

DISTRICT 303



eNEWS



Connect with us!

Administration Center
201 South 7th Street
St. Charles, IL 60174
331.228.2000
JustAsk@d303.org

May 17, 2019

Bell-Graham Life Cycle Unit

As a culmination of their science unit, “Care-takers of the Earth,” Bell Graham kindergarten students in Mrs. McKee’s class and Mrs. Robinson’s 2nd grade class collaborated on a project to compare the life cycle of butterflies with chicks and ducks.

Students compared lifecycle lists for butterflies with lists they they had for chicks and ducks, and then shared their knowledge in a presentation to their peers. The characteristics included a comparison of the duration of the animals’ incubation process, how they form and develop, and the differences in their habitats and diets.

Bell Graham received chick eggs through the University of Illinois 4-H Embryology program, and duck eggs from a local farm and from Bell Graham Reading Specialist Ms. Stout. “This is a good way for us to learn about oviparous animals and compare two different animals within our classroom (chicks and ducks) because they do differ in their incubation and hatching process,” said Mrs. McKee.

In the classroom, kindergarteners and 2nd graders also had an opportunity to interact with the ducklings that recently hatched, and record how much they’ve grown and changed over time. Second grade students were excited to be able to visit the kindergarten class and learn about chicks and ducks.



Author Linda Ragsdale Visits Munhall



It was a “beyazing” day at Munhall thanks to award winning author, illustrator, and international speaker, Linda Ragsdale, who brought her “Peace Dragon” and the many other characters from her books to Munhall Elementary on May 7.

“I love being an author. I get to learn new words and create new words, just like ‘beyazing,’ which you all now know means better than amazing,” she said. She shared how her passion for books and storytelling began when she was very little. She would write stories and act out skits, which she continued to do with her kids.

During her visit, she taught students about the power of words and how, as an author, she gets to use those words to bring peace to people around

the world. Through her books, she encourages students to treat others with respect while accepting their differences and empowers them to see themselves in a positive way while spreading kindness.

“I love hearts, that’s why the peace dragon’s scales are shaped like hearts. Everything you do should be guided by your heart-what you see, how you speak, and what you choose to do,” she said.

Throughout her presentation, she encouraged student participation through several storytelling activities. Students watched in amazement as she folded a paper template to create a 3D dragon figure. She provided students with their own paper template so they could create their own 3D dragon. In addition, she taught students how to draw a dragon, and encouraged them to write their own stories about how their peace dragons will bring peace to the world.

Norton Creek Solar System Exploration

“Did everyone pack their lunch and their space suit?” asked LRC Media Specialist, Mrs. Hubbard, before taking Norton Creek 1st grade students on an outer space virtual tour at the conclusion of their stars and planets unit.

Mrs. Vazquez’s students began the virtual tour with an overview of the solar system. When asked how old they thought the solar system was, they were amazed to learn its 4.6 billion years old. “It’s really old!” exclaimed one student.

They saw the sun and every planet up close, learned about the Earth’s atmosphere, Saturn’s rings, and the many missions to Mars. They also had an opportunity to learn more about the Milky Way and the different constellations.

After the virtual tour, students reflected on what they learned and wrote about their favorite part of the tour that they shared with their classmates and parents.



Too Good for Drugs Graduation at Lincoln

Fifth grade students at Lincoln Elementary School welcomed their parents and special guests to their “Too Good For Drugs” graduation ceremony on May 14. Thank you to St. Charles Chief of Police, James Keegan, Officer James Burden, and Judge Elizabeth Flood for your inspiring remarks.

This 10-week program encompasses lessons that teach students about positive decision making in all aspects of their lives, particularly focused on drugs, alcohol, and dealing with peer pressure. The lessons also focus on giving students the tools and resources to manage stress, deal with mistakes, and set goals.



Lincoln Principal, Mrs. Woodring, began the ceremony with an inspiring poem called “Believe in yourself,” encouraging students to make positive decisions throughout their lives and seek help and advice when they need it.

Chief Keegan and officer Burden, who teach the lessons, remarked how proud they were of the students and their enthusiasm and willingness to learn about those topics during the lessons. Student leaders from the high schools worked with the Lincoln students by performing skits and being positive role models, which helped 5th graders to identify and distinguish positive and negative decision making, and the consequences of those actions.

Judge Flood also remarked how, as parents, “we try to teach them as best we can at home because it’s not just about saying no, it’s about educating them and the importance of the decisions they make.” She encouraged students to thank their parents and family members for their support, and asked parents to continue to have conversations at home because, “communication is everything.”

As part of the program, families participate in lessons with their children at home. “The homework allows for parents to interact with their children and help them understand the topics. It opens up the opportunity for



dialogue and conversations about these issues,” said officer Burden, who has been teaching the program for three years. “We have also added more current topics, educating students about vaping and synthetic marijuana, and their dangers,” he added.

Students energetically performed the song “My Shot,” by Lin-Manuel Miranda and, to conclude the event, they received their recognition award for completing the program. Proud parents took pictures with their student and enjoyed graduation treats.

Noetic Learning Math Contest

On April 18, 4th and 5th grade students from all elementary schools competed in the national semi-annual Noetic Learning Math Contest.

Nineteen students won the National Honor Roll title, which is awarded to the top 10% of participating mathletes. Also, 161 students received National Honorable Mention, which is awarded to the top 50% of participating mathletes.

The 4th grade team from Bell-Graham and the 5th grade team from Richmond also won Team Achievement awards for their high team scores.



The goal of the competition is to encourage students' interest in math, to develop their problem solving skills, and to inspire them to excel in math. More than 34,000 students representing 776 schools across the country took part in this spring's contest. The contest results demonstrate students' great problem solving skills and math talents.

Davis Poetry Slam



Dressed in all black, Davis 1st grade students in Mrs. Schippers and Mrs. McCulloch's class welcomed peers, teachers, and guests to their Poetry Slam on May 10, which concluded their poetry writing unit.

Students and guests filled the dimly lit room, decorated with black tablecloths and candles as centerpieces.

After sharing some snacks and drinks, each student recited his or her unique poem. Some students shared free verse poems about their parents and family members, while others recited list poems about their favorite foods, sports, and hobbies. Some students wrote autobiographical poems or poems about a special someone.

Audience members snapped their fingers to show their support and appreciation for each poet. Once in a while, they got carried away and cheering instead of snapping their fingers, which helped encourage shy poets to present their poem with more confidence and enthusiasm.

Davis Principal, Mrs. Liechty, dressed in all black, also joined the poetry slam, reciting the poem "Recipe for a hippopotamus sandwich," which elicited laughter from the students.

Students spent weeks researching and studying poems to prepare for their poetry slam. They learned about the different types of poems and structures, and made sure to include the key elements of poetry, such as rhyme, rhythm, and style when writing their own poems.

You're Invited!

INCubator Final Pitch Night

Final Pitch Night is a dynamic event where six student entrepreneurship teams present their final business concepts before a panel of industry experts in a competition for funding. The winners of Final Pitch Night are awarded funding and a chance to compete for additional funding dollars at the National INCubatoredu Student Pitch competition in the summer.

May 21, 6-9PM
St. Charles North Auditorium



Final 6 Teams:








INCubator Final Pitch Night

- 5/21/19 6:00 PM
- St. Charles North Auditorium

Don't miss your chance to support our amazing student entrepreneurs!

[Click here RSVP](#)



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Community Backpack



Upcoming School Board Meetings

- May 20**
Learning & Teaching Committee Meeting - 5:30 p.m.
- May 28**
Community Relations Committee Meeting - 5:30 p.m.
- June 3**
Business Services Committee Meeting - 5:30 p.m.
- June 10**
School Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m.
- June 17**
Learning & Teaching Committee Meeting - 5:30 p.m.
Policy Committee Meeting will follow
- June 27**
Business Services Committee - 5:30 p.m.
- July 8**
School Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

2018-19 Calendar Highlights

- May 27**
Memorial Day - No School
- June 2**
High School Graduation Day
- June 7**
Last Day for Students



[Click here to view the 2019-20 District Calendar](#)

ATTENTION

PTO MEMBERS & PARENT GROUPS

When planning end of the year celebrations that include food, please be mindful of students who have food allergies, diabetes or other health issues related to food.

Thank you!



In observance of
Memorial Day, there will be

**NO SCHOOL
MONDAY,
5/27/19.**

