

# PRAIRIE CREEK ELEMENTARY

*"Home of the Panthers"*

654 YMCA Drive  
Andover, KS 67002  
316-218-4830  
[www.usd385.org](http://www.usd385.org)



**Shelley Jonas, Principal**



**December 4th,  
2015**

## *A Note from Mrs. Jonas...*

There is no doubt that our weather is taking a sharp turn. As our weather changes from warm to cold, I would like to remind parents to make sure their children are dressing appropriately for the weather. We go outside for recess unless the weather doesn't permit. We follow the guidelines of going outside unless it is raining, snowing or has a temperature or wind chill below 20 degrees. With the variations in weather we inevitably end up with many coats, jackets, and sweatshirts in lost and found. Please be advised that we will purge our lost and found over Winter Break. Students will be given an opportunity to look through lost and found items with their class before these items are taken out of the building. If your child is missing something, don't forget to check the lost and found at PCE, as it just might be waiting to be found.

WOW! The Prairie Creek community is the best group of people. I was blown away by the unbelievable response during our STUCO/PTO canned/non-perishable food drive. We collected 1,092 items. The PTO Santa shop is off to a great start. Thank you to Jennifer Murphy and all of the volunteers for making this a special experience for our kids. We will kick off the STUCO mitten/hats/scarves drive December 7th. Please see more information as listed in this newsletter.

Our PTO has also done a wonderful job with our Big Bash Party reward for the JT Fundraiser. The kids had a blast! We are looking forward to our Read-a-thon in January. It will coincide with our annual Read Night on Tuesday, January 26th. Be sure to save the date!

Just a reminder, we still have students arriving prior to 8:20. We do not have the supervision for students arriving early. Please make arrangements for your children prior to this time. I appreciate your help with this matter.

Thank you,

Shelley Jonas  
Principal





## FOOD DRIVE

Student council would like to thank everyone who brought items for our food drive. We collected 1092 items!! This is a huge help to the food bank. Student Council was able to go and deliver the items and had a tour of the food bank. The entire school received a special dessert treat as a reward for their efforts. It was a great experience for our students!!



## The Annual Spelling Bee is Buzzing This Way!!!

Our Prairie Creek school spelling bee for grades three, four, and five is soon approaching on Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. in the library. Each classroom is currently selecting their top two classroom representatives to participate in the school spelling bee. The spelling lists will be passed out to these representatives before Winter Break. Everyone is eagerly anticipating who our 2015 school spelling bee winner and alternate will be.

The school spelling bee winner will represent our school in the county spelling bee on Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup> at the Butler County Community College.

Best of luck spellers!



## The Mitten Tree Project

The Prairie Creek STUCO will be sponsoring the annual Mitten Tree Project during the month of December. From December 7<sup>th</sup> thru December 14<sup>th</sup>, mittens, hats, scarves, gloves, and earmuffs will be collected to decorate the Prairie Creek Christmas tree. On our final collection day, all the items will be gathered and delivered to needy children in and around the Andover area. This community service project is based on the children's story titled, "The Mitten Tree." Mrs. Jonas will be reading this book to the students during the Good Morning Meeting. There is a school goal of collecting 100 items so that Mrs. Jonas can wear a crazy stocking hat. If you wish to donate items, please bring them to the Christmas tree area in the front lobby beginning Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for helping us to help others!





## *Music Notes from Mrs. Routh...*

It has been a busy fall and now we are heading into the holidays. Our third, fourth and fifth graders had a great field trip to see "The Composer is Dead" with the Wichita Symphony Orchestra. Our students were very well behaved and excellent listeners. I am always proud of our students and how they represent Prairie Creek.

We did our annual "Turkey in the Straw" all school dance at Good Morning Meeting on November 20. It is an amazing sight to see all the students, and some faculty, square dancing.

We have already started Christmas music and activities. The Pre-K are loving the jingle bells and Kindergarten are discovering the antics of the naughty Gingerbread Man. The Kindergartners get to act out the story with their own Gingerbread Man.

Grades 1-5 are studying The Nutcracker Suite by Peter Tchaikovsky. The music in this suite is magical and heard everywhere this time of year. I want them to be able to recognize the different pieces by name. I am excited about some fun new activities to go with our Nutcracker lessons. The second graders will need a shoe box to make our own stage for the Nutcracker. We are enjoying all the favorite Christmas carols and discovering some new ones too. We are doing lots of movement and playing instruments. There are so many fun Christmas music videos on YouTube. Some are quite old like the Chipmunks and others very new like Pentatonix. We are exploring as many as we can this month.

The Prairie Creek Singers will be performing at Barnes & Noble this Saturday, December 5th at 4:00 p.m. This is a fun place to perform with lots of people to sing for. It also benefits our Andover Public Library. A certain amount of the day's earnings go to the library. They will also be performing at Victoria Falls on Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. The people at Victoria Falls are a wonderful, appreciative audience. We have 44 great fourth and fifth graders in the choir this fall. Moving our rehearsals to after school has been wonderful. We have not been as rushed. Thanks to all the parents for making this happen. We will be happy to take any leftover Christmas candy for the choir. They look forward to that small reward each rehearsal. Our new year will be starting and contracts will be coming out this month so we can get started soon in January. We would love to have some new members if they love to sing!

Upcoming programs in the spring include Grades 2-3 on Tuesday, April 19 and Grades K-1 on Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. Both programs will be at Andover Central High School Auditorium and start at 7:00 p.m. Please mark your calendars to save the date for these fun evenings! We all know that December will fly by. Take time to enjoy the journey and your families. Merry Christmas!

Musically yours,

Mrs. Routh



# Ornament Project!



*Each ornament will be personalized!*



*They will only cost \$8.*

The fourth graders are selling Christmas Ornaments, to raise money to help needy families at Christmas time! These keepsakes will be on sale from Nov. 24th-Dec. 12th.

*Please make checks payable to Prairie Creek Elementary.*

Please fill out the bottom section of this page and return it with your money no later than December 12th!

*P.S. If you already have enough ornaments and would like to just donate some money to help the project, please do! Donations can be sent to the office along with a note saying that they are for the ornament project.*

**Student name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please print the names that you want to appear on each ornament: (Up to 20 letters & spaces per ornament)

Ornament #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Ornament #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Ornament #3 \_\_\_\_\_

# Counselor's Corner

By: Mrs. Bradford

## Teaching Children to Be Grateful

By Charlotte Latvala

An excerpt from *Parents.com*

### How to Teach Gratitude-

Children model their parents in every way, so make sure you use "please" and "thank you" when you talk to them. ("Thanks for that hug -- it made me feel great!") Insist on their using the words, too. After all, "good manners and gratitude overlap," says New York City etiquette consultant Melissa Leonard, a mother of two young daughters.

- **Work gratitude into your daily conversation.** Lately, we've been trying to weave appreciation for mundane things into our everyday talk -- with A.J., his big sister, Mathilda, 10, and especially with our 2-year-old, Mary Elena. ("We're so lucky to have a good cat like Sam!" "Aren't the colors in the sunset amazing?" "I'm so happy when you listen!") When you reinforce an idea frequently, it's more likely to stick. One way to turn up the gratitude in your house is to pick a "thanking" part of the day. Two old-fashioned, tried-and-true ideas: Make saying what good things happened today part of the dinnertime conversation or make bedtime prayers part of your nightly routine.
- **Have kids help.** It happens to all of us: You give your child a chore, but it's too agonizing watching him a) take forever to clear the table or b) make a huge mess mixing the pancake batter. The temptation is always to step in and do it yourself. But the more you do for them, the less they appreciate your efforts. (Don't you feel more empathy for people who work outside on cold days when you've just been out shoveling snow yourself?) By participating in simple household chores like feeding the dog or stacking dirty dishes on the counter, kids realize that all these things take effort.
- **Find a goodwill project.** That doesn't mean you need to drag your toddler off to a soup kitchen every week, says Lewis. Instead, figure out some way he can actively participate in helping someone else, even if it's as simple as making cupcakes for a sick neighbor. "As you're stirring the batter or adding sprinkles," she says, "talk about how you're making them for a special person, and how happy the recipient will be."
- **Encourage generosity.** "We frequently donate toys and clothes to less fortunate kids," says Hulya Migliorino, of Bloomingdale, New Jersey. "When my daughters see me giving to others, it inspires them to go through their own closets and give something special to those in need, as well."
- **Insist on thank-you notes.** Paula Goodnight, of Maineville, Ohio, always makes her girls (Rachel, 10, Amelia, 6, and Isabella, 3) write thank-yous for gifts. "When they were toddlers, the cards were just scribbles with my own thank-you attached," she says. "As they grew, they became drawings, then longer letters." Younger children can even dictate the letter while you write, says Lewis. "Just the act of saying out loud why he loved the gift will make him feel more grateful," she says.
- **Practice saying no.** Of course kids ask for toys, video games, and candy -- sometimes on an hourly basis. It's difficult, if not impossible, to feel grateful when your every whim is granted. Saying no a lot makes saying yes that much sweeter.
- **Be patient.** You can't expect gratitude to develop overnight -- it requires weeks, months, even years of reinforcement. But trust me, you will be rewarded. Four years after the robotic dog fiasco, I can now report that A.J. is a grateful, cheerful boy who delights in making other people happy. Sure, he asked for lots of gifts this Christmas, but he was just as excited about requesting gifts for his sisters. "They've both been good girls and deserve something special," he wrote in his letter to Santa. Now I'm the one feeling grateful.





## 2nd Grade Gingerbread Community Project



During the week of December 15th, the 2nd grade classes will be creating a gingerbread version of our community and then connecting via Skype with other communities across the country to share our gingerbread versions with each other.

## Staff Birthdays this month...



Megan Haines 12/2

Jamie Clark 12/8

Jamie Pearson 12/27



## PTO NEWS...

PTO will be hosting the Prairie Creek Staff Holiday meal on Thursday, December 10th. We are still in need of volunteers so if this is something you would like to help with or donate towards, please contact Holly Devlin at [haddenett@devlinenterprises.com](mailto:haddenett@devlinenterprises.com) or 617-5161.

Teacher Christmas Wish Lists will be going home Friday and items can be dropped off in the Library until Wednesday, December 16th.

Be on the lookout for information on our 1st ever Read-a-thon when we get back from winter break! Reading is so critical for our children and we are so excited about the plans for the students with this event!

Our next PTO meeting will be January 28th at 6:30 p.m. in the Library.



## Early Dismissal!

*Students will be dismissed at 1:35 p.m. on  
Friday, Dec. 18, for the winter break,  
December 18th - January 4th.*

*Have a great holiday break  
& Happy New Year!*

