

RHEEMARKS

"Frank"ly Speaking...

February 26, 2017

"Here comes the sun... Doo da dwee doo!"

Special thanks to the teachers and students for their perseverance through some intense precipitation these past weeks! It certainly makes one thankful for that famous Rheem Team flexibility and cooperation.

I'm looking forward to sharing the results of the "Greatest Read-a-thon on Earth" at tomorrow's Spirit Assemblies. Here's a hint regarding the news – our students can feel very proud of their efforts! Be on the lookout for Read-a-thon Sponsor Sheets coming home in the backpacks on Friday. The students did a great job reading; let's show them our support!

This Week at Rheem:

Monday, February 27:

- Spirit Assemblies: 9:00 for 3rd – 5th graders; 10:00 for K – 2nd graders
- "Seed Secrets" in 1st grade classrooms
 - O'Connell (8:30 – 9:30); Strohmeyer (11:05 – 12:05); Bailey (1:00 – 2:00)

Tuesday, February 28:

- Parent Ed Night (by POEMS: Parents of Exceptional Moraga Students)
 - IEP Basics: What is an "Individualized Education Plan?"
 - 7:00 p.m. at JM Library
 - Presenter is Laraine Domenico of Contra Costa SELPA

Wednesday, March 1:

- 5th grade Colonial Days (8:30 – 2:00)

Friday, March 3:

- Science Fair Draft Reports due!
- 4th grade Field Trip to Sacramento (8:00 – 4:30)
- 3rd grade Spirit of Alaska Program in Multi-Use Room (1:30 – 3:00)
- Read-a-thon Sponsor Sheets go home with kids!

Save the Dates!

Don't miss these upcoming Rheem events!

There are a variety of fun-for-the-whole family events coming this Spring that you won't want to miss. Make sure these dates are on your calendars:

- **Rheem Variety Show:** Friday, March 24 (6:00 – 7:30 p.m.) in the Multi-Use Room
- **Rheem Family Work Day:** Saturday, April 22 (8:30 – 11:30) in the Rheem Garden and around campus
- **Rheem Science Fair:** Thursday, April 27 (5:30 – 6:30) in the Multi-Use Room
- **Rotary Field Day:** Wednesday, May 10, beginning at 3:00 at JM
- **Rheem Spring Picnic & Art Show:** Friday, May 12 (4:30 – 7:00), Multi-Use and front blacktop
- **Rheem Open House:** Thursday, May 25 (7:00 – 8:00 p.m.)

Did You Know?

2017-2018 Instructional Calendar Approved

Recently, the Moraga School Board approved the 2017-2018 calendar, complete with dates for such events as Back-to-School Night and Open House for the 2017-2018 school year. *Did you know that Rheem's Back-to-School Night is scheduled for Thursday, August 24, 2017?* School Holidays and Staff Development Days are also noted. It's not too early to make sure you have your home and school calendars "synced" to ensure good attendance and to not miss any important events. Click [HERE](#) for the 2017-2018 MSD calendar.

School Climate Survey Results:

Feeling Connected to School

In the MSD School Climate Survey given in November, 2016, 186 Rheem parents responded as follows:

- 90% respondents agreed with the statement ***"My child feels 'connected' to the school – that he/she is a contributing member of the school community"***.

Actual Breakdown: 45% strongly agree; 44% agree; 8% neutral; 1% disagree; 0% strongly disagree; 2% don't know

Amanda Lorie is Moraga's Teacher of the Year!

Rheem kindergarten teacher, Amanda Lorie, has been selected as the Moraga School District Teacher of the Year. Her dedication, compassion, and collaborative attitude make her an excellent choice for this honor.

Ms. Lorie began working in the Moraga School District *seventeen* years ago. In the early 2000's, she began working at Rheem as an elementary PE teacher assistant, a classroom teacher assistant, a yard duty supervisor, and a GATE assistant. These early days working with the students and staff at Rheem piqued her interest in getting a teaching credential. With a teaching credential in hand, she returned to Rheem in 2002 as a long-term substitute in 1st grade, and then taught kindergarten for 2 ½ years before taking time off to have her son, Brandon.

Ms. Lorie has never stopped learning and growing as an educator. While raising her son, she simultaneously pursued a Master's Degree in Education at UC Berkeley with a focus on children's cognition and development, reading theory, and best practices in teaching reading. Her teaching career continued in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District, during which time she also received her Reading Recovery Certification at St. Mary's. She found her way back "home" to Rheem in 2013, where she taught 2nd grade, and served as a "teacher leader" – providing guidance and resources to all 2nd grade teachers in the district as they began the implementation of Common Core Standards. Now, in her 2nd year of teaching kindergarten at Rheem, she serves on the district's English/Language Arts committee and was one of a select number of teachers to attend the 2016 Summer Institute on the Teaching of Reading, The Reading and Writing Project, at Columbia University.

Yes, Ms. Lorie has the knowledge and skills to be an exceptional teacher. But, she also has that special quality that cannot be found in any textbook or workshop; it's called LOVE. Her concern for the social/emotional well-being of her students is of paramount importance. As a result, her classroom environment is welcoming, fun, and supportive. Ms. Lorie is a passionate advocate for ALL students, recognizing the unique supports needed by the wide variety of learners in her charge. When asked what she enjoys most about teaching, she doesn't hesitate to respond:

*"I get to spend my days working with young children who love to learn. They fuel my days with energy and excitement and so many questions -- every second I spend with them is a gift. And I am grateful for, and cherish my days with my students and their open minds and generous hearts. My drive comes from them -- teaching them to read and their progress, their smiles, their zest for life and learning and playing and questioning and problem solving -- **they** teach me new things every day. They make me want to be a better teacher, to always learn, and to always push myself to be the best that I can be."*

Ms. Lorie moves on to the Contra Costa County Teacher of the Year selection process, representing the Moraga School District. The board will acknowledge her as the district's Teacher of the Year at the March 14 board meeting. Congratulations!

Safety First

Communicable Disease Notices

If your child is sick with one of the following communicable diseases, please give the office a call so notification can be sent to the other students in the classroom. This gives parents the information that their child may have been exposed so that proactive measures can be taken. The communicable conditions that require us to notify parents regarding possible exposure are:

- **Chicken Pox**
- **German measles**
- **Hand, foot, and mouth disease**
- **Measles**
- **Mumps**
- **Scabies**
- **Slap Cheek**
- **Streptococcal (scarlet fever and strep throat)**
- **Whooping Cough**
- **Pink Eye**
- **Shingles**
- **Ringworm**
- **Pinworm**

Although **head lice** is not a communicable disease, it is also something we report as it can be easily spread. We very much thank you for your cooperation with this important notification procedure.

Hello From Roadrunner Club

Finally some SUN and vitamin D! We have had a great week! Our cooking project for Wed was learning the origin of Brownies and then making them! They were yummy.

Just an FYI, we have had some difficulty with our telephone line due to all of the rain. Our phones are now working but I would suggest that you communicate with Roadrunner Club via e-mail. Roadrunnerclub@moraga.k12.ca.us.

We are almost out of used, clean clothing in our supply closet. If you would like to donate, we would appreciate any donations you might have, mostly sweatpants, socks, mostly K-2nd size. Thank you.

Last Word...

This year's Read-a-thon may be over, but reading is forever! And, thank goodness! Engaging, enlightening, AND cost-effective, the power of a good book is unlike any other form of entertainment. And, better still, reading makes the world a better place:

I was happy to come across the article, ["The Importance of Family Reading"](#) recently, and was especially struck by the first paragraph:

Reading gives us two gifts—the gift of understanding and the gift of feeling understood. Every new book you read shows you another life, another time or place or way of being. Every new book also assures you that yes, other people have felt as afraid, as embarrassed, as sad, as giddy and as joyful as you have felt. Through reading, we learn empathy, compassion, respect and understanding. How lucky we are as parents to be able to give our children those skills by doing something as simple and enjoyable as reading.

It makes sense, doesn't it? Empathy is the ability to appreciate a different perspective, and books support that experience. Another article, ["How Reading Can Teach Children Empathy,"](#) further explains how this happens. Fiction "tricks our brains into thinking we are part of the story" – so our brains become "wired" to have the same sensitivity to real people that we feel for fictional characters.

Entering the world of characters from different times, different places, and with uniquely different experiences and challenges, supports our children to become more compassionate people. So, by simply encouraging our children to read, we have made the future a little better. Feels good. Let's keep up the good work!

I love this school!

Ms. Frank, Principal