



Elmer Thienes – Mary Hall Elementary School

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Happy Thursday!

What a fantastic time was had last week at the PTO sponsored Wolf Pack Game. Our singers impressed the XL Center audience with their terrific rendition of *God Bless America*. As they sang, a large contingency of MES students surrounded and waved a huge, beautiful American Flag. Our yearly adventure to the XL Center provides funds to our PTO one year and the music department the other. Thank you to all the families who joined us this year, raising money for our Music Department to purchase a wireless microphone for the Community Room, a couple of microphone stands, rhythm instruments for choral music and some Orff bells/xylophones for choral music. The Music Department is also hoping to be able to defray the cost by \$5.00 for all students attending this year's Adjudication Festival.

In the last two weeks, a group of our fourth graders, families and Ms. Uccello have been crafting bat wraps to send to Australia. Armed with donated soft material, the children folded, measured, cut and sewed each of the bat wraps – over 100 in total. The bat wraps will act as the mother's wings to the injured bats. We are so incredibly proud of this effort, as our children poured their hearts into making a difference.

Wearable technology is starting some very interesting conversations with staff and students. From fitness trackers to watches that can play games, we are starting to find a need to define what is the acceptable use of these devices. At the beginning of every year, we send home our Acceptable Use Policy for Technology that we have rewritten each summer based on the new technology that is available to our children. As we discuss and rewrite our expectations, we frame them to support responsible usage. Our children, with certain tools such as smart watches, can be constantly interacting with information, other people, or games based on the functionality of the device. From monitoring our steps, to sending text messages, smart watches provide constant engagement. We'll continue to work with children to build strategies for interacting with a variety of technology devices, as well as remembering the importance of face to face interactions. We love technology, a message we continually share with the children.

Thank you to families for sending in our last collection of Box Tops. As the Box Top Program is moving over to a scanned technology platform that they are still working to perfect, we are exploring other programs where we may be able to tap rewards programs that support schools. Thank you to all the families that have signed up for the A+ Program at Stop and Shop, or purchased a reusable bag at Big Y. If any families would like to use the Amazon Smile Program, that is another avenue for the PTO to build funds to support programs. We are very thankful to everyone for their continual support of our school.

With the weather being so lovely this January, we hesitate to jinx it by sharing the date of the 100th day of school – February 10th. While our upper grades children may not even realize it is the 100th day, our little ones treasure this day. We will hope that our nice weather continues and we can plan on our 100th day of school being in two weeks.

Today's Student Council spirit day/fundraiser, 'Oh the Places You'll Go', supports the Marlborough Food Bank. Staff and children wore clothing that shared the places that they hoped to go – from many Cape Cod sweatshirts to future college shirts, we enjoyed seeing where in the world we all would like to go.

Dan & Kim

Upcoming events:

2/5 – Kindergarten Registration
2/5 – Afterschool Clubs begin – 3:00-4:15
2/6 – Kindergarten Registration
2/7 – PAWs Pizza Luncheons

New Fliers:

Park & Rec:
Mad Science
Acrylic Painting on Canvas