



# Taft Elementary School

## Tiger Tales

Volume 2 Issue 4

January, 2008

### A Letter From the Principal

#### Principal's Message

Greetings! During the next four weeks the children will be participating in the Books and Beyond program. Emphasize the importance of reading by letting your child see you read as they read. Plan a weekly Family Reading Night or visit the public library. Give books as gifts. Visit the web sites of your child's favorite author, characters, or stories. The effort will go a long way in supporting your child's growth. Thank you for your help.

Mrs. Montesi

#### *From the Desk of Miss Fafard*

*Hi!*

*#1-January 25th is All Sports Day. Students and Staff can dress in their favorite sports clothing. It is an early release day.*

*#2-We would like to thank parents for their cooperation with bus safety rules so far this school year and especially during the winter season. Keep up the good work stressing the importance of these safety measures. Remember that school starts once students step onto the bus and school ends when you step off the bus every school day.*

*Thank you and Happy New Year!*

*Miss Fafard*

**January 28-February 1-Taft Physical Education classes are participating in the American Diabetes Association's School Walk for Diabetes. We are learning about nutrition, exercise and diabetes. Return collection envelope to Mrs Dimmick or Mrs. Seagrave. (Deadline-Feb.14)**

**PARENT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** Students love to jump rope and want to jump Double Dutch in Physical Education class. Any parent volunteers willing to come in and help us turn the long ropes are welcome. If interested, contact Mrs. Dimmick at [bdimmick@uxbridge.k12.ma.us](mailto:bdimmick@uxbridge.k12.ma.us)

### IMPORTANT DATES

Friday January 18, 2008	Books and Beyond begins. (4 week program)
Friday, January 25, 2008	All Sports Day
	Curriculum Half Day Dismissal at 11:45
Friday, February 1, 2008	Principal's Coffee Hour 9:30-10:30
Friday, February 8, 2008	Father Daughter Dance 6:30
Week of February 11, 2008	Friendship Week (activities in class)
February 11, 2008	All About Kids Assembly
Thursday, February 14, 2008	PTO Meeting 7:00
Friday, February 15, 2008	Last Day of School Before February vacation
Friday, February 29, 2008	School Assemblies to Celebrate the End of Books and Beyond (9:00 and 10:00)
Friday, February 29, 2008	Dr. Seuss Night (Read Across America) 6:30-8:00

## Announcing

We are happy to announce the birth of Erika Lundberg. Erika was born on Friday, January 4, 2008. Erika and her mom, Mrs. Stephanie Lundberg, are doing well. We wish Mr. and Mrs. Lundberg much happiness as they enjoy this special time with Erika.

from the Office Staff

Thank you for bringing in your ID and for escorting students into the building as requested in our last newsletter. It really has helped us.

## Musical Notes

Music Classes are back in full swing in January with units on the African American music tradition and Jazz. Songs focus on peace and freedom themes and include old favorites as 'Follow the Drinking Gourd', 'Wade in the Water', 'Train is A'Coming', 'Eyes on the Prize' and a new hit; 'Back of the Bus' about Rosa Parks.

First Graders will explore the concept of 'pitch' with a giant staff carpet and fourth graders are learning about the musical element of 'timbre' (tam-ber) as they await their shipment of recorders. Second and third graders will discuss instrument families and the unique sounds of each instrument as we review pitch, dynamics, melody and continue to build upon strong foundations.

We are pleased to announce Mr. Nicholas LaPete as the new Taft School Music teacher. Mr. LaPete is a recent graduate of University of Massachusetts in Amherst. As you get to know him you will notice his knowledge, musical talent, and enthusiasm. Welcome to Taft, Mr. LaPete.

## Art "Effects"

The Art Classes are celebrating the beauty of winter. The students are painting and drawing what nature has created outside our windows. This will help increase their powers of observation and develop their critical eye. My third grades will be creating trout! They will create sculptures that will be mounted like trophy fish. Grade four will explore geometry and art. Creating abstract designs. Grade two will begin to look at the art and cultures of the continents. Grade one will experience working with clay. Always exciting for them. As always we will be busy and creative.

Mrs. Henries and Mr. Skillern

## Practice Makes Perfect

If any first or second grade student would like to read to me, please send Mrs. Montesi a note stating so. Include your child's name and the teacher's name. Encourage your child to practice the book at home. Practice makes children fluent readers.

## Leadership Club News

The Leadership Club is planning to hold a bake sale on Friday February 15, 2008 during the 4<sup>th</sup> grade lunch period. The Leadership Club is going to base the theme of the bake sale in relation to Friendship Week. The funds raised from the bake sale will go to activities and products for the fourth grade class.

## All Roads Lead to Taft

Students suggested names for the corridors at Taft. A group of teachers picked the winning names. Through a donation, the signs were printed and will be displayed in the halls soon.

Miss Fafard and Mrs. Montesi are normally here until 4:30. However, if you arrive after school hours and can't enter the main entrance, please enter around the building into the cafeteria.

## Taft Elementary School

16 Granite Street  
Uxbridge, MA 01569  
508-278-8643  
Fax 508-278-8646

Email:  
[pmontesi@uxbridge.k12.ma.us](mailto:pmontesi@uxbridge.k12.ma.us)

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**Come visit at**  
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# Computer Bytes

January is a busy month in the Computer Lab! First Grade is learning "how we use technology every day". Plus, we are discussing electrical safety using the computer. These two topics are included in the Massachusetts Recommended K-2 Technology Literacy Standards. We are using *Stickybear Math Word Problems* for addition and subtraction practice. The other grades are using *Word Munchers* software. The 2<sup>nd</sup> grade is working on classification and grammar. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders are working on grammar and phonics. We are discussing care of CD's, use of technology in the workplace and in society, and recognizing the functions of basic menu commands. These, too, are some of the Standards required.

## Library Corner

Hello from the Library! December seemed like a short month, didn't it?! We read books about dance and about snow, and in the last week of school we looked at very special books by Robert Sabuda. Robert Sabuda is a pop-up artist. His books are works of art created by folding and cutting only. Next time you're in a bookstore, check this artist out; these are books to have on your own book shelves! We are still exploring *spine labels* and the *call numbers* they contain. First and second grades are learning how to tell fiction from non-fiction by the call number, and third and fourth graders are creating their *own* fiction call numbers. Finally, over 30 books have been "sponsored" by the Donate-a-Book program and now are on the shelves for all to enjoy. Come in and check out the "orphans" still waiting to be sponsored!

## Let's Get Physical

Physical Education classes have kicked footballs, practiced the hula hoops, played snowball tag, and began jumping hoops and rope. January brings more jump rope skills and walking in preparation for our School Walk for Diabetes during PE classes. Donation envelopes are optional. Volunteers are needed for the week of January 28-February 1 to help with the School Walk and also to help turn rope for jump rope unit. The children anxiously await jumping Double Dutch again. Flyers are available for those who wish to donate to the American Heart Association. Contact Mrs. Dimmick at [bdimmick@uxbridge.k12.ma.us](mailto:bdimmick@uxbridge.k12.ma.us) or call 508-278-8643.

## It's Never Too Late to Learn Your A, B, C's....

**A B C**s Of Student Success

**J** is for JOBS.

Giving kids jobs at home teaches them responsibility and other valuable lessons.

- Young children follow directions as they sort socks or set a table. Older children take on bigger tasks.
- Don't expect a job to be done right unless you take time to teach the child to do it right.
- Don't take away from a child's sense of accomplishment by redoing a job.

With practice and encouragement, jobs help develop responsibility and a strong work ethic as they set the stage for success in life.

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**Next Month: K is for Kitchen**

# Classroom Happenings

## Grade 2

### Polar Express

It was a cozy Friday before vacation for all the grade 2 classes as they enjoyed a culminating activity for Celebrations Around the World dressed in slippers and bathrobes (some pj's too). This literature activity, coordinated by Mrs. Davis, involved the book Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg and the movie by the same name. We would like to thank Judi Lanoue for all her help, especially making all the cookies and the second grade parent volunteer elves who handed out cookies and hot cocoa to all. Mrs. Rooney looked lovely as she passed out treats dressed as Mrs. Claus. After the movie, Ms. Bandstra's class invited Mrs. Priore's early childhood class from the high school to create Venn diagrams comparing the book and the movie. A fun day was had by all!

### Celebrations Around the World

Here are a couple of writing samples about our trip around the world!

I enjoyed traveling to the countries of Israel and India. They both are on the continent of Asia. India celebrates a holiday called Diwali. Diwali is pronounced Divali. Israel celebrates a holiday called Hanukkah. Hanuhhah is called the Jewish Festival of Lights. The craft we made in India is called a rangoli. The capital of Israel is Jerusalem. I enjoyed learning about the 8 countries we went to. Celebrations Around the World was so much fun!  
By James Stark

I enjoyed traveling to the country of France. France is on the continent of Europe. When I went to France I learned a lot of wonderful things. One thing I learned was that the kids in France take their shoes and put them by the fireplace. It was fun to learn about lots of things in France! What a great time!  
By Benjamin Howard

### Gingerbread Houses

Mrs. Roche's class along with Mrs. Sirois used their Empowering Writers Time to write about the candy gingerbread houses the class made at their holiday party. The class is learning to write using "elaborate detail". This brings life to our narrative writing. We want the reader to experience the story through the five senses. Please read our mouth watering descriptions! You can see the classes finished pieces in our grade 2 hallway along with a picture of each child's gingerbread house!

*Angela Young wrote this about her gingerbread house.*

I gasped when I saw the magnificent gingerbread house before me. Its door was made of licorice with a red and white peppermint candy window. It also had a tiny, red licorice doorknob. The windows were square, pink, strawberry starbursts. I was delighted with the roof that was made of sugary, purple and yellow gumdrops. I could hardly believe how yummy the green gumdrops looked as grass all around the little house. My mouth watered at the sight of the whole colorful gingerbread house. I thought about having a little bite, but I think I want to save it!

## Grade 1

The first grade team was happy to be part of the Empowering Writers training on our recent Professional Day. We look forward to learning more about this wonderful program which will help our students become even better writers than they already are!

Mrs. Michelson and Mrs. Landry's classes worked together throughout the month of December to learn how the holidays are celebrated all over the world. Mrs. Ethier and Mrs. Gallo's class did a similar activity, learning about an assortment of Winter Celebrations that different people around the world take part in. December was a very busy month in first grade!

## Grade 3 Poetry

### Who is Martin Luther King?

By Joseph Garron

A brave man who made history-  
Made stuff equal to everybody,  
Won a Nobel peace prize,  
A good friend to everybody  
A good preacher  
A inspiration to all  
A great person  
That's who Martin Luther King is.

### Who is Martin Luther King?

By Trevor Benoit

A man of his dreams.  
A person of peace.  
A strong speech man.  
A strong man who fought his fear.  
A person of history.  
A guy who had a dream.  
That's Martin Luther King