



JCSA Jonas Clarke School Association Newsletter

Jonas Clarke Middle School
17 Stedman Road ♦ Lexington, MA 02421-7210
781-861-2450 ♦ <http://lps.lexingtonma.org/clarkems>

Principal: Anna Monaco
Assistant Principals: Jennifer Turner
Jonathan Wettstone

November 2012 *Print edition*

Online at www.clarkenewsletter.org

SCHOOL CALENDAR

11/13	Challenge Team Sponsored Staff Breakfast	7:30 AM - 12 PM
	Parent Coffee in 3rd Cafeteria	9:00-9:45 AM
	School Committee Meeting	7:30 PM
11/14	7th and 8th Grade Instrumental Concert	7:00-8:30 PM
11/15	JCSA Meeting in 3rd Cafeteria	8:30- 9:30 AM
11/20	6th Grade Instrumental Concert	7:00-8:30 PM
11/21	Half Day - Dismissal at 11:45 am	11:45 AM
	Schools and Offices 1/2 Day	12:00 PM
11/22	Holiday	
11/23	Holiday	
11/29	Choral Concert	7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
11/30	Middle School Conferences - No School for Students	8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
12/4	School Committee Meeting	6:00-8:00 PM
12/6	School Picture Make- Up Day	8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Dear Jonas Clarke Community,

We are well into the swing of things now as the first quarter comes to a close. I hope that all students and families got the opportunity to see progress reports online. This is a reminder that all progress reports and report cards will be

visible on the Aspen portal only. If you are having difficulty accessing the portal or have a question about the process, please visit our website where there are links to help documents, as well as parent and student portal Tech Support email addresses.

Last week we held our Rachel's Challenge assemblies for all grades. The purpose of these assemblies was to remind our 7th and 8th graders about Rachel's Five Challenges and why they are so important to our school community, as well as introduce our 6th graders and new students at Clarke to this inspiring program. It is my belief that as a result of bringing Rachel's Challenge to Clarke, we have given our students and staff a common language about how we want to act and treat each other at Clarke Middle School. All 6th, 7th and 8th grade students had a chance to see the presentation and, if they choose to accept Rachel's Challenges, sign the banner now hanging in the front entrance. In addition, students had the opportunity to hear about the *Chain Links Club*, which is dedicated to spreading kindness at Clarke, and our new *Linked In* program, designed to bring students together to form new friendships. We are so proud of the positive climate that Rachel's Challenge has brought to our school community. Rachel's Five Challenges are:

- Treat Others the Way You Would Like to Be Treated
- Dream Big and Believe in Yourself
- Appreciate Everyone. Mock No One
- Practice the Power of Positive Gossip
- Forgive and Be Forgiven

We would like to thank you for your support of this program over the years. I believe that it is important for all of us to understand what it takes to build a positive school culture.

Parent conference time is also upon us. Upcoming conference dates include a full day of conferences on **November 30, 2012** (no school for students) and half days on **December 7, 2012** and **December 14, 2012** (early release days for students). As communicated earlier, we have made a change to our parent conferences this year by going to 10 -minute team conferences. Although we understand the challenge of having only 10 minutes, this allows us to ensure that there are more conference slots for each grade level. We thank you for your understanding and flexibility.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Belmont World Film's Family Festival Turns 10!

November 9-10 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
November 16-18 at the Studio Cinema, Belmont
More on page 7

Magazine Drive is now over.....

But it's not too late to participate!

More on page 7

**NEXT DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER
ARTICLE SUBMISSION is Monday,
DECEMBER 3. Submit your articles to
clarke.newsletter@gmail.com**

FROM THE PRINCIPAL *Continued from page 1*

I would also like to thank the JCSA for sponsoring our online program for conference sign-ups again this year. For more information on how to sign up for conferences online, please check the homepage of our website.

I would like to thank you all for your support and feedback as we have moved into this school year. As always, please feel free to contact me with any feedback, questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Anna W. Monaco
Principal

FROM THE JCSA

The 2012-13 school year is off to a great start! The staff enjoyed the lunch provided by the JCSA the day before the first day of school and a pizza dinner on Back to School night. The New Families Night was a great way to welcome newcomers to Clarke. There were food and games for kids, and Ms. Monaco, Ms. Turner, Mr. Wettstone were on hand to speak to new parents. Thank you to Paige Sabine and Becky DesRoches for organizing this event and helping us extend a warm welcome to new families. 6th and 7th graders had the opportunity to celebrate being back at school and get to know one another at their socials. They were treated to great food, a rockin' DJ and wild (but not too wild) dancing. It wouldn't have happened without our JCSA Socials Coordinators, so thank you to Julie Read and Kristin LaFond.

The Magazine Drive, one of our two fundraisers, was a big hit as always. Students enjoyed some friendly competition for prizes, and the proceeds will allow the JCSA to continue to support our wonderful staff and teachers. Kirsty Collis and Naomi Kieler did an outstanding job running the drive. Of course, the magazine drive is a team effort, so thank you to everyone who helped out. Also, it's great to see students showing their Clarke pride by wearing spiritwear, so many thanks to Alison Arshad, Leslie Forg, Beth Gavrin, and Sue Wilner for organizing the sale.

Our membership drive is going well. 430 families and an amazing 55 staff members have joined the JCSA! These numbers are great, but we would love to have the entire Clarke community be a part of the JCSA. If you haven't joined yet, don't worry, because it's never too late. You can download a membership form on the Clarke website or simply complete the form at the end of this edition and return it to the office.

Happy Thanksgiving,

Kara Brandes and Kathleen Lenihan

Science Teacher Carolyn Sheild meets Dr. Robert Ballard



Adventurer science teacher Carolyn Sheild was thrilled to meet Dr. Robert Ballard on Friday, Nov. 2 at the Ocean Literacy Summit, hosted by the New England Ocean Science Education Collaborative in Narragansett, Rhode Island. The conference theme was "The Ocean Is Largely Unexplored", and provided attendees the opportunity to attend talks and hands-on workshops led by scientists and educators. Dr. Robert Ballard is among the most accomplished and well-known of the world's deep-sea explorers, and is best known for his historic discoveries of hydrothermal vents and the sunken R.M.S. Titanic. Since Ms. Sheild went in the Alvin submarine in 2007 and has an interest in hydrothermal vent ecology, getting the chance to hear Dr. Ballard speak was especially meaningful.

Ballard has pioneered distance learning in the classrooms of America and around the world with the JASON Project, and is currently Director of the newly-created Center for Ocean Exploration at the University of Rhode Island's Graduate School of Oceanography. His new ship of exploration, the E/V *Nautilus*, operated by his Ocean Exploration Trust spends four to five months at sea each year. In 2011, the vessel explored the Black Sea, Aegean, Mediterranean, and Atlantic Ocean, beaming back his exploration around the clock on Nautilus Live, <http://www.nautiluslive.org/>.

TEAM NEWS

Atlantis 6

Atlantis team teachers have a great deal to be thankful for this year.

Our Top Ten reasons, in no particular order:

1. The wonderful start to the 2012 - 2013 school year with our new Atlantis students.
2. The beautiful fall weather, which has given us the chance to have lots of recess.
3. The beginning of our yearly Atlantis homework club. We meet in Room 367 from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm on Thursday afternoons. Students can work independently, with friends from any team, or with LHS students and 8th graders as tutors.
4. Our homeroom representatives, as they led our homerooms to another successful Food Drive.
5. Two early days out of school because of Frankenstorm (Superstorm Sandy).
6. The enthusiasm of Atlantis students about the presidential election and their participation in Clarke's revamped voting process.
7. The creativity of Atlantis students in finding fun and interesting ways to demonstrate their learning, and share with others.
8. The enthusiasm and spirit shown at our annual Team Breakfast, especially the willingness to participate openly in team-building games as students made some new friends.
9. The New England Patriots' exciting start to the season on their way to the Super Bowl.
10. The health and happiness of our families and friends.

Bonus -The anticipated return of the NHL as the Bruins skate toward another run at the Stanley Cup.

Voyager 6

Voyager Math students are learning to solve mystery math puzzlers that feature missing digits that have been replaced by letters. Using their knowledge of multiplication and division algorithms, they solve these using logic and problem-solving strategies. In addition, they are learning to graph exponential growth and decline.

Voyager Science has had a very exciting start to the year! Students have conducted investigations, and have done lots of work sharpening up their scientific skills.

We laughed as I followed the procedures for "Making Jelly and Fluff Sandwiches" that were written by the students. They were amazed when they observed a soda-can implode.

In these first 2 months, students have shared their personal experiences and cultures with the class, which has created a wonderful place for students to learn and be respected. Moving into our weather unit, we can thank Hurricane Sandy for a great introduction. I am looking forward to a fantastic year in Voyager science.

In English, Voyagers students have begun the year with a Writer's Workshop. Students have been drawing on a variety of memories from their past and writing about them in their writer's notebooks.

Seed ideas for future writing are kept in their writer's notebooks as well. We have read several examples of memoir writing and learned the characteristics of memoirs. Students then selected an example from their seed ideas to create memoirs of their own. Memoir writing and sharing have proven to be a wonderful way to get to know each other early in the school year. After studying the elements of literature including characters, setting, conflict and plot and applying these concepts to several short stories and fiction writings, we are beginning a study of character development and change over time within a novel about early humans.

In Ancient Civilizations, we just finished creating Famous Archaeologist Baseball Cards. The students did a wonderful job creating the baseball cards and presenting them to the class.

Most recently, we have been studying archaeology and early humans.

Students are beginning an early human research project in the IMC.

Adventurer 7

English

After beginning the year by reading short stories in English class, Adventurer students have been thinking a lot about community as we read Lois Lowry's, *The Giver*. One way we practiced close reading of the text was to find relevant evidence as we responded to writing prompts. As we analyzed the details of the book, we identified aspects of society that we feel are important. We are clear that we want the freedom to choose our own course in life even if that means there will be obstacles. After reading Lowry's novel, we watched *Pleasantville* and compared the two stories. The similarities are remarkable and prompted thoughtful discussion. It's been an awesome first quarter.

Math

In Math, students continue to practice communicating mathematically using both numbers and words.

Students are learning to combine like terms to simplify expressions. We have learned how to use the distributive property when simplifying expressions.

As we continue in our expressions and equations unit, students will engage in a wide variety of word problems which ask students to identify patterns and write function rules.

Science

In Science, students have been enjoying viewing the microscopic world using microscopes! We are learning about cells and their parts, and doing various projects to understand how cells function. Students are comparing a cell to something (like a city, school or zoo), and observing and labeling living cells under the microscope. Adventurer team is looking forward to our first field trip to the Aquarium in December in conjunction with our upcoming Ecology unit. Just keep swimming!

Geography

The introduction is just wrapping, students now know where our electricity and water come from, and where our trash and sewage go. Our little Adventurers will have a brief project about one country in the world, then we will finally begin our march around the globe in Europe. Bon Voyage!

Enterprise 7

Team Enterprise continues to explore strange new topics and boldly go where no team has gone before.

Current events have been a rich source of information in our World Geography classes. We covered the power and fury of Sandy and what made this Frankenstorm so unique. The election provided Enterprise students with a great opportunity not only to learn about not only the national race for President, but also to examine the state races and ballot questions Massachusetts residents voted on. Students also had the opportunity to exercise their right to vote when they registered and participated in the first Clarke Mock Election this year.

In English, we just finished the classic novel *The Giver*. Students explored the concepts of utopia, memory and self as we followed Jonas through the community. Throughout the book, we challenged ourselves to examine our own customs and recognize that what may seem normal to us, may be seen as strange to outsiders who are not familiar with our ways.

In Math, students have completed the fractions and decimals unit. They also learned how to solve problems with diagrams. Students are working with combining like terms in algebraic expressions or modular arithmetic. Students will continue to manipulate algebraic expressions using rational numbers.

In Science, students have completed a refresher on microscopes and we have looked at several specimens. With this knowledge, we are starting our Cell Unit. This unit will explore similarities and differences between plant and animal cells as well as the function of different cell parts and the function of different cells.

Explorer 7

In English, students have finished reading the novel *Tangerine* and are headed toward a writing workshop. They will review the steps in writing a multi-paragraph essay by working through the writing process and they will work both independently and collaboratively in editing and revising their work.

In Science, students have begun examining the all-important world of the cell. Students have learned the names of 13 cellular organelles and the function of each organelle in the life of a cell. We will soon be looking at living cells under the microscope before moving on to learning about cellular processes including cell transport, cellular energy processes, and cell division.

In World Geography, students are continuing work on country profiles while learning about world economies, culture, and forms of government. We are getting ready to head off on an exploration of Europe.

In Math, students continue to practice communicating mathematically using both number and words. Students are learning to combine like terms as well as using the distributive property in order to simplify expressions. As we continue in our expressions and equations unit, students will focus on writing equations as a problem-solving strategy in order to solve a

Apollo 8

As Apollo students enter the second term of eighth grade, we enjoyed our fall field trip when we visited sites relevant to the American Revolution. On Nov. 8, we headed to Lexington and Concord for a field study in history.

In English, we are working through *The Outsiders* as we study how theme is developed in a text, and how elements such as character(s), conflict(s), and setting(s) affect the journey of theme. Furthermore, by investigating the novel for issues of class, gender, and labeling, we study how this novel, published in 1967, continues to have relevance in today's society. Through the use of the Reader's Notebook, students are experiencing more freedom in what points they look at in the novel, as well as what they write about more formally.

In US History, Mr. Romulus has found that there is much enthusiasm among students as they examine the many critical events leading to the American Revolution.

As tension in the colonies continues to grow, students have already been called to join in a mock New England Town Meeting to discuss their comprehension and philosophical views of the deteriorating relationship between England and the 13 English colonies.

Next, students will be called to create an historical "Timeline" of events, which will express many facts leading to the American Revolutionary War.

In Math, we are studying equations, inequalities and functions.

Making careful mass, length, and volume measurements to be able to determine densities of different materials occupied much of October in Science. We learned why different materials float, sink, and suspend in liquids.

Some of us connected density to the advanced concept of buoyancy and now have a better understanding of why ships made of very dense steel can float. As the mercury dips (or is supposed to...), we begin our study of heat: how it differs from temperature and thermal energy, and how it transfers among materials. We will learn to safely use bunsen burners to bring about changes in material properties after our heat unit. Stay warm!

Challenge 8

Challenge students are off to a great start. In English, they have been reading a wide selection of short stories, including tales from Edgar Allen Poe, Guy de Maupassant, Anton Chekov, and other classic authors. Students have been delving into various literary elements, writing analytical essays, and learning assorted subtleties of grammar, including what makes a clause a clause and the many wonderful things an adverb can do.

In US History, students are well into their study of the American Revolution. They have also been keeping a close eye on the presidential election, learning all about the electoral college and the voting process. Soon, they will tackle a unit on civics and government, where they will see how, where, and “why” the government operates. Some are already looking forward to voting in four years.

Science classes have recently finished their study of density and are now on to learning about the transfer of thermal energy. They also have begun using the ever-popular bunsen burners for a variety of exciting lab activities. Next up will be a whirlwind tour of the states of matter.

Algebra IA has tackled the foundations of algebra and exponent rules. We have just completed a major unit on equations, and will be starting off second quarter with an inequalities unit!

Algebra I has conquered the foundations of algebra, equations, and inequalities, and is now ready to take on the heart of algebra with a functions unit! Math 8 took on the foundations of algebra and is now tackling equations of all kinds!

Discovery 8

In Discovery English, we are finishing our short story unit and will proceed to a common assessment. After reading our short stories, we have enacted some as skits. Our vocabulary work continues apace, though students can re-take quizzes as needed. We have completed our unit on the questions that modifiers answer and will utilize that understanding in later grammar units.

Our United States History students are completing their PowerPoint presentations. At the same time, we are investigating the events in Salem Village in 1692 and the 2012 election. Very shortly, they will be embarking on the road to the American Revolution and the ultimate establishment of the republic.

In Discovery Science, we are beginning our chemistry unit by exploring various properties of matter. We have just completed our investigation of density, in which we explored the relationship between mass and volume and the effect that it has on matter’s behavior. We explored questions such as, “How can objects made of really dense substances (such as steel) float in water?”

Next, we will be exploring the effects that thermal energy has on matter, including changes of states in matter.

In Mr. Owens’s Math 1 classes, students have just completed a unit on inequalities focusing on solving and graphing inequalities on the number line. We also looked at solving and graphing absolute value inequalities and word problems. We are beginning a unit on functions. We will be using a Vernier Probe in class to learn about graphing relationships with distance and time.

In Mr. Owens’s Math 1A classes, students have just completed a unit on solving equations. Students learned about solving single-variable equations, literal equations, and translating and solving word problems. In the next unit, we will be looking at solving and graphing inequalities on the number line.

JCSA Clarke Newsletter Information:

The Newsletter prints items directly related to the school and the JCSA. Articles are subject to editorial discretion. It is now available online at clarknewsletter.org. A printed edition (in pdf format) can also be found at the Clarke Middle school website www://lps.lexingtonma.org/clarkems. **NEXT DEADLINE for the December/January issue is Monday, December 3, 2012.**

Newsletter Team: Layout: Grace Clackson, Irina Gritsevskaya

Editing: Lesley Hausmann

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Belmont World Film's Family Film Festival Turns 10!

November 9-10 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

November 16-18 at the Studio Cinema, Belmont

Belmont World Film, which has presented the best in international films from around the globe for children and adults since 2001, celebrates the 10th anniversary of its Family Film Festival with "Magic and Movies," five days of live action and animated films from the Netherlands, Czech Republic, Poland, the UK, Germany, Estonia/Latvia, Canada, China, the US, and elsewhere—many of them US or New England premieres.

Each weekend begins with "Magic Fridays," magical programs of animated shorts, live action films, and performances. Programs include:

"MAGIC" FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9 (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)

7PM: The Magic Piano, The Chopin Shorts + Live Performance by Leonard Solomon & His Bellowphone. New England Premiere • All ages

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10 (Museum Of Fine Art Boston)

10:30 AM: ERIC CARLE PICTURE WRITER: THE ART OF THE PICTURE BOOK by Kate Geis (2012, 30 min.) • All ages • Shown with films from *The Very Hungry Caterpillar & Other Stories* (1993, 30 min.) with permission from the Eric Carle Studio

12 PM: FIDGETY BRAM by Anna van der Heide (The Netherlands, 2012, 83 min.) US premiere • Age 6+ • In Dutch with English subtitles

2PM: CANADIAN/QUEBEC SHORTS I: AROUND THE WORLD (69 min.) from the National Film Board of Canada with a spotlight on Quebec

3:30 PM: THE BLUE TIGER by Petr Oukropec (Czech Republic, 2011, 90 min.) New England Premiere • Age 7+ • In Czech with English subtitles. Shown with: *THE HAPPY DUCKLING* (UK, 2009, 9 min.)

"MAGIC" FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16 (Studio Cinema): Featuring free ice cream treats compliments of Moozy's in Belmont

4:45 PM: THE MAGICIANS by Joram Lürsen (The Netherlands, 2011, 94 min.) New England Premiere • Age 5+ • In Dutch with English subtitles. Preceded by a live magic show by Bill Cook, featured in the film *Make Believe*.

7 PM: MAKE BELIEVE by J. Clay Tweel (2010, 88 min.) • Tweens & up. Followed by a live magic show by Bill Cook, featured in the film, and a Q&A with producer Steven Klein.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17 (Studio Cinema, Belmont)

10:30 AM: ANIMATED BEST LOVED CHILDREN'S BOOKS FROM SCHOLASTIC/WESTON WOODS STUDIOS: Program I (USA, 70 min.) • Age 3-10 featuring *Knuffle Bunny Free, The Red Hen, Happy Birthday Moon!, Edwina, the Dinosaur Who Didn't Know She Was Extinct, Doctor De Soto, Hi! Fly Guy, Swimmy, Chicken Soup With Rice.*

12 PM: ERIC CARLE, PICTURE WRITER: THE ART OF THE PICTURE BOOK by Kate Geis (2012, 30 min.) Shown with *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (6:12 min.) and followed by a Q&A with filmmaker Kate Geis. • All Ages • Sponsored by Cambridge Savings Bank

12 PM: THE MAGIC PIANO AND THE CHOPIN SHORTS (New England Premiere) • All ages

3 PM: VICTOR AND THE SECRET OF CROCODILE MANSION by Cyrill Boss & Philipp Stennert (Germany, 2012, 91 min.) US Premiere • Age 8+

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18 (Studio Cinema, Belmont)

10:30 AM: ANIMATED BEST LOVED CHILDREN'S BOOKS FROM SCHOLASTIC/WESTON WOODS STUDIOS Program II (USA, 70 min.) • Age 3-10 featuring *Bink & Gollie, Sky Color, Frederick, Edwina, the Dinosaur Who Didn't Know She Was Extinct, Pete's a Pizza, I'm Fast, Knuffle Bunny Free, Goodnight, Goodnight Construction Site*

1:30 PM: CANADIAN/QUEBEC SHORTS I: GROWING PAINS (60 min.) • All Ages. From the National Film Board of Canada with a spotlight on Quebec

1:30 PM: LOTTE AND THE MOONSTONE SECRET by Heiki Ernits & Janno Põldma (Estonia/Latvia, 2011, 75 min.) New England Premiere • Age 5 & up

3 PM: ONE LIFE by Michael Gunton & Martha Holmes (UK, 2011, 85 min.) US Premiere • All Ages

TICKETS:

OPENING NIGHT: children \$7; seniors, students, MFA & BWF members \$9; non-members \$11.

ALL OTHER SCREENINGS: children \$5; seniors, students, MFA & BWF members \$7; nonmembers \$8.

MFA tickets are available online at www.mfa.org/film, by calling the MFA Ticket Line at 1-800-440-6975, or in person at any MFA ticket desk.

Studio Cinema tickets are available online at www.mktix.com/bwf-festival or in person at the Studio Cinema Box Office. For full descriptions and trailers, visit www.belmontworldfilm.org. For more information call 617-484-3980.

The magazine drive is now over

The magazine drive is now over. Thanks to everyone who participated. Over 700 orders were made this year. Proceeds will be reported when they are known. Online sales were considerably lower than last year but please keep in mind that there is still opportunity to purchase magazines online and help the school. (Jonas Clarke Middle School receives 40% of the subscription price for each magazine sold, new or renewed)

Magazines can continue to be ordered online all year through the Great American website. The link to the site is: www.gaschoolstore.com. Click "Shop Now" in the orange box. **The School Code for ordering is 2548949.** Using this code will ensure that Clarke gets credit for the sale. Remember, magazines make great holiday gifts!

Congratulations to Ms. Richmond's homeroom # 362 on the Voyager Team for the highest sales school-wide!

If you have any questions, please contact Naomi Kielar (nbkiel@verizon.net or 781 674 2086)



As we strive to produce an informative and interesting newsletter, it would help us to get your feedback and ideas regarding the content. Please email your suggestions and comments to clarke.newsletter@gmail.com
Many thanks!

Jonas Clarke Middle School
17 Stedman Road
Lexington, MA 02421-7210
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