

# Buena Vista Elementary School

# Tiger Times

April, 2005

## From Dr. Rasmussen's Desk:

As my final year as principal of Buena Vista Elementary School is quickly coming to a close I find myself with lots of things I feel the need to say to the families and friends of Buena Vista.

I heard a rumor recently that I was being 'invited' to retire because of the Montessori initiative that has been taking place at Buena Vista. Let me tell you that is just not true. While I am not a Montessori trained educator, I am a supporter of the Montessori method and I support its implementation at this school. I have nurtured the development of the Montessori implementation in the best interests of this school and hope that it will bring with it the enthusiasm and support that are required to revitalize this small Westside school. I've heard from some of you that you wish the school was not changing, but change is exactly what is needed if this school is to remain a public school for neighborhood children. While our traditional program has served the neighborhood well, it is no longer unique enough to attract new students. Without an injection of a solid, well established program such as the Montessori Method, Buena Vista would be doomed to keep losing children. At some point in the not too distant future, voters will be asked again to build schools in the northern and eastern parts of Colorado Springs. A clear message has been sent to the Board of Education that voters do not want nearly empty schools remaining open on the Westside while they are asked to build schools elsewhere. Sooner or later, a Westside school will need to be sacrificed to the needs of other neighborhoods. It is my fervent hope that Buena Vista Montessori School will be passed over when that dark day arrives. Change is inevitable; preparing for it is an option.

Will you please join me in my final weeks as principal of Buena Vista to embrace the change that is taking place and take in the refreshment that a new initiative will bring to this already great school. The Montessori method is a researched-based curriculum with over a century of international implementation. It is based on numerous fundamental and common sense ideas about how children learn, grow and develop. Its complexity is premised on

well-documented observations of child growth and development that have identified sensitive periods in a child's life. These sensitive periods are used to introduce children to concepts, ideas and facts at the perfect time for learning.

Buena Vista is on the crest of a rising wave of revitalization. With your support and patience, this school will recover from its shrinking enrollment problems and less than superior achievement levels and become the school of choice for the entire Colorado Springs community.

Finally, I cannot find enough ways to say thank you for all the years of support that I have received in this neighborhood and from the several generations of Buena Vista families I have known. It is heartwarming to know that I have touched your lives and made this great Westside neighborhood a little nicer because of my stay at Buena Vista.

## Buena Vista's Enrollment History

1992	350
1993	335
1994	310
1995	298
1996	290
1997	285
1998	268
1999	265
2000	226
2001	210
2002	179
2003	174
2004 Montessori Implementation	190

## Found

Three sets of car/house keys. If you have lost keys, please call the office at 328-4100 or come in to the office to claim.



**Mark the Dates!**

**April**

- 7 Lewis & Clark Assembly (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>) 1:30 p.m.
- 7 Solo & Ensemble Festival, Rogers Elem.
- 7 Movie Night in Gym, 6:00 p.m.
- 8 Kindergarten Registration Begins
- 8 No Students – Assessment Day
- 12 PTA meeting in Teacher’s Lounge, 6:30 p.m.
- 14 Montessori Open House & Silent Auction, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
- 20 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grades to IMAX Theater
- 21 Art, Pie and Science Night, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
- 27 RATS!, 1:30 and 7:00 p.m.
- 27-2 Scholastic Book Sale
- 28 Assessment Day – Early Dismissal at 12:30 p.m.
- 29 Staff Training Day – No School

**May**

- 3 Teacher Appreciation Lunch
- 3-4 Track Days (Tentative)
- 9-10 Golden Bell – 5<sup>th</sup> grade
- 10 PTA meeting in Teacher’s Lounge, 6:30 p.m.
- 12-13 Assessment Conferences – No Students
- 19 Band & Strings Concert, 1:50 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- 19 Dr. Rasmussen’s Retirement Open House, 2:30 p.m.
- 24 Kindergarten & 5<sup>th</sup> grade graduation
- 26 Last Day of School
- 30 Memorial Day

**Teacher Appreciation Card**

Would you like to show your appreciation to a teacher, teacher's aide or volunteer? For a donation to the District 11 Crystal Apple Awards Program, Honoring Teaching Excellence, an appreciation card and a teacher appreciation button will be sent for you during National PTA Teacher Appreciation Week, May 1-7, and will be listed in the Crystal Apple Awards banquet program.

Donations may be made through April 18. Donors should include the their name and the names and locations of the District 11 persons they want to receive the cards with a \$5 donation for each person designated. Checks should be made payable to El Paso Council PTA and sent to:

Crystal Apple Awards Committee  
2728 Northcrest Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

**RATS!**

The Drama Club and the 4th and 5th grade classes will be presenting RATS! the story of the Pied Piper on April 27th at 1:30 in the afternoon and at 7:00 that evening. Please plan on joining us to watch this delightful presentation.

**P.T.A. ctivities**

*Minutes from March 8*

Elections were held with the following results. President is Vicky Robertson, 2nd V. Pres. is Pam Dech, Secretary is Michele Ferrier, Treasurer, Sheila Romero. The 1st V. Pres. position is held for the principal, which will remain as Dr. Rasmussen until the new principal is assigned.

Upcoming calendar events through the end of the school year were discussed. Details for the parking for the St. Patrick’s Day Parade and garage sale fundraiser were discussed. The Read-a-thon fundraiser was also discussed. The Band and Strings concert is scheduled for May 19th and a reception will be held in honor of Dr. Rasmussen’s retirement following the afternoon concert. The spring Scholastic Book Fair will be held April 27th through May 2nd. Volunteers will be needed for set up, tear down and to work after school each day. Salads will be made by parents for the teachers on May 3rd for teacher appreciation.

**Solo & Ensemble Festival**

Our Solo & Ensemble Festival will be held on Thursday, April 7th, at Rogers Elementary School (110 S. Circle, just south of Pikes Peak) starting after school and continuing into the evening.

Students have an opportunity to prepare and perform a piece of music for a judge (usually another music teacher in the district). The judge will critique each solo and/or ensemble and rate the students 1-5 (1 representing superior to 5 representing poor). Students who receive either a 1 or 2 rating will receive a medal for their performance, to be awarded at the spring concert. There is no cost for participation.

Please see the sign-up sheet for detailed information or call Ms. Hobein at 328-4800.

**2005 – 06 Classroom Applications Available**

Although it is too early to tell parents the names of classroom teachers for next school year, it is time to ask for your input into telling the school the ideal characteristics for your child’s teacher.

If you feel strongly that your child needs certain qualities in a teacher in order for him or her to learn at their most optimum level then you are invited to fill out a classroom application. Every effort will be made to accommodate your wishes in matching students and teachers for the next school year.

Applications are available in the school office and are due by April 29.

### **Bridges of Understanding Exhibit**

The Greenberg Center for Learning and Tolerance brings Bridges of Understanding: Ceremonies and Festivals, an interactive inquiry-based exhibit introducing the traditions of six world cultures, to the Pikes Peak Library District in Colorado Springs this April.

This multicultural program is a journey into the African-American, Asian Pacific, Hispanic/Latino, Jewish, Muslim, and Native American cultures, celebrating special events, holidays, and traditions. Participants enjoy hands-on activities, video, music, and art projects. For more information about the exhibit call 634-5311 and ask for Bridges of Understanding. Information will be available online at <http://ppld.org> in April.

The exhibit will be on display at the East Library, 5550 N. Union Blvd., from April 3 - May 1. Self-guided tours are available any time during library hours.

### **Art, Pie and Science Night**

On April 21 all classes will have hanging art on display for parents, friends and families to see. The 3rd, 4th and 5th graders will also display science projects they have been working on. Parents will donate pies to enjoy during the exhibit.

### **Read Across America**

On March 2, students “flew” to different areas of the country to “read across America” in celebration of Dr. Seuss’ birthday. At each station, guest readers read a book about a specific section of the United States. Guest readers included Dr. Norman Ridder, Buster the Bus (supported by Elaine Cox, Debi Shafer and Glenda Marie Cox), Bill Bair, Gwen Giddens, Laura Rhodes, Vicki Robertson, Kathy New; police officer Laury Cochran; firefighters John Roy, Kevin Duly, Steve Thime, Mindie Verplank and Cory Marr; Margie Taylor; Virginia Brunn (UCCS); JR Bogans; Barbara Dwyer; Karen Bodmer and



MaryAnn Davidson. Buena Vista Elementary thanks all who supported their adventure across America!

### **New Math Club Members**

#### *One-Minute Club:*

Jessica Gonzales  
Cole Shelton

#### *Two-Minute Club:*

David Ferrier  
Andrew Sprague  
Marcus Cable

#### *Three-Minute Club:*

Tristan Breaker  
Brianna Larreau

#### *Four-Minute Club:*

Zack Hannon  
Anthony Lemalu

#### *Five-Minute Club:*

Morgan Banfield  
Torin McCormick

We are proud of our mathematicians!

### **Read-A-Thon**

Money will be raised for the new climbing wall in the gym with a Read-A-Thon. Students will read or be read to for 300 minutes from April 4-15. Each day students will log the amount of time they spend reading. Pledge forms will be distributed for students to collect pledges from family, friends and neighbors. Pledges should be turned in to teachers by April 7.

Money raised through the fundraiser will be split with 50% for the climbing wall and 50% for students to use for books from the Usborne catalog. Catalogs are available in each teacher’s room and in the media center. Mr. Lopez has agreed to shave his head if \$500 or more is raised during this event.

### **Student Work**

#### *What Makes Me Happy*

*by Adelia Walters*

*(3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, Ms. Lindenberger)*

This is the one thing that makes me happy. One thing that makes me happy is my family. My family makes me happy by loving me. I can tell that they love me because they feed me and take me to fun places. Another way my family makes me happy is by raising me. They taught me how to talk, walk, and how to eat. The last way my family makes me happy is by bringing me to school. They help me know that education is important. That is how my family makes me happy.

## **Classroom News**

In **Ms. Vincent's** A.M. Kindergarten we read lots of Dr. Seuss books in March. We participated in Read Across America, and had our own "Cat in the Hat" and "Green Eggs and Ham" days. We made clay sculptures of "Oh, the Thinks I Can Think!" and drew and printed Cat in Hats on the computer for our March calendar. In April we are thinking Spring and will be learning about plants, bugs, birds, and butterflies.

In **Ms. Corbett's** full day Kindergarten we have just finished a HUGE weaving unit. We are also working on maps and making maps of the classroom.



For Science we are observing two sweet potatoes, we have them both in jars and we have one jar covered and one uncovered, and are trying to see which one sprouts faster.

We will be ending March by working on measurements and using the book Inch by Inch (Leo Lionni) to explore different types of measurements and tools of measurement. We are also working very hard to prepare for our upcoming spring musical The Little Red Hen, which we are putting on with Ms. Paula's and Mrs. Vincent's classes along with Karen Bodmer. In April we will be working on plants and butterflies.

**Ms. Hastings's** Montessori class completed an Organisms unit during March. They studied seas, aquatic plants, pill bugs, beetles, fish and fresh water snails. The 3<sup>rd</sup> graders wrote and published research reports on animals. The class is reading Mr. Popper's Penguins and learning about Antarctica and penguins. In April they will begin to study Africa and on April 22 they are going to Sinton pond to an Earth Day Clean-up.

In **Ms. Gutierrez' 2<sup>nd</sup>** grade class we are working on Fractions in Math during the month of April. We are also up to writing a story a week. We are working on the writing process where Mondays we PLAN, Tuesdays ROUGH DRAFT, Wednesdays EDIT, Thursdays FINAL DRAFT and Fridays we SHARE. Ms. McCort comes in each afternoon to help us with that.

Also, during the month of April, our class will be participating in a pilot assessment program, Balance and Motion Science Kit. Our Junior Achievement volunteer will also be coming in during the month. Her name is Judy Wasoba. She has been coming into my class for 6 years now.

I'd also like to recognize that Harley Whitefield and Elissa Silvey participated in the BOOK IT program through Pizza Hut. They turned in goal sheets every month since October. Rex Moran also, turned in his goals for 5 out of the 6 months. They have received awards from the BOOK IT program.

**Ms. Garsoe's** 4th grade is finished with CSAP's and well into our study of the human body. We are also scheduled for a field trip with the fifth grade to the Fountain Creek Nature Center on April 12th. This is one of the hidden refuges in Colorado Springs where herons, ducks, fox and beaver live. We will spend the whole day there studying water and the aquatic environment, ending with a picnic and playing on the playground.

April will be a busy month because of our Colorado History Alphabet Book. We started these in January, and they are due on May 9th. One of the highlights of this project was having Mrs. Lang come to talk to us with HER Colorado History scrapbook that she made as a fourth grade student at Buena Vista. It was a wonderful connection for all of us.

Thanks again, to all the parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles and friends who support all the children in their studies.

The month of April will be busy for 5th graders in **Ms. George's** class. Students will be working on a science fair project at home. A packet with important information will be coming home soon. On April 12th we will be going on a field trip to Fountain Creek, and on April 20th students will be attending an IMAX movie as a reward for working so hard on CSAP. The trip to Golden Bell will be here very soon--May 9th and 10th.

### **Family Spring Festival**

West Center for Intergenerational Learning will provide a free program with hands-on activities, demonstrations, family door prizes and tons of fun for families with children ages 3-1 on May 7 from 1-3 pm.

### **Early Childhood and elementary student programs**

The West Center for Intergenerational Learning offers pre-school and student programs throughout the year. This summer they will have a morning pre-school enrichment program and an elementary enrichment program for first through fifth graders.

Contact Mary LaBrecque at 385-7923 for information on these programs or call the West Center at 385-7920 for a program brochure.