

RENNER ROUND-UP

A Renner PTA Publication

Volume XVI, Issue 6

April 2010

Mission

The mission of Renner Middle School, a shared responsibility of home, school and community, is to provide education which nurtures, inspires and challenges students in their uniqueness, preparing them to be contributing members of society.

Renner Round-Up

is published six times a year by the Renner PTA.

5701 W. Parker
Plano, TX 75093

Principal :
Bill McLaughlin

PTA President :
Carolyn Keeter

Newsletter
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Allison Choucair

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TAKS Week is Coming!
Monday, April 26th
6th and 7th Grade LAT Math

Tuesday, April 27th
6th and 7th Grade Math

Wednesday, April 28th
6th and 7th Grade Reading

Thursday, April 29th
8th Grade Science

Friday, April 30th
8th Grade Social Studies

Test Taking Tips:

- Get at least 8 hours sleep the night before the test.
- Eat a good breakfast with protein and carbohydrates like eggs and a biscuit or oatmeal sprinkled with pecans.
- Get to school on time.
- If you are feeling anxious, draw in a long deep breath through your nose and slowly let it out through your mouth.
- Bring two sharpened pencils.
- Take your time.
- Your teachers know how hard you worked and believe you will do just fine. Tell yourself the same.



April/May/June 2010 Calendar

APRIL

- 15 End of 5th Six Weeks, Teacher Treats
- 20 Renner Spirit Night at Yogurtville, Park & Preston
- 22 Renner Theater presents *Channel Surfing, II* - 6:30pm, cafeteria
- 23 Report Cards
- 26 Math LAT - 6th and 7th Grades
- 27 Math TAKS - 6th and 7th Grades
- 28 Reading TAKS - 6th and 7th Grades
- 29 Science TAKS - 8th Grade
- 30 Social Studies TAKS - 8th grade

MAY

- 3-7 Teacher Appreciation Week
 - 7 Plano Music Festival - 6th grade only (during school day)
 - 8 End of Year Band/Choir/Orchestra Party - Hawaiian Falls
- 10 PTA Board Luncheon - 11:30am
NJHS Meeting
- 11 NJHS Induction Ceremony
- 18 Renner Spirit Night at Yogurtville, Park & Preston
- 24 Boys Choir Rehearsal - Cafeteria, 3:35-5:30pm
- 25 Girls Choir Rehearsal - Cafeteria, 3:35-5:30pm
- 26 Boys Choir Spring Concert - 6:30pm
Girls Choir Spring Concert - 7:30pm
- 21 8th Grade Yearbook Signing Party - 8th period, Cafeteria
- 31 Memorial Day - Student/Staff Holiday

JUNE

- 1-4 Final Exams
 - 4 Last Day of School - Early Release 12:40pm
 - 7 Report Cards



Parents of all Sixth Graders:



**Take care of your student's
7th Grade Immunizations now!**

Immunizations Required for Entry to Grade 7:

- **TDaP (within the last 5 years)**
- **Meningitis**
- **Varicella #2 (unless student had chicken pox)**

**DO NOT WAIT UNTIL AUGUST TO COMPLETE THESE.
Immunizations must be on file in order for
your student to pick up his/her schedule
and start school on the first day.**

**Many students have these completed,
but they are not on file with the nurse.
Contact your physician ASAP.**

**If you need help finding places to get the vaccines,
you can call Miss Grace at (469) 752-5809.**



The Principal's Column

By Bill McLaughlin, Renner Middle School Principal

I hope this issue of the Renner Round Up finds that your family is doing well and your child is making progress at school. Rather than writing my usual article, I want to share a few random thoughts that I hope are all somewhat related:

- **The Middle School Brain:** (no, this is not an oxymoron) As a staff we have continued looking at brain research on teenagers and how this impacts their education. At a recent staff professional development, one of our teachers shared new research findings. A brain research study began with the premise that a teenager's brain would look closely like the brain of an adult. Not surprising for anyone who has a teenager living in their house, it doesn't, and teenagers think very differently from adults. One part of the study found that a middle school kid's pre-frontal cortex is not fully developed causing them to react emotionally rather than logically in negative situations. As a parent I'm sure you have seen an emotional response once or twice from a request or consequence you've issued so this shouldn't be too surprising. Part of our job as parents and educators is to use these opportunities as learning experiences and talk them through what happened, what would have been appropriate, and understanding why a consequence might be necessary. You are helping them create brain pathways, and in time, more rational responses will replace emotional reactions, or over-reactive responses as the case may be.

Another interesting finding showed that teenagers typically don't correctly identify the emotion shown on an adult's face. More often than not, they saw anger when that was not the emotion the other individual was experiencing. I have seen this first hand in the cafeteria when I'm in deep thought solving the world's problems as kids eat their chicken nuggets, and a student walks up and asks "What's wrong Mr. McLaughlin?" or "Why are you upset?" when really that's not how I'm feeling. I guess the morale of this story is to help your child understand how to better read emotions, or you could smile more, even if it means you have to fake it sometimes.

The Principal's Column, continued

By Bill McLaughlin, Renner Middle School Principal



- **Spring Fever:** Help your child avoid the pitfalls of spring and declining grades. Encourage your child to set goals for the remainder of the year, stay organized, use their agenda, work hard, and complete their work. Finish strong.
- **The Power of Peers and Need for Supervision:** The influence of friends is a significant pressure for teenagers. Who your kids are hanging out with, where they are, and what they are doing becomes more and more important. Know who your child's friends are, talk with them about making good choices, invite their friends to your house, and meet their parents. It's important to keep an ongoing dialogue about what your child's friends are doing and reinforce your expectations and family values. While I'm on this topic, I continue to be concerned with an after school plan of meeting friends at the Rec Center. I think many parents have the false impression that their child is supervised next door. This is not the case and significant amounts of unsupervised time with large groups of teenagers might put your child in a situation that you wouldn't be comfortable with as their parent. Stay involved and have on-going conversations with your kids. Ask questions that can't be answered with a simple yes or no.
- **Lunch Time Help:** Due to legislation, please do not bring food or desserts for your child's friends at lunch. You may only provide food for your child. Thanks for your help.

Bill McLaughlin, Principal





The President's Column

By Carolyn Keeter, 2009-2010 Renner PTA President

Where has the year gone? I can't believe that it is mid-April and we only have one more 6 weeks left of this school year. As always the Renner PTA volunteers have been extremely busy doing what you all do best, VOLUNTEERING!

Thank you to **Holly Blais** and **Debra Copley** for an outstanding book fair. It was extremely successful. Because of the great success of our book fair, the PTA will be able to continue the programs and activities we provide for the students of Renner. Thank you also to all of the volunteers who helped Holly and Debra throughout the week the book fair was open.

A big thank you to all three teacher luncheon coordinators who have hosted some of the best parties around in the teacher's lounge or the counselor's conference room. **Lori Gropper, Michelle Adams, and Susie Learmont** are all amazing women who have put all of this together. There are also many volunteers who help in these events. Thank you to each of you!

Holly Castora put on an amazing social on April 9th. A loud, fun time was had by all students who attended. This is always a great event for students to go to school and hang out with their friends in a safe environment. Thanks Holly for all of your planning.

Thank you to **Jenny Craig** and **Becky Tanoury** for another great day of teacher treats. They have been amazing the last two years and I think the teachers have really looked forward to their day of big treats.

As we get closer to the end of school, we still have several events planned. Teacher Appreciation will be May 3rd – May 7th. **Mary Kay Drury** is working hard to make our Renner teachers feel special. Contact her at appreciation@rennerpta.org if you would like to help. **Katherine Sigrist** is also coordinating volunteers to make a casserole for a teacher that week. Renner has a large staff so any help with this project is appreciated. Please contact Katherine at casseroles@rennerpta.org.

The teachers and students are all preparing for the TAKS tests the last week of April. Please make sure your child gets a good night's sleep and a wonderful breakfast each morning.

The President's Column, continued
By Carolyn Keeter, 2009-2010 Renner PTA President

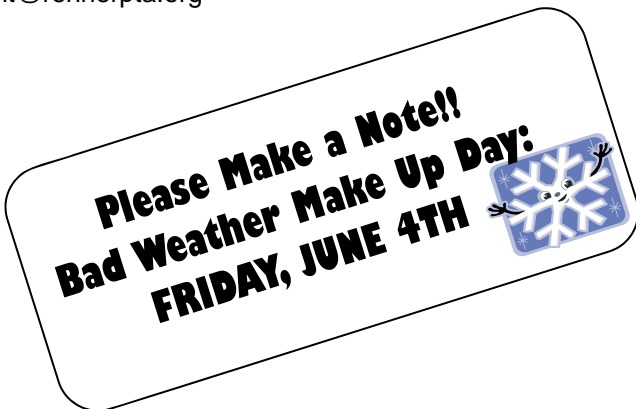


I would like to congratulate the new officers of the Renner PTA for the 2010-2011 school year. They are President, **Julie Myers**, 1st VP-Programs, **Kelley Eggleston**, 2nd VP-Volunteers, **Susie Learmont**, 3rd VP-Ways and Means, **Jenny Wood**, 4th VP-Membership, **Lori Baum**, Secretary, **Jennifer Fuller**, and Treasurer, **Sandy Seaton**. They were elected at the General PTA meeting on March 8th. They will do a wonderful job of leading the Renner PTA next year.

We are beginning a new fundraiser this spring. **Yogurtville** at Park and Preston will be hosting **Renner Spirit Nights** once a month. During these nights the Renner PTA will receive 10% of all sales from 4:00 - 9:00pm. Please visit Yogurtville and place your receipt in the "Renner Bucket". The next two Renner nights will be **April 20th** and **May 18th**. These will continue through the summer months so check the next Round Up for those dates. What a great time to catch up with friends while the kids (and adults) have a great treat.

The summer will be here before we know it, so let's finish this year strong. As we start planning for next year, please don't hesitate to contact me or the new officers above with any new ideas that we can consider to make Renner even better.

Carolyn Keeter
Renner PTA President
president@rennerpta.org



Dear Renner Parents:

In order to plan for the 2010-2011 school year, we would appreciate information from families who are planning/considering a move from the Renner/Shepton attendance zone during the summer. This information is very important and helps in accounting for all students who do not return for the 2010-2011 school year. Students who are unaccounted for will be reported as drop outs. We do not want this information to follow your student. Please complete the form below.

If you know for certain or if you are considering a move (this includes your student attending a private school), please complete the appropriate information below and have your student return the form to the counseling office. If you know the name and address of the school your child will be attending next year, please include that information. (This form is for Renner use only. If your plans change and your student returns to Renner/Shepton in 2010-11, this form will be discarded.)

Thank you,
Judy Lawson, Registrar

My student(s) will not be returning to Plano Independent School District for the reason listed below. I am the legal guardian of this student. I plan to enroll him/her in the school named below.

Student(s) Name: _____ Grade Level: _____
_____ Grade Level: _____

Withdrawal Reason _____

Name of New School: _____

If moving, please provide a forwarding address (optional):

Printed Name of Parent or Legal Guardian _____ Relationship _____

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian _____ Date _____

HELP, HELP, HELP

School Supplies Needed!

Renner's last outreach project of the year will be benefitting The Collin County Children's Advocacy Center. The Center is a non-profit agency serving children and families affected by abuse and neglect.

We are collecting school supplies for the Center's Back to School Fair where each child is presented with a backpack filled with school supplies and gift certificates. What could be a better way to help these kids start the school year off in a positive way?

The items needed are:

Graphing paper
Compasses
Hand sanitizer
Ziplock bags (any size)
Folders with brads
Glue
Scissors
Erasers
Rulers
#2 Pencils
Pencil boxes
Colored pencils
Crayons



The back to school drive will be **held April 26 - May 14th**. All items can be dropped off in the bins near the main office. For more information, please contact Lori Baum at (972) 781-1331.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

A great big THANK YOU to all who helped support our community outreach efforts. Because of your support, we were able to help The Family Place put on a "spook-tacular" Halloween carnival, provide our troops in Afghanistan with holiday gifts, snacks and the essentials needed to make their stay overseas a little more bearable, and finally provide the dogs and cats at Operation Kindness with food, treats, toys, and more.

So, thank you for showing the community how much Renner cares and in such a BIG way!!

Renner Book Fair News

By: Holly Blaise and Debra Copley



We've all had a SPYING good time with the Renner Book Fair! The fair was a big success with sales totaling over \$12,300! About 1/3 of that amount is the fundraising portion with both the PTA and the library benefiting from the fair.

Since the target goal of \$10,000 was exceeded, the entire school will enjoy a HOMEWORK FREE DAY! Also, lunch period "A" had the most tickets and won the lunch outside. We promise to pick a beautiful spring day for this never before experienced privilege.

Both Holly Blaise and Debra Copley would like to thank all the wonderful adult volunteers and students (from Plano West, Shepton, and Renner) who gave so generously of their time to help with the set up, take down, and daily running of the book fair. The fair ran for 6 school days plus two evening special events, so that was a bunch of hours contributed from a very committed group of volunteers. We certainly couldn't have done it without you. We hope you had fun, and we'll see all of you NEXT YEAR.



PS - To all of you who purchased The Hunger Games, happy reading. It's a great book. But stay tuned....At next year's book fair, the 2nd book of the series, Catching Fire, will be available in paperback!

Volunteer Opportunities at Renner...

**Teacher Appreciation
Week May 3rd - 7th**
By: Mary Kay Drury



The Renner PTA is working to put together a special week to say "Thank You" to our teachers and staff for all of their hard work and dedication to our children. We will treat our teachers each day and finish out the week with a staff luncheon to be held on Friday, May 7th.

If you would like to express your appreciation, we are in need of donations of resources and time. If you did not sign up to volunteer with Teacher Appreciation, please contact me at teacherappreciation@rennerpta.org. We will be sending an email out soon so keep an eye out for it.

Thank you for all you do to make Teacher Appreciation Week a huge success!!

**Time is Running Out!! Sign up Now to
make Home-cooked Meals for the Staff!**



Wouldn't it be nice to have a home-cooked meal at the end of a long day? Don't miss the opportunity to prepare a casserole for your child's favorite teachers! We present each teacher and staff member with a casserole during Teacher Appreciation Week May 3rd - May 7th. Just call or email Katherine Sigrist, Casserole Coordinator, at (972) 378-4061 or casserole@rennerpta.org. Help show our Renner faculty and staff how appreciated they really are!!

ORDER YOUR RENNER SPIRIT WEAR!

Last Chance! Want a great Renner t-shirt to show off your school spirit this summer? Got a little brother or sister that will head to Renner this fall? Stop by the school store and check out our selection of t-shirts, gym shorts, and sweatshirts! The School Store is open during lunch (11am-1pm) on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays this semester. All prices already include sales tax.



- T-shirts.....\$12
- Pullover Hoodie.....\$25
- Zip-up Hoodie.....\$28
- Girls shorts.....\$12
- Boys shorts.....\$17
- Gym bags.....\$ 9

If paying by check, please make check payable to Renner PTA and include your drivers license information on the front of your check.

For more information, please email Kim Brown, Spirit Wear coordinator, at shirts@rennerpta.org.

Will you be a SHEPTON Parent next year?

Will you be a parent of a child at Shepton next year?

Do you like volunteering?

If so, and you'd like to volunteer by working Shepton's School Store, we could use you!

The store, which sells snacks and school supplies, is open daily from 11:30am -1:30pm. If interested, please send your volunteer preferences to Lori Baum at waysmeans@sheptonpts.org.

We look forward to working with you! **Go Stallions!!**

Renner Reflections Program

by Jill Blackwell

At the conclusion of Renner's Reflections Contest, six entries received Awards of Excellence:

For photography - Nirali Thakor
For Visual Arts - Brianna Perkin
Connor Griffith
Nirali Thakor
Phoebe Lee
For Music - Michael Moore

These entries were advanced to our local PTA council and on December 9th, 562 entries from 56 Plano schools were judged. Three of our entries received awards at the Regional level as follows:

Brianna Perkins - Honorable Mention for her work
World Peace
Nirali Thakor - Excellence for her work
Ocean in it's Glory
Phoebe Lee - Excellence for her work
Beauty is Careness

All three of these individuals and their families will be invited to an Awards Reception on the evening of Wednesday, April 14th at the Sockwell Center. The entries by Nirali Thakor and Phoebe Lee were further advanced to the State Competition. Check back in the next Renner Round Up to find out how their entries competed.

Congratulations again to everyone who participated in this year's Reflections Program

You can now get started on next year's theme -
"Together We Can".



Dallas Regional Science Fair



Congratulations to the following students who qualified to compete at the Exxon Mobil Secondary State Science Fair in San Antonio by placing 1st, 2nd or 3rd place in their category at the Dallas Regional Science Fair:

Lisa Michaels **1st Place: Cellular/Molecular Biology,**
Grand Prize: Life Sciences

Narahari Bharadwaj **1st Place: Earth/Planetary Science**

Andrew Friedman **1st Place: Plant Science**

Daniel McKnight **2nd Place: Bioengineering**

Abe Mansour **2nd Place: Environmental Science**

Elizabeth Klingler **2nd Place: Physics/Astronomy**

Ria Chhabra: **3rd Place: Chemistry**

The following students won special awards at the Dallas Regional Science Fair:

Longhorn Institute of Food Technologies:

Special Award: Rebecca Miles

Honorable Mention, Chemistry

Special Award: Ria Chhabra

Outstanding Communications Project:

Narahari Bharadwaj

Texas Instruments:

Signals Process Engineering, 1st Place:

Narahari Bharadwaj

Congratulations!
We are so proud of your
hard work and enthusiasm!

2009-2010 Renner Directory Advertisers!!

**Help yourself - Help your school!
Read through the list below...**

These are businesses that have made a tremendous contribution to your school! Want more info? Go to the Directory Sponsor Section of your Student Directory.

Back Cover: ROYAL EXPRESS CAR WASH (The Perkins Family)

**Inside Covers: SAVVY AND CHIC (The Kenvin Family)
LONE STAR AUTO GROUP (The Craig Family)**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Sponsor Name</u>
Adult Dentistry	David Stock, DDS
Automobile Sales/Service	Lone Star Auto Group
Café and Bakery	Chocolate Angel Too
Car Wash	Royal Express Car Wash
Counseling Services	CITY House Family Center
Country Club	Gleneagles Country Club
Design/Remodeling	AshLake Design & Remodeling
Etiq/Pers Enrich. Wkshops	Savvy and Chic
Family Medicine	Family Medicine at Willow Bend
Financial Planning	Abe P. Mansour, CFP
Flooring	Karndean International
Fossil	Fossil
Gen. & Cosmetic Dentistry	Star Ranch Dental
Graphic Design	Jan Jenkins Poston
Insurance	Larry D. Sandlin, State Farm
Interior Design	Room Service Redesign
Jewelry, Custom	Olschwanger Designs
Martial Arts	Shaolin Wu-Yi Institute
Mary Kay	Eunice Armstrong
Medical-Legal Consultants	Rodenbaugh and Associates, LLC
OB/GYN	Personalized Women's Healthcare
Orthodontist	George Q. Adams, Orthodontics
Orthodontist	Genecov Orthodontics
Party Planning	A Little Help Party Planning
Printing Services	Allegra Print and Imaging
Real Estate	Lynda K. Fisher, Bob Reuther
Real Estate	Nancy Markham
Real Estate	Cindy O'Gorman
Real Estate	Ann O'Blenes
Recreation Sports	Plano Sports Authority
Remodeling	Regenesis Remodeling
Tutoring Center	Plano SAT Master
Women, Healthcare	Plano Healthcare for Women

Hot off the press...

The 2010 Texas Lone Star Reading List is here!

Recommended for grades 6th - 8th by a committee within the Texas Library Association, these titles represent some of the best recently published literature for young persons.

If you have been searching for a good book,
take a look at this list and then
"check one out" at the Renner Library!

Lone Star List 2010



- The Sweetheart of Prosper County** by Jill Alexander
The Red Blazer Girls: The Ring of Rocamadour by Michael D. Beil
All the Broken Pieces: A Novel in Verse by Ann E. Burg
Graceling by Kristin Cashore
The Demon King by Cinda Williams Chima
The Roar by Emma Clayton
The Maze Runner by James Dashner
North of Beautiful by Justina Headley
Girlfriend Material by Melissa Kantor
The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate by Kelly Jacqueline
Pop by Gordon Korman
The Season by Sarah MacLean
The Hunt for the Seventh by Christine Morton-Shaw
Slob by Ellen Potter
When You Reach Me by Rebecca Stead
Killer Pizza: A Novel by Greg Taylor
Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Mary-land by Sally M. Walker
Bull Rider by Suzanne Morgan Williams
Donut Days by Lara Zielin
Prophecy of the Sisters by Michelle Zink

The annotated 2010 Lone Star Reading List and the past Lone Star Reading Lists are located at: <http://www.txla.org/groups/yart/lonestarlists.html>

Find these and many more titles at the Renner Library!!

2010 - 2011 Renner PTA Officers

At the March 8th General PTA meeting, the following women were voted in for the 2010-2011 Renner PTA Executive Board:

President: Julie Myers

1st VP- Programs: Kelley Eggleston

2nd VP- Volunteers: Susie Learmont

3rd VP- Ways & Means: Jenny Wood

4th VP- Membership: Lori Baum

Secretary: Jennifer Fuller

Treasurer: Sandy Seaton

Thank you for stepping up to serve Renner Middle School PTA!

PTA

New Renner PTA Fundraiser

**Spirit Nights at Yogurtville
Park & Preston
April 20th & May 18th
4 - 9pm**



We are beginning a new fundraiser this spring. **Yogurtville** at Park and Preston will be hosting monthly **Renner Spirit Nights**. During these nights the Renner PTA will receive 10% of all sales from 4:00 - 9:00pm. Please visit Yogurtville and place your receipt in the "Renner Bucket". The next two Renner nights will be **April 20th** and **May 18th**. These will continue through the summer months so check the next Round Up for those dates. What a great time to catch up with friends while the kids (and adults) have a great treat.

6th Grade Dolphins



In **Math**, our year will end with *Stretching and Shrinking*. This book explores similar figures, ratios, and scale factor. We will have some fun days with the Wump family, and we will end the unit by enlarging cartoons. The red *Connected Math* and blue TAKS workbooks will come home at the end of the school year, so be on the lookout. These should be helpful in completing math skills practice over the summer!

In **Science**, the Dolphins are still studying the **Voyage of the Mimi**. We will begin the culminating assessment project for our unit on Interactions within Ocean Systems. The students will be researching an ocean creature and creating a portfolio. Your child may need to go to the public library and check out books or use the computer at home to conduct some of their research. Thank you for your help! Our year concludes with our study of Relationships among Objects in Space where we learn about Newton's laws, research the planets in our solar system, and design and test water rockets. We're having fun learning science vocabularies, riddles, and puzzles.

The Dolphin **Language Arts** students have begun reading E.L. Konigsburg's *The View from Saturday*. Students will have group discussions, vocabulary, writing/reading responses, quizzes, and a final test. Please check with your child that he/she is reading the assigned text and comprehending it. Adjectives and adverbs are the grammar focus of this unit, and we have also begun studying Latin roots.

The **PACE Language Arts** students are reading *The Giver*, a Newbery-award winning novel by Lois Lowry. They are researching topics for power point demonstrations and designing a creative activity dealing with theme. Next we will be reading *Animal Farm* and studying about its relationship to the Russian Revolution.



6th Grade Penguins

In **Language Arts** classes, Penguins are finishing the year with a literature-based unit entitled “Book Clubs”. Our students will learn to respond appropriately in group meetings to self-selected novels by participating in student-led reading groups. To prepare for Book Club meetings, members will read their books and prepare discussion topics and questions. During the meetings, members will decide on appropriate activities based on their given novels. Students will be evaluated on task completion, full participation, and group collaboration. This has been an especially sweet “flock” of Penguins. We are proud of all that our Penguins have learned and look forward to all that they will do in seventh and eighth grades. **PACE** will be exploring Utopian societies through the novels *The Giver* and *Animal Farm*.

Penguin **Math** students are wrapping up our current unit of study, “Variables & Patterns”. We have spent time constructing and analyzing tables and graphs to display relations among variables. We are working on writing equations and expressions and solving one and two step equations.

We are currently holding **TAKS tutorials** after school and we will be doing a comprehensive review of all 6th grade TEKS during all math classes in the upcoming weeks to assure that every student is ready to tackle the TAKS test on April 27th! Don’t forget that green practice sheets are assigned every Friday and due the following Friday. They count as a double daily grade!! Parents can sign the practice sheet for 5 bonus points!

It is an exciting time of year for the Penguin **Scientist**. We are working on a research portfolio of our favorite cetacean to wrap up our oceanography unit. Be sure to ask your child which cetacean is their favorite! Then, it’s off to space! We will be introduced to Newton’s laws, forces, space exploration, and rockets.

Social Studies classes are beginning the “Conflict and Cooperation” unit. In this unit, the students are learning what basic human rights are and how people in the world have been denied human rights. We will study Communism and command economy and then compare it with market economy. We will end the year studying Global Interactions with a focus on Asia.

6th Grade Sea Otters



The **History** classes have been journeying through Latin America and Africa in the unit, "Cultures in Transition". The unit will culminate with a study of an individual country from Africa and a power point presentation. Next the classes will be learning about 20th Century Europe with a focus on "Conflict and Cooperation". The unit will take a look at the World Wars, the Russian Revolution, the Cold War, and the recent changes in modern Europe with the emergence of the European Union. Various political systems and economic systems will be introduced and studied in an historical context.

The **Science** Sea Otters are in their natural habitat studying the ocean this six weeks! Along with the ocean, they are doing an in-depth study of Humpback Whales!!!!!! So.....jump aboard and sail with us on the Mimi for a closer look at these magnificent mammals!

Sixth grade **Language Arts** students will finish the year with a book club unit, "Imagining Other Worlds". The students will be able to choose from eight historical fiction novels. This unit focuses on comparing and contrasting as critical thinking skills in reading, writing, and viewing. The **PACE** students will be learning about history through the fictional novel *Animal Farm*. They will also learn about Utopian societies through novels.

In all **Math** classes, we finished with our work with expressions and equations right after Spring Break. We are now working in a book entitled "Stretching & Shrinking" which deals with concepts of similarity in the context of geometry and the coordinate plane. The problems in this unit are designed to help students begin to accumulate the knowledge and experiences necessary to reason about scaling in geometric situations. We will use coordinate rules to scale figures up and down, discuss what is meant when similar objects that have "scale factor," and explore the mathematical concept of "similarity." About a week before the TAKS Test in late April, we will take a break from "Stretching & Shrinking" to polish up our skills in preparation for the test. We will resume work in "Stretching & Shrinking" after the TAKS test and continue with it until the end of the year.



7th Grade Cougars, Jaguars and Tigers



7th Grade Language Arts:

We were extremely proud of all the seventh graders who took the Texas state writing test on March 3rd. All of them worked diligently to incorporate the writing techniques taught this year into their essay. It was a challenging day; students began writing at 8:30am and ended late in the afternoon. Some even worked until 4:00pm to perfect that composition! Thanks for all of your support to make it a successful day for the students.

Regular **English** classes will continue reading the novel *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech. The story deals with the emotional issues of family love, courage, and personal losses. Creech's characters embark on a cross-country journey across the United States in search of answers to life's complexities. As they travel from state to state visiting famous landmarks, they face challenging situations while exploring personal and interpersonal relationships.

Honors classes will continue the novel *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien. As students study the novel, they will engage in reader response journal entries which will encourage them to interact with the text and to think critically as they read. Students will also focus on novel elements and how personal viewpoints reflect our perceptions of the world.

7th Grade Texas History: Unit 4: Growth and Development



The lessons in this **History** unit are organized to help students understand how modern Texas developed due to its diverse leaders, geography, and resources. Students will learn the importance of the agribusiness and petrochemical industries as well as about modern heroes, such as Barbara Jordan and Lyndon Baines Johnson, who helped determine the direction of modern Texas. Students also analyze the economic impact of the Galveston Flood, Dust Bowl, and the Texas City Explosion. Many activities are designed to be active learning or experiential.

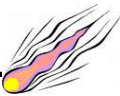
7th Grade cougars, Jaguars and Tigers - continued

7th Grade Science:

Cougar, Jaguar, and Tiger **Science** students have learned about genotypes, phenotypes, and how to predict traits in offspring generations. They have nurtured and grown their “Fast plants” and kept a detailed logbook of their scientific investigation. Presently, the students are working on their culminating assessment project for the Continuity of Life unit which involves compiling a data table, graph, Punnett Square, and a written conclusion about their plant experiment. Make sure you ask them about growing their plants; it was a fun experience for all of them!



8th Grade Comets, Stars & Suns



Well, we are almost into our last six weeks of school! The time has passed so quickly! The **Social Studies** lessons in this last unit help students understand the causes of the Civil War, the major events of the war, and the significance of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments. The unit unfolds with an emphasis on the sectional differences of the North and South before the war. Towards the end of the sixth six weeks, students will be analyzing documents as a part of the document-based essay on the final exam. Many activities throughout the unit focus on the military campaigns, political and military leaders, and the strong convictions on both sides.



8th Grade Comets, Stars & Suns - continued

Currently in **English** we are working on our unit on The Diary of Anne Frank play and the accompanying background on the Holocaust. Parents, we encourage you to talk with your sons and daughters about this very serious and sensitive subject. Although the information is quite sad and grim, we teachers are stressing the prevention of hatred and prejudice. Our theme for this whole unit is expressed in Edmund Burke's statement "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

In **Math** we are winding down the year with 2 big algebra units. The first one uses the Connected Math book, *Thinking With Mathematical Models*. In this book, students enhance their skills in recognizing and analyzing linear relationships. They will also focus on a special type of nonlinear relationship called an inverse variation. In the final Connected Math Book, *Say It With Symbols*, students will concentrate on equivalent symbolic expressions and equations.

Our next Unit in **Honors Math** will be "Growing, Growing, Growing". The basic goal of this Unit is for students to learn to recognize situations, data patterns, and graphs that are modeled by exponential equations and to use tables, graphs, and equations to answer questions about exponential patterns. We will be examining growth patterns, growth factors and rates, exponential decay, and patterns with exponents. This unit is designed to introduce the topic and to give students a sound, intuitive foundation on which to build later.

Honors Algebra I students just completed a unit in which they learned how to graph, solve, and apply quadratic equations. In the last chapter of the year, students will learn how to graph, solve, and apply exponential equations. Compound interest, exponential growth and decay, and the half-life of radioactive elements are a few of the topics we will be covering.

The **Science** students will continue their studies of the dynamic Earth by exploring the connections between Earth's geology and the use and conservation of natural resources. Students will learn how to test and classify minerals and rocks based on physical properties, as well as learn about the effects of both chemical and physical weathering on rocks: mountains *can* be made into mole hills!

The **Honors Science** students will also have a unit on physics where the students will learn about electricity, circuits, speed, velocity, and acceleration.

Renner Theater by Paulette Van Atta

The Renner Theatre Department proudly presents its Spring Show:

Come see this hilarious parody of your favorite TV shows - everything from Bailline News to Clueless Jeopardy with lots of sports, fashion, and psychic help for all. Even James Bond - I mean Mr. McLaughlin - makes an appearance.

Channel Surfing, II

Thursday, April 22, 2010, and Friday, April 23, 2010

6:30pm in the Renner cafeteria

Admission: \$4.00 at the door



Speech Team News by Paulette Van Atta

On Saturday, February 20, 2010, the Renner Speech Team attended a competition at Wilson Middle School. The team was in fantastic form! We won all the trophies given for Public Forum Debate—a clean sweep of the category!

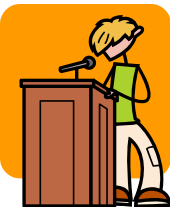
Naina Rao & Susanna Dibble - 1st place - Public Forum Debate

Ria Chhabra & Varad Agarwala - 2nd place - Public Forum Debate

Emily Zagorski & Kelly Wang - 3rd place - Public Forum Debate

Also placing in Current Events:

Schweta Julka - 6th place - Current Events Speech



Way To Go Team!!!!

The last tournament of the year will be at Vines High School. Look for the team's results from this tournament in the next Renner Round Up!

Choir



We are so proud of our 6th grade choir students. Their musical was AWESOME! The solos were wonderful, the dances were terrific, and the speakers were adorable! We LOVED it. Thanks for all of your hard work and dedication. A great big thank you and hugs go out to all the dancers who worked on their dances for so many hours outside of class. You really made the night special.

By the time you get this newsletter, the 7th and 8th graders will have gone to UIL contest. I will update you on their scores in the next Renner Round Up. I'm sure they will be fabulous though!!

Upcoming Choir Events:

5/7 Plano Music Festival - 6th Grade only (during the school day)

5/8 Hawaiian Falls

5/24 Boys' Rehearsal, 3:35-5:30pm

5/25 Girls' Rehearsal, 3:35-5:30pm

5/26 Spring Concerts - Boys @ 6:30pm, Girls @ 7:30pm

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Nurse's Notes - by Judith Grace



It's OK. I Took an Aspirin This Morning.

For decades we have understood that giving aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) is not recommended for children. So, I am always surprised when a child tells me that they have taken an aspirin at home. Most of the time, they are referring to a Tylenol generic (acetaminophen), an Advil / Motrin generic (ibuprofen), or an Aleve generic (Naprosyn, naproxen). Calling a pain reliever "aspirin" is often a habit of the previous generations. But perhaps you don't realize why we restrict children under age 19 from taking aspirin.

A specific syndrome called Reyes Syndrome was linked to the use of aspirin in children who were also experiencing viral illness, especially chicken pox. Since using aspirin in children for any reason has fallen out of favor, we don't often hear about this any more. However with the difficult flu season that just passed and the next one that is sure to come, it is important to understand the risk of using aspirin products.

"Reye's Syndrome is a disease that affects all organs of the body, and most lethally the liver and the brain. Reye's Syndrome is a two-phase illness because it is almost always associated with a previous viral infection such as influenza, or chicken pox. Scientists do know that Reye's Syndrome is not contagious and the cause is unknown. Reye's Syndrome is often misdiagnosed as encephalitis, meningitis, diabetes, drug overdose, poisoning, SIDS, or a psychiatric illness. Reye's Syndrome tends to appear with greatest frequency during January, February, and March when influenza is most common. Cases are reported in every month of the year. An epidemic of flu or chicken pox is commonly followed by an increase in the number of cases of Reye's Syndrome. Research has established a link between Reye's Syndrome and the use of aspirin and other salicylate-containing medications, over the counter products, and topical use products." (National Reyes Syndrome Foundation Brochure).

Aspirin and aspirin-like products are still out there and available over the counter. Parents are urged to **READ THE LABEL**. Some medicines like Excedrin Migraine, Pepto Bismol and Pamprin contain aspirin or other salicylates. Even topical creams for acne sometimes contain salicylates. Lists of potentially harmful products can be found at the Reye's Syndrome Foundation website at www.reyessyndrome.org.

Talk to your teens about using only over the counter medicines that you approve. It is important that they not take medicines from friends and that they too learn how to read the labels on medicines.

Plano ISD does not allow school nursing staff to administer medicines that contain aspirin unless accompanied by a note from the doctor. Educate yourself and your children about this potentially fatal interaction.

Technology Recycling

**Help Renner Recycle
Cell Phones Laptops, PDAs
& HP Cartridges for \$\$\$!**



Thank you to everyone who has sent used cell phones, PDAs and HP ink jet cartridges to Renner for recycling! We will continue to recycle these items throughout the school year. So keep Renner in mind when you replace or upgrade your technology.

HP Ink and Laser Jet Cartridges

Send your empty HP ink and laser jet cartridges placed in a plastic bag/baggie. Your student can put them in the designated container in the CTA Office (by the rotunda). For each empty HP inkjet cartridge we recycle, Renner receives **\$\$\$**. (Laserjet prices vary).

Cell Phones, Laptops and PDAs

We are also asking you to recycle your used cell phone, laptop and PDA through the school. When you upgrade, send your old item in a plastic bag to school. Renner will make money for everything we recycle. Visit <http://cartridgesforkids.com/pricesframe.html> to see what your item is worth in this recycle program!

Questions? Contact Tom Pittman, Renner CTA, at (469) 752-5806.



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