

The Vinton Chronicles

March/April 2010 Edition
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Upcoming Events

- ◆ Science Fair & Invention Convention
April 27th
- ◆ Mobile Dentist
May 10th

A Message from the Principal

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.” *Dr. Seuss*

Welcome to “Read Across America” month at Vinton School. To follow along with Dr. Seuss’ quote, we certainly have been lots of places so far this school year, with four exciting and fun-filled months of learning yet to come. Another place I know I am ready to go is a season called spring, as it always brings renewed energy, uplifted spirits, and longer and brighter days. There are lots of wonderful activities and events planned for this spring at Vinton, so read on or click on our school website.

School Building Committee - after four years of study and research, the School Building Committee is picking up speed regarding recommendations to the Board of Education and Town Council. For a complete list of public meetings and an overview of Committee history, please check out the School Building Committee link on the Town of Mansfield website.

Daylight Saving Time - it seems when we “spring ahead” with the clocks, parents start to think about summer vacations. Thus, they ask, “how many snow days have we had?” So far, we have had two, which brings us to Friday, June 18th as the last day of school. (Keep your fingers crossed!)

Trestle Tree Grows at Vinton - included in this edition of the Vinton Chronicles is an article about a physical education unit that our students absolutely enjoy. Please read Mr. Lunski’s article about the Trestle Tree and feel free to visit a class if your schedule permits.

Also, Greg Lunski, who many of you remember from the 2007-2008 school year, is substituting for Mr. Kronisch until later this spring. As always, please call or e-mail if I can assist with anything. Best wishes for a wonderful spring.

“So you see! There’s no end to the things you might know, Depending how far beyond Zebra you go.”

Dr. Seuss

Read Across America Celebration in March!

Read Across America “Dress Up” days are as follows:

- ◆ Friday, March 12th Bartholomew Cubbins Crazy Hat Day
- ◆ Wednesday, March 17th Grinch green day
- ◆ Friday, March 19th Sneetch Day **Wear Yellow!**
- ◆ Wednesday, March 24th The Foot Book Crazy Shoe Day
- ◆ Friday, March 26th The Sleep Book - wear your pajamas!
- ◆ Wednesday, March 31st Cat in the Hat Red, **White** and Black Day



March is National Nutrition Month Nurse, Mrs. Eaton

March is National Nutrition Month! At our school, we are creating the **Building Blocks of Good Health**, with a focus on Breakfast Health. We kicked off our month long celebration at the Celebrate Vinton assembly. I was joined on stage by some very healthy friends to help emphasize the need for children to develop a diet that includes all of the food groups, especially fruits and vegetables. I have also sent fliers home to all of our families to provide



some illustrations of healthy breakfast ideas as well as some activities for the children. Children who eat a healthy breakfast are better able to concentrate on their school work, have a more cooperative spirit, and have a better attendance record.

Hopefully, by starting good eating habits early in life we can promote a healthy lifestyle that the children will follow all

through their lives! For some great ideas and fun activities, check out www.mypyramid.gov/kids/.

PreK to K Corner Mrs. Rameaka, Ms. Rudge, Mrs. Terry, Mr. Toomey

This month preschoolers will focus our activities on the stories written by a favorite author of children's books, Dr. Seuss. We will have lots of practice listening for rhyming words in the stories and playing some rhyming games. Learning to rhyme is an important pre-reading skill. During March we will also be talking about the color green, shamrocks, leprechauns and rainbows. Our "Green Day" celebration will take place on Wednesday, March 17th. We will dance a jig with a partner, sing songs, go on a shamrock hunt, and enjoy a special "green" snack.

In the kindergarten classrooms, kindergarteners have been busy with building graphs, playing probability

games, and learning to count money.

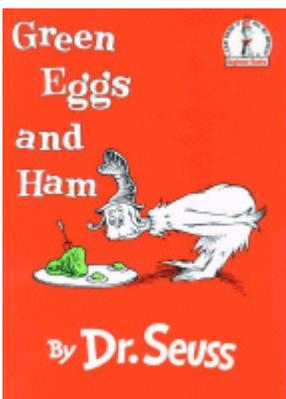
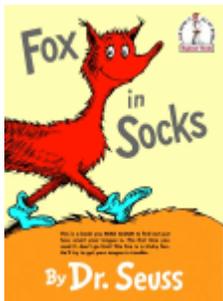
Ms. Rudge's class has written their own versions of the classic Mitten story, participated in a writers' workshop, and some of us have published books! Soon, we will be clearing our garden and looking to see if the bulbs that we planted in the Spring have sprouted.

Mrs. Terry's class is celebrating Dr. Seuss books this month by listening to many of the stories and practicing reading several others. We are also practicing a play based on the book *Tacky the Penguin* by Helen Lester. We are learning about healthy eating habits and taking care of our bodies through our unit on Nutrition.

From the Pages of the Library Mrs. Parda

March is here! 'Tis the month to celebrate Dr. Seuss and **Read Across America**. The children are excited about 'reading' our way across the map as well as participating in our 'dress up' Seuss days. Please refer to the letter that went home a week ago for the

schedule or see the dates listed on the front page of this newsletter! April will bring a 'tropical' theme. We will have a 'Hawaiian Shirt' day on April 9th! Also, don't forget that the PTA will be holding our annual **Spring Bookfair** in the library! More details coming soon!



Getting to Know Our Speech Pathologist

Mrs. Heersink

Can you believe it's March already?? Where has the year gone? If you haven't had a chance to meet me previously throughout this year or last year, my name is Danielle Heersink and I am the Speech-Language Pathologist here at Vinton. This is my second year here and I am so happy to be a part of the Vinton family ☺.

Often times, children and adults alike will say, "What is a Speech teacher?" or "What do you do at Speech?" and my favorite answer from some kiddos is always "We play games." While I assure you, your children have fun playing lots of games in my room, my job encompasses much more than having a good time ☺.

As a Speech-Language Pathologist, my role here in the school varies from grade to grade and student to student and covers several different areas of language, including the following:

- **Articulation** (production of sounds)
- **Language Comprehension** (understanding vocabulary, questions, directions, etc.)

- **Language Structure** (understanding and using grammatical rules)
- **Semantics** (understanding and using vocabulary to define, describe, and compare/contrast vocabulary)
- **Pragmatics** (use of language in play and conversation as well as writing)
- **Voice** (use of voice, most often in terms of use/abuse of vocal folds)
- **Fluency** (rate and prosody; stuttering).

The majority of my time is spent with kiddos providing service both in and out of the classroom, evaluating students' speech and language skills, and collaborating with staff on a weekly basis. I truly love all of the students here at Vinton!

If you or your children would like to know more specifically about what I do or have any questions for me at any time, please stop by (my room is in the Main Office), call me at (860)423-3086, or send me an email at heersinkdj@mansfieldct.org. For more information regarding Speech and Language, please visit www.asha.org. They are a great resource!



*Danielle Heersink,
Speech/Language
Pathologist*



4th Graders rope climbing and setting up for their own new move, "The Sloth" on the parallel bars

Physical Education News

Mr. Lunski

During the month of March until April 16th we will be working on the Trestle Tree in Physical Education. We began the unit with basic skills. The beginning lessons focus on gymnastics skills such as tumbling, jumping / landing, vaulting, rope climb, inverted positions, and balancing. Seeing the students on this equipment and their excitement level is truly amazing.

Each child will improve their coordination, balance, strength, cooperation, and problem-solving skills during the Trestle Tree. The challenge level will increase progressively at a developmentally appropriate level and will be adapted to individual abilities and needs.

The equipment that is used are boards, trestles, various balance beams and

climbing ropes, several rope bridges, cargo nets, different ladders, and many mats for safety. One of the great things about this unit is that each child will tremendously increase their confidence level. This happens through challenge by choice on the more difficult equipment, peer encouragement and cooperation. Many goals thought unattainable by students will be achieved.

During the beginning stages the scope of our theme will be based on skill practice and small group problem solving. As we near the final weeks, whole class cooperation and problem-solving will be emphasized while keeping the previous skills learned within context. The Vinton students and I look forward to the time, work, and results from the Trestle Tree.



Dr. Seuss Trivia

In ONE FISH, TWO FISH,
RED FISH, BLUE FISH,
how many humps are
on Mr. Gump's Wump?

- A) Four
- B) Five
- C) Six
- D) Seven

Find the answer at
the bottom of this page



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We're on the Web!
mansfieldct.org/schools/vinton

Invention Convention/Science Fair

Ms. Barrow

The ever popular Annie E. Vinton Invention Convention / Science Fair will be held on April 27th at Vinton School. Three of the inventors' displays will be selected to compete in the CT Statewide Invention Convention at UCONN on May 1st. The non-competitive science projects are simply celebrated and shared. Both events invite all Vinton students (K-4) to participate and enjoy the many rewards of project based learning.

Students who choose to participate in the Science Fair will display their projects, just as the inventors. The only difference is that the Science projects are non-competitive and aren't judged. All student scientists and student inventors receive ribbons and awards at a public ceremony held at the school on the evening of the event.

As in the past, student projects are completed at home with parent support. Ms. Barrow is available for parent and child consultations. The process consists of problem finding, solution finding, gathering of materials

and documenting expenses, creating the project, revising, and finally preparing a display. The hallway bulletin board outside the computer lab gives suggestions for getting started. Copies of the handouts can be found in Room 3 and are available to anyone.

Once a student decides to participate, he or she will need to document the entire process on a student log. Blank student logs are included in the packet that each child receives once they return their permission slips. The packets give step-by-step directions for completing the project.

Six weeks in advance of the event, permission slips are distributed to all students. This gives them ample time to complete their projects. Should any part of the packet get destroyed or lost, it can be replaced by printing out a copy of the form available on the Vinton website under the Enrichment window. We're looking forward to another fun-filled educational event at Vinton School on April 27th!

Hola from Señora Zugarazo

Grade 2 - Puerto Rico!!!! We just finished up Carnival in Puerto Rico and are studying about the geography of the island and some interesting facts. We will be writing a class book followed by individual books about Puerto Rico.

Some of these will be published by our publishing center. Our other class books and CDs are now available in the Library for checkout. Please encourage your child to check these out and share with the family.

Grade 3 - Off to Honduras!! We are focusing on the tropical fruits of Honduras and their size, color and taste. We will be having a fruit tasting in April. So, if you would like to help

out or send in fruits, let me know. I will be sending home more information in April.

Grade 4 - Perú! Perú! Students are reviewing time and numbers. This will help them with their play about Peru which they will be presenting in April. This unit has a lot of review from past units this year and last. They are learning about the geography and animals in Peru as well as the climate.

As always, if you need to contact me about any activity/unit or have any questions, please feel free to call me at the school at (860) 423-3086 or email me at jennifer.zugarazo@mansfieldct.org. *Gracias!*