



Mitchell Messenger

September 2011

For families and friends of Kate Mitchell Elementary

Pam Stangeland, Principal

Dates to Remember:

September 5
Labor Day – No School

September 6
PTA Meeting at 6:30PM – Mitchell Media Center

September 13
School Board Election and Bond Issue

September 15
Children's Theater – 10AM

September 20
1st Grads Insectology Trip to McFarland Park

September 20
Mitchell Elementary Open House – 6-7:30 PM

September 21
School Pictures

September 27
1st Grade Ants, Ants, Ants Program

new first grade teacher, and Ms. Karen Sawhill is now on our roster as teaching 5th grade. Additionally, we have expanded hours for Karen Forster who is now full time in the School and Family Counselor role, and we welcome Brooke Dannen as our new part-time nurse. Part-time positions have been filled by Sally Shaver, physical education and media; Tana Tesdall, music; and Megan Cummings, art. These teachers will be featured in future editions of our newsletter.

One of the biggest changes you may observe as you enter our building is the prolific growth of our community garden. Volunteers have worked tirelessly through the summer to water, weed, and otherwise tend to our garden. It looks wonderful, and classes are taking the opportunity to make the curriculum come alive through harvesting, sampling, and comparing various horticultural examples. Many garden activities have been scheduled throughout the fall with our Farmers Market planned for September 29th from 5:00-7:00 p.m.

I look forward to getting to know all of you throughout this year and encourage you to take advantage of our volunteer, PTA, and communication opportunities. We have an incredible school with one of the most dedicated staffs around; we know that our efforts will be strengthened by a quality partnership with families.

Pam Stangeland
Principal



From the Principal's Desk

Welcome back to school! We've had a smooth and enjoyable transition to the start of the 2011-12 school year at Kate Mitchell. We're glad to have all our returning families, and we welcome those of you who are new to Mitchell school.

We have several new faces on staff this year. Ms. Vanessa Cortes is teaching kindergarten, Ms. Kenessa Jones is our



Library News By Mrs. Fitz and Mrs. Chieves

Welcome to the Kate Mitchell Elementary School Media Center! Mrs. Chieves and I are both avid readers, and are here to share our passion of reading onto you and your child! Your student will be visiting the media center (both library and computer lab) every fourth day of school. Classroom clips will soon enable all students to visit the media center on a daily basis, so there is no excuse for your child not to have a book to read and share with you.

Our media center is "user friendly" in that your child does NOT have to be able to read a book in order to check it out. Of course, if we see a small kindergartner trudging up to us with a 600 page book, we will show them the advantages of an easier "read". While an enticing book on chemistry might not be YOUR idea of a perfect book to read, there was something in that book or on the cover that attracted your child to that book, and we must respect their wishes. As parents, you are encouraged to sign up for a school library account and check out any 5 books from our library. This enables you to find books that you would like to read aloud to your child/children.

Reading aloud to your children is crucial at every age. Just because a child seems to be reading, doesn't mean that you should abandon your child's reading education. Bump your child's reading comprehension up by reading books that are beyond his comfort zone in reading. Ask plenty of questions and enjoy your time with your children. We do have one of the most complete school libraries in the City of Ames, take advantage of our wonderful collection.

Some basic info:

- 2nd - 5th graders can check out 2 books.
- 1st graders check out one book first quarter.
- Kindergarten check out one book all year.
- Books are checked out for 2 weeks and can be renewed once.
- Scholastic Book Fairs are held twice a year during parent teacher conferences.
- Any damaged books should be returned to the school library so WE can attempt to repair it, don't try to repair it on your own –

as this can cause further damage.

- Keyboarding is introduced to all students. Our school district provides a license for older students to Edu-typing. For proficiency, keyboarding MUST be practiced at home. Our extensive list of technology standards do not enable us to spend an extended amount of time on teaching a student to keyboard, using home row finger placement. We introduce the program, we supply the password, but it is the responsibility of the parents to make sure your child practices at home. If a home computer is not available for your student, let us know and we will make sure that recess time or other times are set aside so your child can learn to keyboard properly.
- For \$1, your child can have their name placed in a new school library book to honor their birthday. Your child will be the first person to check out the new book.

Our school media center maintains a technology web page at <http://mrsfitz.iowapages.org/katie> This web site enables students to extend their computer lab experience into your home, and provides resources for both parents and students. Please check out this valuable resource and bookmark it for your students at home.

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



PTA News Mike Moore

The Mitchell PTA will hold our first meeting of the school year on Tuesday, September 6th, starting at 6:30 p.m. in the media center. This 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! I look forward to seeing many of you at the meeting. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Old Chicago Pizza Palz

Kate Mitchell PTA are 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

**Kate Mitchell Volunteers Needed!!
Jesseca LaFayette**

Parent Volunteers are Needed!!!
We are searching for a couple of parent volunteers for our very important leveled book room.

Qualifications are as follows:

1. Happy to donate 1/-1 hour/week between the hours of 8AM and 3:30PM
2. Enjoy Organizing!!

For more information, contact Jenni Pudenz, 3rd Grade teacher, at:
jennifer.pudenz@ames.k12.ia.us
515-239-3775

**Recycling At Kate Mitchell
Mrs. Fitz – Media Center**

Yes, Kate Mitchell Elementary School is big into recycling!! This year, we are concentrating our efforts on Campbell soup labels, box tops for education and ink cartridges.

Please send the ink cartridges of any size to the media center and the labels and box tops should be placed in the mailbox in the hallway outside of the office. Ask family members and friends to do the same and we will be able to buy books and other supplies for the special education room!!

**Welcome Ms. Jones
By Student reporter Hannah Hapke – 5st Grade**

Ms. Jones is our new first grade teacher! She was born in Fairfax, Virginia, and then moved to Ames. She went to Meeker Elementary. Her favorite things to do when she was little were reading and playing school. Her favorite children’s book is *Alexander and the Terrible Horrible No Good Very Bad Day*. She does not have any pets, but enjoys reading and riding her bike. She decided she wanted to be a teacher in first grade because she loved her first grade teacher so much. She does not like the Iowa State or Iowa football teams, but she does like UNI. She drives a Lexis, and her favorite vacation was spending a year in Australia.



**Read a Million Minutes Volunteers Needed
Mrs. Hindman**

Kate Mitchell teachers are working towards implementing “Read a Million Minutes.” We are seeking volunteers for 30 minutes to 1 hour on any Monday morning to record the minutes read by students. More details will be given at the PTA meeting Sept. 6th at 6:30. If you can’t attend the meeting or want more information, contact Mrs. Hindman at school, 239-3775.

Target Comes through for Kate Mitchell Mrs. Fitz – Media Center

The Target Corporation has again agreed to partner with Kate Mitchell Elementary School in "Making Over our School Library". Scott Sitzman, our Target Liaison person, continues to notify our school of potential field trip funding and grant writing opportunities. Through his diligence, our library has received in excess of \$1,500 worth of books over the last three years, and an opportunity to buy digital cameras for each grade level. Scott was also responsible for bringing in published authors and community leaders on a monthly basis to help students see the value of reading and writing. Thank you Target for helping in making Kate Mitchell a great school!!

PTA Involvement Encouraged The Teachers at Kate Mitchell

Our first PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) meeting is Tuesday evening, September 6 at 6:30. Please consider coming to help plan events for our school and support our students. We know that your lives are very busy with many activities, but we encourage you to come. Not only can you make a difference for Mitchell students and families, but it would be an opportunity to meet other parents.

Please plan to attend!

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

Kate Mitchell • 3521 Jewel Drive • Ames, IA 50010 • 515.239.3775

Visit us on the web at: <http://www.ames.k12.ia.us/Schools/Mitchell/Mitchell.html>