

# Of Special Interest . . .

**Adjust your calendars...**after printing the front of the calendar we learned from Mr. Perry that the basketball teams are playing Kent HERE on January 14 and we are going THERE on January 31.

**It's not too late to join the discipline committee...**we are discussing school discipline. Next meeting, noted on the front of the calendar is January 15 at five o'clock in the lower level of the library.

**Websites...**Martin Luther King, Jr., an American hero, is honored each January and there are some great websites for teaching children about his life and career. [www.edhelpnet.com](http://www.edhelpnet.com) and [www.apples4theteacher.com](http://www.apples4theteacher.com) are good resources. For those setting healthy living goals the Food Network has some very good tips for healthy eating, special diets, and better health. Visit them at [www.foodnetwork.com](http://www.foodnetwork.com). Please pass along website addresses that you find helpful with children-any topic.

**North Canaan Walking Club** is taking a brief hiatus this winter with the amount of snow and ice on the walkways. This important after school activity will resume early spring.

**Ready, Set, goal!**Traditionally, the start of a new year brings a desire to improve oneself. The setting of personal goals is a good thing and we suggest that parents discuss with children measures that can be taken to improve academics, reading, behavior, striving for wellness, etc.. Try to choose one thing to work on, make the goal measurable, and then move on to a new goal. In other words, make it short—follow a plan, assess your success, get help from family and friends, and expect challenges along the way! We all understand that change is a long process—don't give up!

**Speaking of goals...**don't forget to include reading, both silent and aloud. Children love to be read to—even if they're in middle school. Daily reading can lead to vocabulary development, fluency, comprehension skills...the benefits are endless!

**Supplies...**We are fast approaching mid year and this is an excellent time to replenish pens, pencils, notebooks. Be sure to look in your child's backpack and talk with him/her about any supplies that are needed. (For those who need help, we keep supplies in the office—please ask, we are discreet and confidential). Also, check for organization of papers, assignment notebooks, and school notices. Checking the assignment notebook reinforces what we are doing at school and lets you know work expectations for your child. Reviewing homework and class work demonstrates to your child interest and a sense of importance in getting an education. A student's planner is also a way to communicate with a teacher. By the time a student reaches middle school they should be in a well developed habit of organization with the planner.

**Safety Reminder...**wear helmets when bicycling. Drive your bikes safely out of the way of traffic! Walkers from school, please use the sidewalks and obey the directions of the crossing guards, especially with the amount of snow and ice on pavements! Please have your child dress appropriately for winter weather with coats, gloves, hats, and boots. Students do go outdoors for recess if the weather permits. Be safe in eight!

## **Recipe of the month...Gumbo**

Nothing's better in cold weather than a hearty soup and over the holidays my chef brother made a batch which we enjoyed with some homemade fritters. I took a few notes as he prepared this yummy soup (as he almost never cooks with a recipe). I hope you enjoy it as much as we did.

Ingredients for 8-10 servings:

2 large boneless chicken breasts, browned and cut in small pieces and/or 2 lb. fresh shrimp (tails off and deveined); cut amount of shrimp to 1 lb. if using chicken also

Optional, 1 lb. andouille sausage, cut in small pieces and browned	
2 large onions, chopped	1 green pepper, chopped
6 cloves garlic, minced	1 red pepper, chopped
fresh thyme leaves to taste	6 carrots, sliced
1 tsp. cayenne pepper	2 ribs celery, chopped

1 poblano pepper, chopped  
1/3 cup cilantro, chopped  
2 tbs. Worcestershire sauce  
3 cups chicken stock  
salt and pepper to taste

2 bunches green onions, chopped  
1 tbs. fresh lemon juice (1/2 lemon)  
1 large can stewed tomatoes with juice  
3 cups clam juice

Use just chicken or shrimp or a combination of chicken, shrimp, and sausage to suit your tastes. Brown the sausage and chicken. Do not add the shrimp until just before serving the gumbo. Sauté the onion, garlic, red and green peppers, carrots, celery, green onions, and poblano pepper in a large dutch oven. Add the meat and all other ingredients except the shrimp and cilantro; heat through. About five minutes before serving, add the shrimp; cook only until the shrimp turns pink and then add the cilantro. Serve with rice!

**Coming Up Next Month...**Read Aloud Day at North Canaan February 6, 2008, Grade 3 Field Trip to the Warner Theatre on February 4, 2008, Grade 8 visits the high school to see the school "in action," ask questions, sit in on classes, sample lunch, and talk with the principal, Regional Band/Chorus Production at North Canaan, Quiz Bowl Inter-school competition (Go, North Canaan)...These are just a few of the highlights!

## **Regional Band/Chorus**

**by David Gaedeke**

Starting in January, and extending in to much of February, the Region I Music Teachers gather their collective skills and energy to create the annual Region I Band and Chorus Music Festival. Each Music teacher invites some of their most talented and motivated young musicians to participate in a large Concert Band and Chorus. Rehearsals take place at the High School Wednesday afternoons from 3:30—5:00. The conducting responsibilities are shared by all the Music Teachers. In school assemblies are performed at each of the 6 Region I Schools. A formal evening concert (February 13th at 7:30) is performed at the High School for the family and friends of the performing students.

In addition to creating larger performing groups for the students, the rehearsals and concerts provide opportunities for students in the region to get to know each other. Additional, participating students become more comfortable and familiar with the High School facility and the High School Music teacher.

## **Yearbook Sales to Begin this Month**

By Patricia Palmer

With the help of parents Linda Creedon and Debbie Carroll and myself, the Class of 2008 will produce a hardcover paper yearbook this year. We are contracting with a company who has online software for digitally assembling a yearbook. The yearbook will include pictures of all middle school students, pictures of the staff, and class pictures of all grades from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In addition there will be many candid pictures of students participating in special school activities such as music, sports and drama club and working in their classrooms. The eighth grade students will be contributing short written pieces for a "last will and testament" section and an "I shall remember" section in addition to the personal section that each student creates in computer class. The yearbook will first be on sale for orders from eighth graders who will have various options including engraving of their names and plastic covers to protect this wonderful memory of their school experiences. The price for the basic yearbook will be \$20 with various prices for each add-on item. At the end of January, order forms will be sent home with all students at NCES for ordering by anyone who may want to purchase one. Please consider purchasing a yearbook to support the eighth grade and to help preserve a piece of North Canaan Elementary School history.

## **Be "Green" – Recycle Cell Phones and Printer Cartridges**

By Patricia Palmer

Our recycling program continues with its collection of laser printer cartridges, inkjet printer cartridges and cell phones. For a list of eligible items, go to the school's website and click on the Special Projects link. On this page you will see section two with links to qualifying items for recycling. The eligible items change from time to time, so be sure to check before you send the items to school. Cell phones are always in demand so consider supporting the school when you need to dispose of your old cell phone. Items may be dropped off at the office or directly in Room 146, the computer room. Be green and at the same time, help the school earn points which we exchange for cash to purchase items to support technology use at NCES. Thank you for your support. A special thank you is extended to the local businesses and their employees who continue to drop off laser cartridges.

**North Canaan Elementary School**  
**Canaan, Connecticut 06018**

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