kindness Week!

Random Acts of Kindness Day is observed nationally on February 17, 2017. At Willow Ridge, we will celebrate with a WEEK of kindness February 27-March 3!

During February classroom lessons, Ms. Piecuch will teach about kindness. Students will be given a "50 Random Acts of Kindness" worksheet, and will be challenged to complete all 50 if they wish. Students who complete all 50 random acts of kindness, get a parent signature, and turn their sheet in by Friday, March 3, will be entered into a drawing to have a pizza lunch with Ms. Piecuch! 10 student names will be drawn!

During our Random Acts of Kindness Week, Ms. Piecuch will announce a daily kindness challenge on the morning announcements. There will also be a "kindness station" set up at lunch time. Student council and small group members will help at the table. Each day, there will either be a fun activity or special treat for students to enjoy during lunch!

Here are some books to read at home that promote kindness and empathy:

Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deed by Emily Pearson, Fumi Kosaka

Those Shoes by Maribeth Boelts

Last Stop On Market Street by Matt de la Pena

Each Kindness by Jacqueline Woodson

The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig

Rude Cakes by Rowboat Watkins

Thank you for your continued trust and support! - Ms. Piecuch

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