



Southwest 'Rider News



From The Elementary Principal - Mrs. Rasmussen

Southwest Elementary is forging ahead with plans that will open a before and after school program in the elementary building. Preschool applications are now being accepted and Kindergarten Registration has been scheduled. For parents of our youngest students this is an exciting time.

Preschool at Southwest runs from 8:00 am to 11:30 am. This year students are either picked up by parents or taken home on a bus. Next year there will be a different option; students will be able to stay for after school care. This daycare will be open to any student enrolled at Southwest Elementary. Older children will be welcomed to come at the end of their day later in the afternoon. Students will have a chance to play outside, work on homework, have a snack, and participate in organized activities.

The licensing proceeds are lengthy, but will be well

worth it to help working parents. Currently, the application has been turned in to the Department of Health and Human Services and accepted. In mid-February an inspector from the State Department inspected the rooms that will be used and determined if they fit for daycare use. A budget still needs to be accepted before final approval from the state. After final approval, advertisements will run to find qualified staff to care for the children. Details about hours of operation and days open are also left to be determined.

Kindergarten Registration has been set for Monday, April 6th. Two registration times have been scheduled for parent's convenience. The first session is from 9-10 am, and the second will be from 1-2 pm. Please call the school office and let us know what time you plan to

attend. Any child that will turn five on or before October 15th is eligible to enter kindergarten. Before students enter school state law requires their immunizations to be current, a physical exam, an eye exam, and a copy of their birth certificate. More information will be given on this at the registration meetings. Students do not have to meet these requirements before coming to registration. On that day there will be no school for the current kindergarten class.

Preschool applications are now being taken. For the best chance at having your student in the program please return applications by May 1st. Applications received after this date will be considered, but there will be no guarantees. Parents of three year olds that currently attend will need to fill out an application as well. Please contact the elementary for applications (364-2613).

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Special points of interest:

- March 6 - NO SCHOOL
- March 8 - Daylight Savings Time Begins
- March 9 - School Board Meeting at 7:30 PM
- March 13 - NO SCHOOL
- March 30 - 12:30 PM dismissal for all students

ACT help for Juniors and Seniors - Mrs. Lashley

The Late Winter/Early Spring months come with many important math testing dates. Many of the Juniors and Seniors have been studying hard for their ACT tests. Two more testing dates are available for this year's ACT, (April 4th & June 1st). If parents would like to work with their kids to help improve test scores the following websites are available to help those who will be taking the ACT:

www.actstudent.org/sampletest/index.html

www.number2.com

www.testprepreview.com/act_practice.htm

These websites will provide review tests for all portions of the ACT.

Seniors who are interested in attending the University of Nebraska-Lincoln or the University of Nebraska-Kearney may visit with Mrs. Lashley regarding the MPE (Math Placement Exam). Students attending these two schools will be required to take the MPE. The MPE will be offered at the high school on Wednesday, April 1, 2009. If this test is taken at the high school then it will not need to be taken during NSE (New Student Enrollment). If you wish to take this test at the high school, please see Mrs. Lashley before March 6th.

Good Luck to all who will be taking any kind of Mathematics Assessments during the coming months!

Work That Brain! - Mr. Loshbaugh

Encourage the members of your family to do mathematical thinking. There are a variety of books and online websites which feature logical thinking activities. Here is an example involving pattern recognition:

Consider the following three sequences of numbers:

What do you discover as you study them?

Well, they have two important features in common. First, they go up in regular steps: the first one goes up by 6 each time, the second by 12, and the third by 30. Such a sequence is called an arithmetic progression. Secondly, and more interestingly, they all consist only of prime numbers.

Finally, they are also extended as far as they can be: the next number in each series would not be prime. (For example, $29 + 6 = 35$, a composite number.)

Recognizing patterns is a useful activity, not only for our students, but for all of us. Our brains need exercise, too. In fact, research suggests that those who do mental exercises, whether verbal, like a crossword puzzle, or mathematical, like the preceding example, are sometimes able to delay and possibly even prevent the onset of dementia and Alzheimers as they grow older.

So find some fun ways you and your family can give your brains a workout!

5	11	17	23	29
	7	19	31	43
11	41	71	101	131

FOR SALE

SOUTHWEST YEAR BOOKS

\$35.00 EACH

CONTACT A JOURNALISM STUDENT OR MRS. HARRIS @ 364-2202

Counselor's Corner - Mr. Manker

I wanted to bring you up to date on a few items that you may not be aware of or did not catch in previous articles. Students, who plan on attending college after graduation, normally take the ACT test for their first time in April or June of their junior year. Not all colleges require the ACT. You can register to take this test online (www.actstudent.org) or I have applications in my office. There are two main purposes for taking the ACT; one is for placement purposes and the other is for scholarships, based on a very high score. I have a fairly good idea of how students will do on the ACT by looking back at the PLAN test they took in their sophomore year. If a student chooses not to take the ACT, it is recommended that they take the compass test, which will indicate your strengths and weaknesses in similar but not exactly the same areas that the ACT tests you over. Recommendations are then made as to which level of courses you should enroll in upon entering college. I can make the appointment for your son/daughter to take the compass test at MCC if you wish. It takes about one hour to take it versus about four hours for the ACT. ACT composite scores range from 1-36 with 21 being about average. The highest score that I have ever seen in my 30 years of education is a 32. Nebraska ranks fairly high compared to other states.

Another item that I wanted to mention is the 50% tuition reduc-

tion that MCC offers to anyone 16 years old or older. I think you should take a close look at this. If your son/daughter was interested in this and they took one evening college class each semester starting 2nd semester of their sophomore year, they would graduate from high school with 15 college credit hours at a considerable savings. Also available to them is the opportunity to take college classes over the distance learning for dual credit purposes while in high school. However, dual credit classes do not apply to the 50% reduction opportunity. Please feel free to visit with me about this if you have an interest.

I would also suggest that you begin to take a look at colleges/tech schools that you think your child may have an interest in. Remember that for the first two years of college, most students work on completing general study courses that are required by all colleges and usually transfer to most other colleges. So the need to know exactly what field your son/daughter is going into is not always necessary, however it does help. I also want to emphasize that a four year college degree is not for everyone. Recent studies show that this trend is changing and the college degree is sometimes over rated and under valued based on the present cost of the degree. Trade schools offer another option with great shortages in the skilled labor fields. There are many excellent paying jobs in health care and the skilled pro-

fessions that do not always require a four year degree. I know of several friends and students who chose the health care fields such as Occupational Therapist Assistant or Respiratory Therapy and have done quite well. There is a real shortage of nurses. The health care fields, education and government jobs are being designated as the recession proof fields to be in right now. Of the 30 graduates that we have this year, about 8-10 will be attending MCC. This is a very affordable college with adequate financial assistance, not to mention that your child can live at home. I think that the reason we have so many students attending MCC next year is related to the state of the economy. Please don't hesitate to call upon me for assistance. If I don't know the answers to your question, I can find it for you or at least direct you to someone else.

High School Math - Mr. Ellicott

Over the last several weeks students in consumer math have had the opportunity to file their income tax returns online. Students researched various online tax sites and picked the one that they felt was easy to use. Students could use their actual data or use data supplied by the teacher. Some students have filed their returns and received their refunds already. Others checked to see if their figures from online matched those done by a professional. Through the course of the year students have also done projects on budgeting and planning travel using the internet.

High School Band - Ms Gosnell

Happy March from the Southwest Schools Band Department! With the coming of spring, the honor band season is drawing to a close, and it's been a successful one! We had several students audition for a variety of honor bands, and these selected students traveled to various locations around the state to play with other top musicians from other schools.

Each honor band is unique. Students work with a different conductor, a different dynamic of students, and play a varied repertoire of music. The students' ability to adapt to each of these variables is a testament to their versatility and musicality.

I truly believe the students' experiences at these honor bands have been positive as well as challenging. It takes a lot of time and effort to learn the audition music, record their audition, then turn around and learn the honor band's music once they've been accepted. Therefore, each student deserves recognition of their accomplishments, as these honor bands can be highly selective.

Doane Honor Band: Danielle Blume (sophomore, alto saxophone), Kendra Cuellar (junior, trumpet), Jennifer Foster

(sophomore, clarinet), Julie Gates (senior, flute), Erin Kelley (junior, flute), Autumn Rae (sophomore, trumpet), and Brittany Tollman (senior, clarinet)

Class C Honor Band (March 21): Danielle Blume, Julie Gates, Erin Kelley, Ashlee Minard (junior, baritone saxophone), Autumn Rae, and Brittany Tollman

Hastings Honor Band: Julie Gates

UNK Honor Band: Julie Gates, Ashlee Minard, Autumn Rae, and Brittany Tollman

UNL Festival of Winds: Julie Gates

Wayne Honor Band (High School): Jennifer Foster, April Guthrie (junior, timpani), Erin Kelley, Cassidy McConville (freshman, clarinet), Ashlee Minard, Autumn Rae, and Brittany Tollman

Wayne Honor Band (Middle School): Staci Dack (7th, flute), Emily Fitzsimmons (8th, flute), Kelsey Longnecker (8th, flute), Kate Kelley (8th, clarinet), Kimberly Lord (8th, bass clarinet), Cassa McConville (8th, alto saxophone), and Miranda Wordenkemper (7th, trombone)

Wesleyan Honor Band: Julie Gates

This month, the high school band will be travelling to Hays Center on March 17th to participate in a mass band as part of the RPAC Instrumental Music clinic. Our clinician will be Dr. Gary Davis, former Director of Bands at UNK. The bands at Southwest are also looking forward to contest season. The elementary/junior high contest will take place in Cambridge this year, on Saturday, April 18th (time TBA). The high school's



contest is **Thursday, April 23rd** (time TBA). Not only will the bands perform at these contests, but individuals will perform

either as soloists and/or as part of a small ensemble. As always, the bands will perform for friends and family at their final concerts. The high school's final concert will be Thursday, April 30th at 7:00pm in the high school gym and the middle school's final concert will be Thursday, May 7th in the middle school gym. We encourage the community to join us as we close another school year with wonderful music making!

FBLA News By Abby Houghtelling, FBLA Reporter

The Southwest FBLA is doing a March of Dimes fundraiser until March 16. The mission of March of Dimes is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth, and infant mortality. There are coffee cans placed around local businesses and in the office at school for donations.

Also, on February 21, four FBLA members spent an hour of their afternoon helping out at the Humane Society. They helped out by walking the dogs. It is a community service activity that our FBLA chapter does every year.

High School News - Mr. Springer

The 2008-09 year has been a great educational success at the high school. The staff and the students have spent a lot of time working toward reaching the goals they set back in August. It doesn't seem that long ago we were getting ready for the first week of school and now we are all getting ready for the last week. It is exciting to look back on the year and see how the students have grown academically as well as matured to becoming adults. We

have a wonderful group of students at Southwest High School and that is attributed to the parents supporting their own child as well as supporting the district and its staff.

The class schedules for students are being worked on for next year. We have almost every student registered. These schedules are not finalized until summer



when we have grades finalized from this current semester. The reason we have students register early is to give us a preliminary look at the classes we need to offer based on student request at the high school. With the junior and senior high all starting school in Bartley next year it is important to get started setting up a plan for the move.

High School Music - Mrs. Fisher

On January 19, the choir participated in the RPAC Vocal Clinic at Arapahoe. The clinician was Fred Ritter from Columbus High School. He frequently does clinics, so the students had a good experience. The Concert was at 7:00 p.m. Each school performed a number and then the mass choir sang five songs. Since there is a lot of talent in the RPAC Conference, it was an excellent and enjoyable concert. Thank you to all the parents and administration who attended the concert.

On January 26, six students participated in the UNK Honor Choirs: Kendra Cuellar, alto, and Erin Kelley, 2nd soprano, were in the Women's Choir and Nathan Herrman, tenor; Josh Keenportz, Kaleb Nielsen/Sheffield, and Joe Troutman, basses, participated in the Honor Choir. A concert featuring the three

Honor choirs and the two Honor bands began at 6:30 p.m. This was another enjoyable concert. Thanks again to the parents who came and supported their children.

On February 5th, 6th, and 7th, three students participated in the Hastings Honor Choir. They were Kendra Cuellar, alto; Erin Kelley, 2nd Soprano; and Kaleb Nielsen-Sheffield, Bass I. Hastings has three Honor Ensembles each year and the 3:00 p.m. concert showcased the orchestra, the choir, and the band. This was an outstanding afternoon of entertainment.

On February 28th, ten students (selected by me) will be attending the Singing Youth of Nebraska Choir in Cambridge. The choir will start rehearsing at 8:30 a.m. and will present a concert at 4:00 p.m. Students attending are: MaKayla Brooks, Emily Fitzsimmons, Jes-

sica Fritz, Chloe Hauxwell, Cassa McConville, Lauren Ruggles, Haley Teter, Miranda Wordekemper, Austin Miller and Wyatt Stephen. They have some interesting and fun songs to sing, and they've been practicing during school and on their own time. The songs need to be memorized so they've been working hard.

Elementary
Dessert Theater
Sunday, March 1, 2009
2:00 PM
In the Elementary Gym
\$3.00 per person
6th grade - adult



2009 Statewide Parent Involvement Conference

31st Annual Conference

***PARENT INVOLVEMENT
CONFERENCE
(PIC)***

March 21, 2009
Ralston High School
8969 Park Drive
Ralston, Nebraska

PARENTS BEING THERE: GET INVOLVED-STAY INVOLVED

This parent conference is designed to give educational information to parents about major challenges and issues facing families in today's world. Several Spanish sessions are included.

Session topics will include bullying, Internet safety, communication, parents as literacy leaders, and more. Each session will be approximately 55 minutes in length. Limited free childcare will be provided on a first come, first serve basis. Children must be pre-registered by March 18, 2009.

Magnificent March Math! - Mrs. Ramsay

All year long the elementary classes have been adding, subtracting, making graphs, reading story problems, learning fractions and building shapes. Students have been working hard to prepare themselves for the spring tests that they will have to be taking soon.

One thing we hope all students know by now is that math is easier and faster if they know their math facts. Sometimes students will learn their facts and then forget them if they haven't used them in a while. What we need to remember is that once learned, it shouldn't take long to regain that lost knowledge. Spending 5-10 minutes each night on unknown facts will help tremendously. We all want our children to be successful, monitoring their progress will help them become that way. By the end of third grade addition, subtraction and multiplication facts should all be mastered. By the end of fourth grade division facts should also be mastered. Let's spend the month of March excelling in math facts! Below are some websites you can use with your child to help them master their facts and have fun doing it.

<http://www.funbrain.com/math/>

<http://oswego.org/ocsd-web/games/Mathmagician/mathsmulti.html>

<http://www.mrnussbaum.com/speedmath.htm>

<http://www.d83.org/math.html#multiplication>

<http://www.mathsisfun.com/quiz/mixtimes.html>

<http://www.mrsbogucki.com/aemes/resource/apps/madmath/madmath.htm>

<http://www.dupagechildrensmuseum.org/aunty/index.html>

<http://www.learningplanet.com/sam/sm/index.asp>

<http://www.funbrain.com/cashreg/index.html>

<http://www.teachingtables.co.uk/tm/tmgame/tgame2.html>

Second Grade - Mr. Kennedy

Spring is just around the corner and the end of the school year will be here before we know it, but rest assured that there is still learning taking place in second grade. Second grade is the first year that students are allowed to take part in the Accelerated Reading program and they have been doing a wonderful job. We already have a number of children who have reached 100 points. Our top point earners are: Blake 152, Erica 142, Suzanne 139, Camryn 133, Dylan 107, Zach 84, Paul 79, Shelby 78, Walter 77, and Brett 73. Students who reach 100 points will be going on the AR field trip in May. Those who earn at least 50 points will be attending

the class pizza/movie party, and those reaching 30 points will go to Pizza Hut and eat lunch with Mrs. Rasmussen. Please encourage you son or daughter to finish the year strong.

In math this year we have been working hard on our addition and subtraction facts and will be beginning multiplication (0-5) in the next couple of weeks. We have also learned



how to add and subtract two and three digit numbers with regrouping. Some other concepts that we have been building upon are telling time, reading temperature, area, geometric shapes and solids, and fractions. In social studies we are currently studying government and in science we are learning about force, magnets, and electricity.

Please mark April 29 on your calendars for the second grade field trip. It will be an all day field trip to the Children's Museum and Cody Park in North Platte. We will be sending out more detailed information about two weeks prior to this date.

Southwest Schools

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Nebraska Severe Weather Awareness Week

National Weather Service has designated the week of April 6-10, 2009 as Nebraska Severe Weather Awareness Week. During the week, a different weather hazard will be presented each day on both NOAA Weather Radio All-Hazards and the NWS web site, www.weather.gov/goodland. The highlight of the week is the tornado drill, when NWS offices serving the state issue a test Tornado Warning through normal



communications channels. Similar to previous years, the test

Tornado Warning and follow-up statements will be staggered throughout a one hour test time frame in the morning. The test warning for Dundy, Hitchcock and Red Willow counties will take place **Wednesday, April 8 at 9:40 am MDT (10:40 am CDT)**, and will air on all radio and television broadcast stations, as well as NOAA Weather Radio All-

Hazards. Everyone is encouraged to treat the test warning as if it were an actual emergency and review preparedness procedures. Most municipalities throughout the state will sound their tornado sirens at that time. **School officials are encouraged to send students to their designated tornado shelter and provide a review of safety information.**

Storm spotter training class will be held in McCook on March 19th, 6:30 PM at the Senior Center, 1400 West 5th Street .