



Mitchell Messenger

October 2011

For families and friends of Kate Mitchell Elementary

Pam Stangeland, Principal

Dates to Remember:

October 3

Districtwide Workshop Day – No School

October 11

*PTA Meeting with Students & Parents at 5:30PM –
Dinner, 6:00PM-Meeting; Costume Exchange*

October 21

End of First Nine Weeks (45 Days)

October 28

Spaghetti Supper-5:00-7:00PM

want to get to know all our families and share the fantastic things that are happening here at Mitchell!

Another change for us this fall is the addition of benchmark assessments for all students on a monthly basis. We know that in order for students to improve in their reading skills, they need to spend time reading materials that are at their appropriate instructional level. All students will be “benchmarked” in October with follow-up assessments each month. Since elementary students gain skills so quickly, it’s not uncommon for them to jump several levels in a typical year (Yay!) That’s the reason for the monthly checks. Students will be kept informed about “just right” books on their level, but they will also be encouraged to read the books that interest them.

Don’t worry if your child comes home with library books that seem much more difficult or too easy. We want to allow them the opportunities to enjoy reading at all levels. If a particular book is too difficult, it would be a great idea for parents to read books aloud to their student or trade off paragraphs or pages. The point is to read—anything and everything with the knowledge that we have an accurate picture of where your child is currently stationed. We thank you for modeling the importance of reading and helping your child to become a lifelong learner.

Pam Stangeland
Principal



From the **Principal's** Desk

This year our PTA will be working on creating opportunities for parents and families to communicate and to get to know one another and the school staff. We have a small but dedicated group who meets regularly throughout the year, and this is one concern that we’re ready to address. Parents have told us that they don’t know other parents in their child’s class, and they don’t have regular “social” opportunities.

In mid-September, we held a coffee for parents at 7:30 a.m. Although it was supposed to include a garden tour, Mother Nature was not cooperating, so we visited and snacked in our lunchroom. We have several other opportunities in the works for the upcoming months in attempt to expand our Mitchell community. Please watch future newsletters and Monday Mailings for details. We

Library News
By Mrs. Fitz and Mrs. Chieves

Fall is in the air and soon your own student will be "falling into books" in our media center. October brings on the first reading promotion of the new school year. Students in all grade levels will be challenged to read books throughout the library area. This goes hand in hand with the Million Minutes Campaign and also gives students a chance to try out different books throughout our media center. Students who complete the challenge will receive a gift certificate for either a book or a poster from our next Scholastic Book Fair. Please watch your child's book bag for promo information.

Our new computer lab is getting a work out as students work with various software programs purchased by our school district. The entire school is working with Planet Turtle for math skills and slowly but surely, Edu-Typing Jr. for keyboarding skills. The younger students are still learning how to "drive" their mouse, while others are learning the advantages of "command copy, command vomit" in the computer lab. Please continue to visit our school web site at:

<http://mrsfitz.iowapages.org/katie>

This will extend your student's computer lab experience into your home. Again, if your computer is "down" or "unavailable" to your child, let us know and we will make accommodations in the media center to keep them up with their classmates.

5th graders are encouraged to start reading for the Battle of the Books in March. Kate Mitchell has a history of being one of the top schools in the annual competition, so encourage your fifth grader to start reading. At the other end of the spectrum, we have a large assortment of easy readers in both fiction and non-fiction areas. Again, please take advantage of our library collection.

Please continue to donate old ink cartridges. Our school gets \$2 credit for each one we return to Staples. Every little bit helps!!

Have a great fall - GO CYCLONES!

If you have any questions, please be sure to contact me at joan.fitzsimmons@ames.k12.ia.us

See you soon!!!
Mrs. Fitz and Mrs. Chieves



Nurses Notes
Brooke Dannen RN, BSN
brooke.dannen@ames.k12.ia.us

DENTAL SCREENS

If your child is in Kindergarten, he/she will need a screening done and a form filled out. We would like to have all screenings done by winter break. Please call Brooke RN at the school if you need the required form.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Please make sure your child's immunizations are up-to-date. Reminders will be sent home if your child needs any shots in order to complete his/her record.

A REMINDER ABOUT HEAD LICE

Please remember that head lice is a year-round problem! Remember to check your child's head often for head lice. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need help with getting rid of lice.



Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
Karen Sawhill

September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. To help students in our school become aware of the struggles and triumphs of survival of kids their age, multiple classrooms read "The Lemonade Club" by Patricia Pollaco. This is a book about a 5th grader who is diagnosed with leukemia. After reading the book and having conversations, students created greeting cards that were delivered to Blank Children's Hospital in Des Moines.



**Fundraising by Collecting
Sherry Gehlsen**

We have gotten off to a great start this year with our collections of Box Tops for Education and Campbell Soup Labels! Many of you have turned in these things you collected over the summer. Our mailbox in the front hallway has been overflowing with them all! It really does help when you save the Box Tops and Labels!

For those of you new to Mitchell or who have forgotten...as a building we collect the Box Tops for Education rectangles you see on many products and the UPC codes on Campbell's merchandise you purchase for your home. We are able to obtain many items for our Media Center and school through these programs. We do NOT expect you to purchase any particular brand of goods but if you do and you would be willing to share these with us, that would be awesome.

We also collect pop tabs. These are turned over to McDonald's restaurants here in Ames to help fund the Ronald McDonald Houses in Iowa. These houses provide lodging and support for families who have critically ill children that must be hospitalized for any length of time at little or no cost and in close proximity to the hospital where their child has to stay. We have had several Mitchell families who have benefitted from the Ronald McDonald Houses over the years.

There is a black mailbox in the main lobby of the school where all of these things can be put. Just send them with your children to school in a baggie or drop them off sometime when you are in the building. If the student forgot what to do with them they can simply give them to their homeroom teacher or bring them to Sherry's room. My class sorts, cuts, counts and gets them sent off. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Sherry Gehlsen at sgehlsen@ames.k12.ia.us.

So...KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!



**PTA News
Mike Moore**

The Mitchell Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a good opportunity to get involved in supporting your child's school through the PTA's efforts this school year. PTA membership forms are available

at school, and can be returned to the office, at the meeting, or to your child's teacher. Dues are only \$5 (although additional donations are always gratefully accepted), which are used to support PTA endeavors throughout the school year. We need parent involvement to be successful! If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Old Chicago Pizza Palz

The Kate Mitchell PTA is selling Old Chicago Pizza Palz. The Old Chicago Pizza Palz cost \$11 each and allows you, your friends and family members receiving the card a pizza worth \$22 at all Old Chicago restaurants nationwide. The cards have no expiration date, are valid Sundays through Thursdays, dine in or take out. You just order the pizza with whatever you want on it and the card is worth \$22 towards the total pizza cost. Order yours today by e-mailing Kristin Hinders at:

hinders@gmail.com.

Pizza Palz are also available in the Library. If you have college age friends, this is the perfect gift for those late night studies!! Order yours today!

Mike Moore
PTA President
232-7462
mike.moore@mchsi.com



**Shoes That Fit!
Karen Forster - Counselor**

Shoes That Fit is underway! If your elementary child has a need for shoes or winter clothing please contact me for a request form. The program cut-off date this year is October 26th, so that deliveries can be completed before the holidays.



**Chorus News
Cheryl Stadler**

Calling all singers in 4th and 5th grade... you may join chorus at Kate Mitchell. We will be rehearsing on Friday mornings from 7:45 to 8:25 a.m. Our first rehearsal will be on Friday, September 30th. Ask your classroom teacher or Mrs. Stadler for a sign-up sheet. We look forward to a fun year of singing!



Listed below is a choice of readings to keep it fun:

Student Council

Our student council representatives have been selected. Each class has a representative and an alternate representative, in case the representative can't come. Our meetings will be on the first and third Thursday of each month. Our first meeting for the 2011/2012 school year will be on Thursday, October 6 at 7:45 am in the media center. The following students are our student council representatives: Trey Nesbitt, Wilco Balstadt, Daniel Jakobson, Joshua Motl, Lauren Powers, Chloe Stenstrom-Toft, Caroline Maifield, Lindsay Sublette, Karla Torres, Mason Murphy, Jay Williams, Ezra Manus, Myeesha Harden Hayes and Matthew Farrell. Alternates are: Lydia Heintz, Jack Sailsbury, Haley Waddington, Emilee Murphy, Josefina MacIntosh, Ethan DenBeste, Evan Bay Brakke, Ruot Bijiek, Emily Donald, Shirlin Kingston, Chloe Mayes, Emma Kajtazovic, Noah Sinclair and Tarquinn Stenstrom-Toft. Next month, one of our representatives will report on projects adopted by our student council.



Read a Million Minutes Kicks Off! Marlyns Hindman

-Attention All Parents-
Read 20 minutes, 5 times a week

Students at Kate Mitchell are trying to 'Read 1 Million Minutes' by the end of the school year. In order to achieve this goal, all students need to be read to or read at least 20 minutes, 5 times a week. A traveling trophy and large ribbons will be awarded each week to the class and grade level that reads the most. A huge celebration is planned when we reach the one million mark!

Different ways of Reading:

- If parents read to their child, it counts (Read-Alouds)
If older siblings/grandparents/neighbors read to your child, it counts.
- If you and your child take turns reading, it counts. (Partner Read)
- If your child reads to you while you do dishes or laundry, it counts.
If your child reads to a pet/stuffed animal, it counts. (Read-to-others)
- If your child reads to himself/herself, it counts. (Read-to-self)
- If your child reads with their ACPC helper/sitter/mentor, it counts.
- If your child is reading for an assignment from their teacher, it counts.
- Any reading counts! (At home, in the car, at grandma's, while waiting at the mall)

Different things to Read:

- Picture books
- Poems, Nursery Rhymes
- Back of cereal boxes
- Chapter books
- Wordless books (read pictures)
- Signs
- Novels
- Comics, graphic novels
- Posters
- Magazines
- Almanacs
- Menus
- Newspapers
- Encyclopedia entries
- Labels
- Informational books
- Audio books, recorded books
- Recipes

Ask your child how they need to keep track of
their minutes
and **READ, READ, READ.**



Nondiscrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Ames Community School District to maintain a nondiscriminatory environment in every aspect of the operation of the District. The District will provide equal educational and employment opportunities without regard to sex, race, national origin, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability in its educational programs and activities or its employment and personnel policies. Dr. Tim Taylor, Assistant Superintendent, is the reporting officer for affirmative action, desegregation, and discrimination. Any questions should be directed to: Dr. Tim E Taylor, Educational Services Center, 415 Stanton Avenue, Ames, IA 50014, (515) 268-6610