

January 17, 2012

Dear Parents,

We have two exciting events coming up in the next few weeks. The students are busy writing a story that will need a simple machine to solve a problem in the story. This is a fun project that connects writing and science in a very real way. Students have created a story map as a plan for their story and have a should have a plan for the machine they need to solve the problem in the story. They need to actually build a working model for the machine and be able to explain how it works and what advantage it gives (does it reduce the effort needed – mechanical advantage; does it allow the work to be done far away from the problem – positional advantage; does it allow someone to pull down when they want to move something up – directional advantage). The machines need to be brought to school on Monday, Jan. 30 so we can present them to the class during that week. Please talk to your child about their machine and offer help building it if needed. Please make sure the machine model is free standing and can be displayed without added setup.

Also, on Feb 3 we will be visiting some of the places in Spokane that offer support to the needy of our community. We are currently working through a unit on Social Justice and discovering what it means to be poor. We will visit the Spokane Valley Partners, St. Margaret's Shelter, and the House of Charity. We will also be eating lunch at the House of Charity. Please be assured that we will be closely supervising all the students and we hope that they will be able to experience firsthand some of the struggles and needs of the less fortunate in our city. I am looking for drivers so watch for the permission slip that will come home in the next few days. We would like to collect some items to take with us as a gift to the places we visit. We will be collecting 3 items:

1. Non – perishable foods (especially protein foods – tuna, chili, peanut butter, etc.) for the Spokane Valley Partners food bank
2. Gently used kids books for any age for St. Margaret's Shelter
3. Warm socks or gloves for the House of Charity

Please send whatever you can.

In preparation for this field trip we will be creating an actual family budget so that we can understand what the poor need to give up when they do not have an adequate income. Your child will be bringing home a letter and a form for you to help us come up with realistic numbers for our budgets. Please give your best estimates for the highlighted items. We will average all the numbers we receive so that our budgets are somewhat realistic and current.

Don't forget the Geography Bee this Friday, Jan. 20 at 1:00 in the gym. Our class representatives are Nate Huettl and Matthew Holden who won the classroom competition. Everyone is invited to come out to support them!

Thank you for your support. As always, please feel free to email or call with any questions.

Mrs. Harrell