



February 2014
Volume 3 / Issue 2

EAST LYME PUBLIC SCHOOLS News & Notes

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING & COMMUNITY SERVICE

The school year is flying by, and after six snow days, all of us can't wait until winter is over. Despite the weather, our schools continue to engage students in many exciting learning opportunities.

In this month's issue of our newsletter, you will read about how our high school students honored U.S. veterans as part of East Lyme's annual tribute to those who serve. Supporting the same theme of recognizing military service, Flanders Elementary School hosted the organization Wreaths Across America in December with a moving ceremony honoring local families who lost a loved one in a recent conflict.

Read how our schools emphasize "hands-on" learning activities that capture children's imagination. Lillie B.

Haynes and Niantic Center School have involved children in a number of project-based learning programs, while Flanders children have experienced several arts projects this winter.

East Lyme High School's Family and Consumer Science classes also have focused recent programs on project-based learning activities for students. Finally, our ELMS fifth graders enjoyed yummy gingerbread math projects during a two-week winter unit.

Enjoy reading about how our students engage in stimulating learning programs and give back to our community.

Dr. James D. Lombardo
Superintendent of Schools

Fill Empty Bowls for Care & Share

March 27th from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
East Lyme High School Commons.

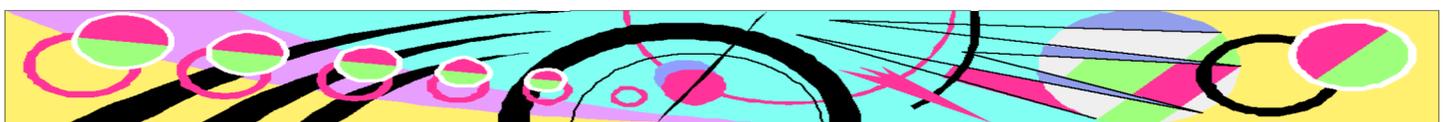
Bowls created by ELHS art students will be for sale along with a selection of soups prepared by culinary students. The price of admission is \$10 for adults and \$7 for children, and includes both the meal and bowl. Guests are also asked to bring a non-perishable food item to donate to Care & Share's food pantry. The 2014 ELHS Empty Bowls project is made possible by a generous donation from the Dime Bank Foundation, Inc.

The Empty Bowls Project is a nationwide venture of the Imagine/Render Group, a non-profit organization that promotes the use of the arts and education to enact positive and lasting social change. Care & Share is a non-profit that provides emergency food delivery and financial aid, holiday food baskets and gifts, winter outerwear and linens, scholarships and camperships to residents of East Lyme and Salem.

East Lyme Scholarship Association, Inc.

The East Lyme Scholarship Association, Inc. annually awards scholarships to deserving East Lyme High School students. The Association is seeking monetary donations to continue to assist graduates with the cost of college tuition. The Scholarship Association has a 501(c)(3) status; therefore all donations are tax deductible. Donations of any amount are gratefully accepted. New donors contributing \$300 or more are entitled to name the scholarship, and may provide reasonable criteria to be used by the Association in awarding that scholarship. Last year, the Association awarded scholarships totaling \$80,500 to 57 students in the class of 2013.

Donations may be mailed to East Lyme Scholarship Association, P.O. Box 190, Niantic, CT 06357. Further information may be obtained by calling RoseAnn Hardy at 860-739-6946 ext. 2551 or Lori Singer at 860-739-6946 ext. 2546.



ELHS National Honor Society Students Help Veterans

The National Honor Society (NHS) raised \$743.65 for the Vet House managed by the New London Homeless Hospitality Center by conducting a "Thank a Veteran" pin sale and sponsoring a jeans day. This money, along with winter clothing, food and toiletries collected in social studies classrooms were delivered to the center by NHS officers.



We are also very proud of our students who volunteered their time at the Vet House on November 9th. They painted two bedrooms, a den, and a hallway, washed windows, cleaned floors, and conducted a yard cleanup. In total, they spent six hours of their time volunteering. This project was timely and meaningful and each student put their all into every aspect of it - from advertising to manual labor. Their efforts made a real difference in the lives of veterans who are vulnerable and in need. Their work represents true recognition of the meaning of Veterans Day.

Submitted by Henry Kydd, ELHS Teacher and NHS Advisor



PROJECT-BASED LEARNING AT LILLIE B. HAYNES



This has been an exciting year for Project Based Learning at Lillie B. Haynes Elementary School. Students in the fourth grade classes completed their first *Assured Research Experience* this fall with a Native American Project. The research experience was kicked off with a whole-class study of the Northeast Woodlands tribe. Students were then placed in collaborative groups and assigned a Native American tribe from another United States cultural area. Over the course of three weeks, groups worked together to research and gather information from print and online resources in the Media Center and Computer Lab. The students' research focused on the natural resources, clothing, and shelter and village life of their tribe. Once their research was completed, each group analyzed their information then worked individually to reflect upon their findings and write a short paper about the comparisons and contrasts between their assigned tribe and the Northeast Woodlands. This research experience culminated with a field trip to the Mashantucket Pequot Museum.

The *Assured Research Experiences* not only support the East Lyme Public Schools curriculum but help to prepare the students for Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) testing. Both grades three and four are looking forward to an additional Assured Experience this year.

Additionally, a third grade class at Haynes took part in another very exciting project in the fall, called *Mystery Skype*. If you are not familiar with *Mystery Skype*, the concept is simple: classrooms use a video conferencing tool called Skype to communicate with each other face to face, from anywhere in the world. The students try to guess where the other classroom is located by asking a series of yes or no questions.

One third grade class at Haynes, teamed up with the building Technology Consultant, Mrs. Melissa Chiappone to set out on a quest to find another class outside of Connecticut, but within the United States. With the help of Twitter and Skype they were able to connect with a class from Lucille Whitehead Intermediate School in Waterford, California.

In the preparatory stage of the project, the students brainstormed some questions. Then, students were assigned jobs in groups. Each student played an integral role in pinpointing the location of the partner school. Whether the student was assigned to ask questions on camera, strategically coming up with the next question to ask, or narrowing down the location in Google Earth based on the answers that the clue keeper organized on the whiteboard.

The excitement of the students in the room was very apparent when the first student sat before the camera and asked the first question: "Do you live West of the Mississippi?" The students were off and running from there. It took our 3rd graders only seven questions to pinpoint their location. It was an amazing project which incorporated critical thinking, public speaking, geographical awareness, and collaboration. The third graders are very excited about our next *Mystery Skype*!

Submitted by, Melissa Chiappone, Computer Consultant



ELMS

GINGERBREAD MATH PROJECT

The 5th grade Sea Hawk students embarked on a two week math event called The Gingerbread Project for Mrs. Stroebel's math class. Students first learned about area and perimeter in class and then designed a house that met certain specifications. After the students completed their gingerbread house design, they cut out their shapes on cardboard. Volunteer parents and teachers helped by cutting out and baking all the gingerbread shapes. The students then put together their gingerbread houses and decorated them with candy.

For our culminating event, the Sea Hawk kiva voted on the grand prize winners, and each gingerbread house was on display throughout East Lyme Middle School. This event could not have been completed with out the help of the amazing Sea Hawk families and their teachers. What a fun time we had!

Submitted by Laura Stroebel, Sea Hawks Math Teacher



1st Place

Guillem Colom, Maggie Madole,
Brooke Douglas, and Isabella Mazzi



2nd Place

Cassie Nguyen, Julia Kahl, Jennie Lin



4th Place

Edmund Buckingham, Claire Angier
AJ Saporito, Emma King



3rd Place

Noam Sokolovsky, Ty Chiasson
Julia Groff, Nolan Deschenes

FLANDERS SCHOOL FEATURING PRE-K & 2ND GRADE



The second grade students at Flanders tried a different approach to doing research in the library and used a new presentation format called Prezi. Students researched used traditional print encyclopedias, Google Earth, and Fact Monster as resources on different countries. The students took notes and then wrote from their notes. They drew pictures, accessed and saved maps and pictures on computers, and recorded video clips with a flip-cam. Finally, their information was put into Prezi and students practiced giving a presentation on what they had learned to their classmates, and later to the entire school.

To enhance the research project, students met with the Art, Music and Physical Education teachers for a week each. In the library

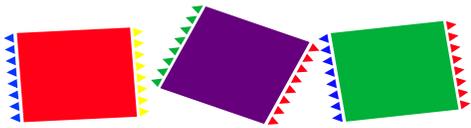


Flanders Pre-K Students Celebrate the Chinese New Year with Dr. Lombardo and the Central Office Staff.

students worked on their research projects and practiced presenting. In Art they learned to do Chinese paintings and made Brazilian shakers. In Music they learned to sing songs and play instruments from China and Brazil, and in P.E. they learned dances to go along with the music. At the end of four weeks, Flanders School hosted an All School Meeting Extravaganza where the second graders shared their art, music, dance and everything they learned about their research country with the whole school!

Project-based learning gave these students the opportunity to build and reinforce their knowledge of different countries.

*Submitted by, Mike Mullen,
Library Media Specialist*



EAST LYME HIGH SCHOOL



Family & Consumer Science (FCS) classes at East Lyme High School lend themselves to project-based learning. In FCS classes, students participate in hands on lab experiences and team based projects that make connections to real life scenarios.



ELHS and Flanders Students

Students who successfully complete Culinary 1 and Culinary 2 classes are able to take a Catering Class. In this class, students apply their culinary knowledge to complete several projects over the course of the semester. For example, they research, plan, and market “Take Home Meals” that are offered to East Lyme High School Staff and they plan and cater events through the East Lyme Senior Center. This past fall, the catering students also planned a culinary, math, and literacy based event with a first grade class from Flanders Elementary School. For this project, catering students collaborated together to plan age appropriate activities that integrated cooking, math, literacy and fun. This intergenerational project was beneficial to all students. The first grade students were able to make new friends, partici-

pate in hands on activities, and had an opportunity to apply their classroom learning to a new setting. The high school students were engaged and enthusiastic “teachers” and claimed it was the “best day ever”.

In Human Development, a University of Connecticut Early College Experience Course (ECE), students are participating in project based learning where their research is showcased at the annual poster competition event held at the University of Connecticut every spring for all ECE Human Development classes throughout the state. This year’s theme is, “The International Year of the Family”. The objective of this project is for students to work in small collaborative groups to research a topic relative to the theme. Each small group will chose a different topic and all groups create an essential question to guide their research. Some of the topics chosen are; international adoption, human trafficking, and the changing face of the American family. The project includes an annotated bibliography, an informational brochure, and a tri-fold poster. The poster must include facts from their research and also be visually appealing.

During the poster competition at the University of Connecticut, students present and display their posters and research. Each poster and presentation is judged by university professors and winners are given awards. Their work will also be highlighted in a university newsletter. This semester long project is rewarding for all.

*Submitted by, Joanna Hildebrand and Freda Gianakos
East Lyme High School FSC Teachers*



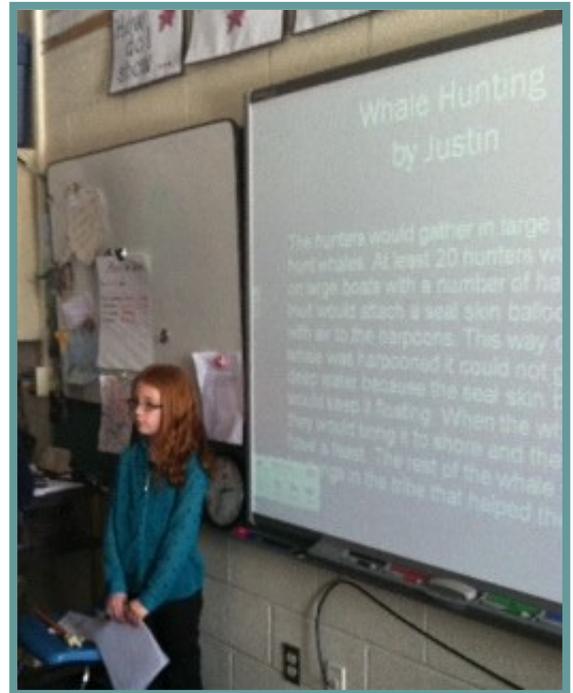
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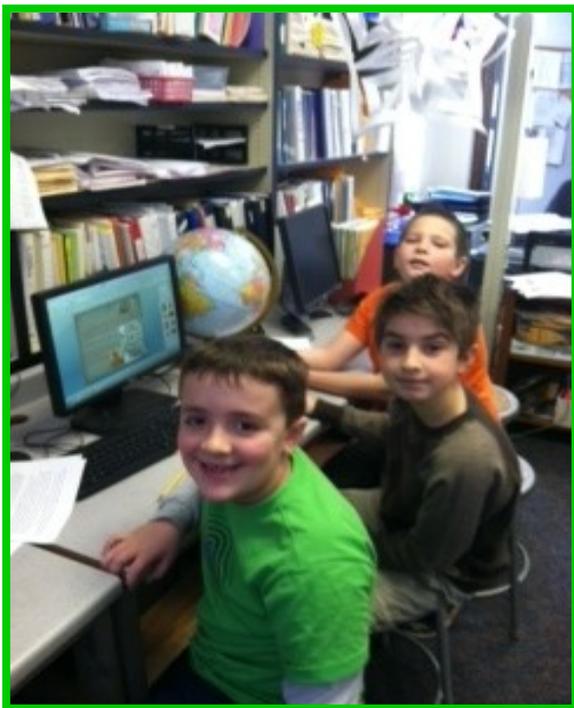
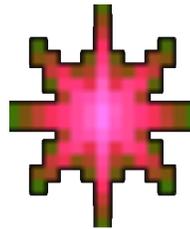
PROJECT-BASED LEARNING AT NIAN TIC CENTER SCHOOL



Niantic Center students work collaboratively as they use multiple kinds of resources during their research.



Fourth grade student at NCS uses a PowerPoint presentation to showcase learning as the culmination to an assured research project.



Students at NCS used project based learning as they research Native American tribes from around the country. They began by having to answer questions through research with a partner and ended the project by sharing their learning in a variety of ways with others.



NCS students learned to collaborate as they made many decisions about their project. Above you see students using their research facts to write about their Native American tribe.



WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA AT FLANDERS SCHOOL



On Wednesday, December 11th, a convoy for the nonprofit organization Wreaths Across America (WAA) made a stop at Flanders Elementary School on its way to Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

WAA, whose mission is to bring wreaths to veterans' cemeteries throughout the United States, began the Connecticut convoy in Harrington, Maine and ended in Arlington. The route through Connecticut also included stops at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and the USS Nautilus Museum, among others.

After arriving at Flanders at approximately 9:15 a.m., representatives of WAA participated in an assembly for students on the importance of honoring veterans. Special wreaths were presented to two local Gold Star Families who had lost an immediate family member in conflict. In addition, a wreath was presented to Superintendent of Schools Dr. James Lombardo, which was placed in the Memorial Garden in front of Central Office, and a wreath was presented to First Selectman Paul Formica, which was later laid at the Niantic Town Green in a special ceremony. During the Flanders program, members of the East Lyme

High School Band performed several patriotic songs, and accompanied the Flanders School students. In addition, members of the ELHS National Honor Society helped students make two large banners to welcome and thank WAA for their visit. Two reporters for the Viking Saga covered the event, as did a cameraman from Channel 3 News, and a reporter and photographer from The Day.

"We are so incredibly honored to have had Wreaths Across America make a stop at Flanders School," says Robin Soule, a third-grade teacher at Flanders Elementary who helped organize the visit. "It was humbling to be able to pay our respects



to the local Gold Star Families as their family members were recognized for making the ultimate sacrifice."

For more information about the program, visit <http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/>

Submitted by Robin Soule, Grade 3 Teacher

