

# Of Special Interest . . .

## Of Note in March...

*There have been five snow days to date*, which at this writing puts the last day of school at June 18, 2008. However, winter is not over yet! As the front of the calendar indicates March brings spring, changing the clocks on March 9, and the Connecticut Mastery Tests. Students in grades three through eight will participate in these state tests which cover mathematics and language arts. Testing officially begins on March 3. Students across Connecticut will be writing to a different topic at each grade level for 45 minutes after materials are distributed and directions given on Tuesday, March 4. Our schedule calls for testing to occur from Monday, March 3 to March 18. Dates vary according to grade levels. Many skills in math, including problem solving, are covered. The writing prompt, reading, reading comprehension, and editing and revising comprise the language arts portion of the testing. Science will be added to the testing program in grades five and eight for the first time this year. All tests must be completed by the end of the month. As parents you can help in a few ways: talk about the importance of trying hard and "doing your very best," everyone can achieve 100 in effort, send your child to school "test ready," i.e., well rested and with a great attitude and a good breakfast. Alert, energized students will arrive at school ready to do their best! Many students have indicated that they do not eat breakfast. **Hence, this year we are offering, free of charge to you, a grab and go brown bag** containing a fruit, a protein, and a whole grain. Students may take either milk or a cup of orange juice. This quick meal can easily be consumed upon arrival at school and will be available during CMT season for all students in grades 3-8. This is a good way to aid our students in doing their best and at the same time experiment with a grab and go program. Studies show that children do better in school and on tests when they eat breakfast. Starting small with a segment of the population will be a good indication of need and desire for an affordable permanent program which would be open to the entire school community.

The staff will also experiment with some motivators during the testing season and the middle school has a pep rally planned for Friday afternoon. We want North Canaan students to be excited about demonstrating their skills!

Aside from testing there are a number of adventures this month: the sixth grade will take the train to New York City on Wednesday, March 19. The highlight of the day in the City is the Broadway show *Lion King*, which they are thrilled to be seeing. Mrs. Lavoie and Mrs. Slonaker have been working hard with the class to raise funds for the trip. Also, the fifth grade will leave for Nature's Classroom in Becket, Massachusetts on March 24. They will stay in Becket for the entire school week and return to the school on Friday, March 28 in time for dismissal. Grade 5 teachers will be in touch with parents on what to pack, writing letters to students, and all of the details. To see photos of the experience every day, go to the school website [www.northcanaanelementaryschool.org](http://www.northcanaanelementaryschool.org) and scroll down on the left side of the screen to Nature's Classroom. The fifth grade is very excited about this program.

**What Makes Teens Tick...** is a parent workshop sponsored by the Housatonic Youth Service Bureau and presented by Jill Gibbons, parent education coordinator. This two part event will be held March 5 and March 12 from 6:30-8:00 P.M. at Housatonic Valley Regional High School. Call 800 300-4781 to register (Foothills Adult Education).

**Knights on Ice...** be sure to check out the enclosed flyer and come out to skate on Saturday. It promises to be great fun! Mr. Murray has a collection of skates brought to us by the Salisbury Winter Sports Association. If you need skates, many will be available. Contact Mr. Murray for information.

**Quiz Bowl** season also comes around in March. This is a form of academic athletics that appeals to students who love trivia and like to compete. Spectators are always welcome. Mrs. Schneider, middle school math teacher, is the coach of the team this year. The team winning the most matches gets to keep the trophy, which currently resides in North Canaan!

**Ending the month** is the annual drama club production which always is terrific. This year they will present *Sleeping Beauty*. (See ticket information in the newsletter).

**St. Patrick's Day...** all green for March 17! In keeping with the spirit of the holiday, I offer a dish that is much loved and often served in my family. It's very easy, economical, and quite delicious.

### **Colcannon (Ceannfionn: Gaelic meaning fairheaded cabbage)**

3 lb. potatoes, peeled, quartered	2-3 scallions, chopped
1 head cabbage, shredded	1 large onion, diced coarsely
Milk	Butter
Salt and black pepper	

Boil the potatoes in a large pot of water—just enough to cover them. While the potatoes are boiling, remove the outer leaves of the cabbage and shred. In a skillet, sauté the diced onion, scallion, and cabbage in a little butter or olive oil until it is tender and slightly browned. Simmer the potatoes until soft; mash with butter, milk, and add salt and black pepper to taste. You have just made mashed potatoes. Fold the cabbage mixture into the mashed potatoes. Serve with meat or add crumbled bacon or chopped leftover meat to the Colcannon and it's a meal. In Ireland Colcannon is traditionally served on Halloween, and Irish Americans like myself enjoy it year round. It's a particularly good way to enjoy cabbage.

**Thank you** to all parents and friends of North Canaan Elementary School for participating in the annual Read Aloud day in February. It was a wonderful experience to bring students and community members together over a good story and helps emphasize reading for pleasure. We thank the Chamber for supporting the school—many businesses were represented.

**The HVRHS Recycling Team** is sponsoring an electronics round-up on March 22 from 9:00 to 3:00 P.M. The group is offering a convenient, environmentally responsible way for businesses and individuals to get rid of unwanted computers, monitors, TVs, phones, cameras, stereo components, printers, VCRs, DVD players, cables, and answering machines. Equipment in working order will be donated for reuse. A minimal donation will be accepted for this service, with proceeds going toward the school's Water for Africa project. Compact fluorescent light bulbs will be for sale. The event will be held in the student parking lot at the high school. Questions should be directed to [dweisman@hvrhs.org](mailto:dweisman@hvrhs.org).

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

## Read Across America

North Canaan Elementary will proudly celebrate *Read Across America* on March 20, 2008. This celebration celebrates the birth date of beloved author, Theodore Seuss Geisel, better known simply as Dr. Seuss.

NCES has celebrated *Read Across America* for the last eight years by sponsoring various events including cross grade buddy reading. During our celebration, students from upper and lower grades are partnered to read books together. It is a wonderful time that helps build self-esteem and school spirit and perhaps, most importantly the joy of books! The children truly look forward to reading to each other and select books carefully to share with their partners. It is also a time of great pride for teachers; allowing us to see first hand, the satisfaction that reading can bring.

As a learning community we believe that students need to see their mentors and models practicing what they preach, so in addition to our buddy reading, the whole school community, from students to custodians will "Drop Everything And Read" from 1:45-2:15! Please note that if you call the school during D.E.A.R. time, the telephones will be automatically answered and your call will go directly to voice mail.

We hope you will extend our celebration of *Read Across America* with your child at home. Pop a bowl of popcorn, cuddle up and read a good book together! Perhaps you'd like to recite the following reading oath to your child!

"You're never too old, too wacky, too wild,  
To pick up a book and read to a child.  
You're never too busy, too cool, or too hot,  
To pick up a book and share what you've got.  
In schools and communities,  
Let's gather around,  
Let's pick up a book,  
Let's pass it around.  
There are Kids all around you,  
Kids who will need  
Someone to hug,  
Someone to read.  
Come join in the fun,  
Your own special way  
And make this America's  
Read to Kids Day."

Happy reading! The *Read Across America* Committee

## North Canaan Elementary School Kindergarten Registration

It is now time to schedule an appointment for kindergarten registration at North Canaan Elementary School. If you are a resident of North Canaan and your child was born during the 2003 calendar year, please call Mrs. Welch, the school secretary, at 824-5149 to make your appointment. The new registration process will take approximately one hour.

DATES: Monday, March 24th  
Wednesday, March 26th

WHAT TO BRING: Your child's birth certificate and Immunization records

We look forward to meeting with you and your child in March! The Kindergarten Team

## North Canaan Elementary School Drama Club

is proud to present

**The Sleeping Beauty**  
By Brian Way

\* Thursday, March 27th

and

\* Friday, March 28th

at 7:00 P.M.

NCES gym

All seats are \$5.00 each

Tickets go on sale March 20th

Come and Celebrate NCES Drama Club's

10th Anniversary

\*PLEASE NOTE: CHANGE IN DATE:

**Cafeteria  
Committee  
Meeting**

March 27th

6:30 P.M.



## Class of 2008 Yearbook

Focus on the Middle School,  
especially the 8th grade

Pictures of **all** students in the school!

Order forms were sent home and  
are available in the school's main office

**Order Your Yearbook Today!**

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