

Of Special Interest . . .

From the Principal

School Banking

Again this year Salisbury Bank and Trust is offering its school savings program to all North Canaan students. The program is designed to teach children the importance of savings. It also enables students to bank at the school. Every Wednesday representatives from SBT will be at a station in the front lobby to accept deposits, which can be in the form of cash, coin, and/or check. Each student will receive a receipt for his/her deposit. On a quarterly basis, students will receive a bank statement detailing the account activity. The bank only accepts deposits at the school. To make a withdrawal you will have to visit the bank. Students who are already enrolled in the School Savings Program do not have to register again. If you have any questions, please call Betsy Devino at the bank (435-9801) and she will be happy to assist you.

Again this year the fifth grade will participate as bank tellers. Wednesday, September 26 the class will walk to the bank for a tour to see how a bank operates. Mrs. Devino and her staff will then come to the school to train the tellers how to take a deposit, verify the amount, and write out receipts. Additionally, fifth grade tellers will escort our youngest children to the lobby to do their banking. Each Wednesday a group of students will work from 8:35-8:50 with bank employees.

Open House was held last Thursday, September 20 from 6:30-8:00. The turn out was fantastic! Thanks to the PTO for providing hospitality. To everyone who baked, set up, and hosted the evening your efforts are appreciated. Many children proudly escorted their parents around the building to see classrooms, the library, and meet teachers.

October is a pumpkin month; this multi-purpose fruit, which is eaten worldwide, is part of our culture as Americans. Centuries before Europeans arrived here Native Americans used pumpkins for food. New Americans embraced the fruit and it quickly became part of the Thanksgiving tradition not only as a dessert but as a side dish and soup. Even beer was made from it. Pumpkins are most popular in the fall, especially at Halloween when they are carved into jack-o-lanterns. Irish immigrants brought the idea to the United States which preserve d their tradition of carving out potatoes or turnips for their Halloween gatherings. They commemorated Jack, the Irish villain, so wicked and shifty that even the devil didn't want him. Doomed to wander endlessly looking for a place to rest, Jack carried a candle in a rotted turnip for warmth. Since pumpkins were more plentiful than turnips Irish American children found them to be a great substitution.

Choosing a pumpkin... picking out the perfect pumpkin can be a fun family activity. Look for one that is mature. The outer skin should be firm to the touch and a rich shade of orange. Most stems retain a green color and should be dry and not leaking sap. Preserving your pumpkin? Try hairspray; it creates a lacquer type finish and spraying cut surfaces will help preserve your jack-o-lantern. Watch for flyers coming home in October for a Pumpkin Carving Contest by Bob & Debbie Palmer.

Halloween Treats

Halloween traditionally brings out the kid in all of us. Everyone loves to dress up, visit the Palmers, and walk around Canaan in search of treats. Most of us think of it as a time to enjoy candy. Treats don't have to be high in sugar, fat and calories. Note the list below:

Cheese and cracker pack	Peanuts in the shell
Cheese sticks	Popcorn
Juice box packages	Chex-Mixes
Small packages of nuts and raisins	Trail Mixes
Packages of instant cocoa mix	
Non-food items such as stickers, crayons, pencils, erasers, baseball cards, coins, etc..	

When trick or treating make sure children eat a meal or snack so they won't be tempted to dive into the goody bags. Once home, check treats. Plan together how the candy cache will be enjoyed. Consider incorporating holiday candy as a dessert or occasional after school snack over several weeks. Spread out the candy and calorie consumption and extend the holiday. Candy bars can be frozen and other candy stored in air tight containers. Above all, be safe! Use sidewalks, cross walks, and always carry a flashlight.

Since we celebrate Halloween this month a pumpkin recipe is always appreciated. Enjoy as a Sunday morning treat!

Pumpkin Waffles with Maple Walnut Apples

Waffles:

1 cup cake flour	3/4 cup milk
1/4 cup wheat germ	1/2 cup pumpkin puree
1/3 cup granulated sugar	1/4 cup melted butter
1 tablespoon baking powder	1/4 cup melted shortening (transfat-free)
1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice	1 large egg
1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg	1 large egg white
1/2 teaspoon fine salt	

Topping:

2 to 3 tablespoons unsalted butter	1/4 cup pure maple syrup
2 crisp apples, peeled and sliced thinly	1/2 cup toasted walnuts

Standard 4 x 4 inch waffle iron. For the waffles: Preheat a waffle iron to medium heat. Whisk the flour, wheat germ, sugar, baking powder, spice and salt together in a large bowl. Beat together the milk, pumpkin, melted butter, and melted shortening, egg and egg white, in a large measuring cup. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and pour in the wet ingredients. Whisk together to make a slightly lumpy batter.

For the topping: Melt the butter in a skillet over medium heat. Add the apples and let cook until slightly browned, but still crisp, about 4 minutes. Add the maple syrup and walnuts and toss to coat.

Pour and spread about 1 cup batter into the waffle iron. Cover and cook until crisp and a rich golden brown, about 7 minutes. (Try to resist the temptation to open the waffle iron too soon. Steam will puff out of the iron while the waffles cook, when this stops the waffle is cooked.) Repeat with the remaining batter. Serve hot with the apples. Recipe from Television Food Network

Time change

Beginning this year daylight savings time ends on November 4, 2007 when we will fall back one hour. Don't forget to change your clocks!

Some great websites for kids:

www.kids.nationalgeographic.com
www.kidsites.com
www.smithsonianeducation.org/students/index.html
www.familyfun.com

For Halloween: www.halloweentreats.com (Various projects, costumes, recipes, and some contests—please supervise children when using the internet and caution them NOT to give personal information of any kind).

Volunteering at School

We welcome community members to volunteer their time and talents at school. We have quite a few folks who help out with reading and tutoring math. Second grade teacher Ashley DeMazza coordinates the volunteers. If you are interested, please give her a call at 824-5149 (Ext. 133). Children benefit from the one on one experience and you serve as great role models for them.

School Lunches

The lunch program is off to a good start this year. One thing we are trying is using local vendors for food supplies including pizzeria pizza. This is extremely popular and leaves the kitchen staff time once per week to make and freeze soup stocks and soups. In addition, you should know that we have been experimenting with a peanut free peanut butter which is very popular. Sunbutter, rich in nutrients such as vitamin E and lower in fat is made from sunflower seeds. Our pb&j sandwiches have been very popular and we're thrilled – eating healthy and at the same time sensitive to those with a life threatening allergy. Please join us for lunch whenever you get the opportunity.

PTO News

by Nicole Blass

The PTO meetings are currently held the first Wednesday of each month starting at 7:00 P.M. Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 3rd. All meetings are held in the school library, with refreshments provided. Here are a few things the NCES PTO is trying to accomplish during the 2007-2008 school year:

Voting on in October—Changing the meeting time to an earlier more convenient time for parents and their children. By doing this we would like to be able to offer Free Babysitting and Dinner to anyone that attends the meeting. We would also like to help by holding these meetings for a maximum of one hour. We are striving to obtain your support! Stay tuned for the results. Any feedback we would love to hear about at our October meeting.

What does a PTO member have to do to be involved? - There are no fees (some schools charge dues), we ask for your help on being part of a committee or to supply us with some good ideas or suggestions or just come and listen. Involvement can be as simple as baking once every few months, cutting out Box Tops, helping out at a fundraiser, attending a meeting when you can etc. Maybe you have something to offer that will help benefit the NCES PTO. It's as simple as giving us contact information for helping out even if you can't make a meeting...supply us with a phone number or e-mail and we will be sure to include you in on the happenings and ask for support when needed, there are no obligations, we are all working towards the same goal—our children and our school. Here are some Agenda items that the PTO is currently working on:

September—December 2007:
Teacher's Wish List
PTO Fundraiser—Wrapping Paper and Gifts
Student Directory
New NCES Apparel
Magic Show in November
Shopping in December
Breakfast with Santa

January—May 2008:
Senior Citizen Breakfast
PTO Bingo
Spring Festival
Mother's Day Flower Sale
My Teacher Rocks Essay
Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week

Please feel free to contact Nikki Blass PTO President at nblass01@yahoo.com if you would like to be involved or want to join any of the above committees. Check out the web as well—<http://www.northcanaanelementaryschool.org/> then click on the PTO link.

*North Canaan Elementary School
Canaan, Connecticut 06018*

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Canaan, CT 06018
Permit #16