

Roadrunner News

Riffenburgh Elementary Principal Marc Ryby 2010-2011 PTO officers President Kathy Cook VP Jen McCoy Treasurer Jen Janssen VIPS Coord. Kris Cafaro		2010-2011 September edition Absentee line: 488-7936 Telephone: 488-7935 www.psdschools.org/schools/riffenburgh
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From the PTO

Welcome back to school, everyone! We are looking forward to a great school year, and we are very excited about all the new things our school is implementing this year.

Our year kicked off with our annual Kindergarten picnic and Ice Cream Social, both were very well attended. A big thank you to Sandra McCullen, the coordinator, and all the parents that helped out.

Our thanks goes out to Sandra McCullen, Michelle Brown for organizing and all the parents that assisted in the Teachers Back to School Luncheon. Our teachers work hard, and we try to show them we appreciate all they do.

The 4th Grade Flower Show will take place on September the Hopefully you will all get a chance to see their imaginative creations on display in the main pod.

This years Flower bulb sale will be September the 23rd thru October 8th. Look for the students to bring home information.

Our first PTO meeting was Monday August the 30th and we were pleased to see so many parents attending. We would like to invite all of you to attend our next PTO meeting on October 12th at 6:30 pm. Your participation and ideas are so important, and we welcome your input. Your involvement in your child's education is one of the best ways to help them succeed in school. If you would like to help as a volunteer in any capacity

please contact Kris Cafaro at KACafaro@aol.com or myself Kathy Cook at enchantedwicks@yahoo.com.

PTO fundraising and activities planned for this year:

Direct Donation Campaign
Friday September 10-Friday October 1
Walkathon Fundraiser
Friday May 6
Carnival/Silent Auction
Rain date: Thursday, May 12
Gold C Book sales
Friday, August 27-Friday September 10
Flower Bulb orders
Friday, September 23- Friday October 8
Scholastic Book Fair
Monday, October 11-Thursday October 14
Santa Secret Shop
Wednesday, Dec. 8-Friday Dec. 10
Flower Bulb orders
Friday, February 25-Thursday, March 10
IB Information Night
Thursday, September 23
Family Fun Walk
Friday, October 1
PBS Family Night
Tuesday, October 19
Family Science Night
Thursday, November 18
IB Information Night
Tuesday, January 11
Missoula Childrens Theatre
February, 14-19

News from the Principal

START OF SCHOOL YEAR...

As we complete the third week of the 2010-11 school year, Riffenburgh staff members are very enthusiastic about the attitude and effort we're seeing from students so far. It is always fun to see our returning students and welcome students who are joining us from other schools and parts of the country. Our Back-to-School Nights were well-attended and provided parents a chance to meet teachers and become aware of the expectations for the upcoming year. We look forward to working closely with parents to help all of our students experience academic and social successes during the new school year.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AT RIFFENBURGH...

We are extremely pleased to welcome Early Childhood Education students and staff to Riffenburgh! We have three classrooms that will be serving about 90 three and four year-olds, who attend either morning or afternoon sessions. The ECE staff has been working overtime to make the move from their old home at Barton EC Center to Riffenburgh. After a summer of preparation, including remodeling of classrooms and installation of an Early Childhood playground, students started on Monday, August 30. Please join us in welcoming Early Childhood Education to Riffenburgh Elementary School.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE AT RIFFENBURGH...

The staff at Riffenburgh, with the support of our PTO, parents and PSD administration, is pursuing International Baccalaureate authorization as a long-term goal. Although the entire process will take three to four years for official approval, we are implementing parts of the IB philosophy, including values through the Learner Profile as we send teams of teachers to receive formal IB training. We are committed to teaching an inquiry-based unit planner during the spring semester in all grades, and see Riffenburgh's pursuit of IB status as providing terrific continuity as the vast majority of our students move on to 6th grade at Leshar IB Middle School. We have scheduled an IB Information Night on Thursday, September 23 at 6:30 pm, to provide interested parents with more information about the IB philosophy and programs. Please look for additional information on the Riffenburgh website and in our Handbook.

Mark these events on your calendar!

For a complete listing of up coming Riffenburgh events, please visit our web site at <http://eweb.psdschools.org/schools/riffenburgh/pto/calendar.aspx>

- 9/10 – Gold C book orders and money are due
- 9/15-17 – ECO Week for 5th grade
- 9/20 – NO SCHOOL-Teacher Collaboration Day
- 9/23 – 3rd grade field trip to ARDEC Farm in Wellington from 11-2 a.m.
- 9/23 - Pursuing IB information night in the Riffenburgh Media Center beginning at 6:30 p.m.
- 9/23-9/24 – 4th grade Flower Show in the main pod
- 9/24 – School pictures from 8:50-11:00 a.m.
- 10/1 – Family Fun Walk-free for everyone beginning at 3:45 p.m.
- 10/6 – Volunteer Orientation in the Riffenburgh Media Center from 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- 10/7 – ROCKS character education assembly in the cafeteria beginning at 9:55 a.m.
- 10/14 -10/15 – NO SCHOOL-Parent/Teacher conferences
- 10/19 – Positive Behavior Support Family Night in the cafeteria from 5:30-8:00 p.m.
- 10/25 – PTO Meeting in the Media Center beginning at 6:30 p.m.
- 10/29 – Halloween Parties with the parade beginning at 2:30 p.m.

Save the Date

Riffy Rock



Riffenburgh's Positive Behavior System family night is coming up. Mark Tuesday, October 19th at 6:30 on your calendar.

Come as a family and learn about the behavior system we use at school and how you can plan and use it at home. More information to follow.

DIRECT DONATIONS---

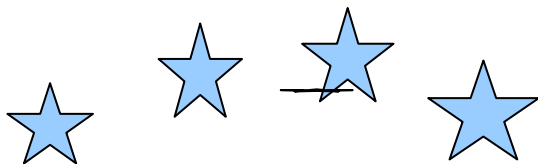
Jen Janssen

Please watch for the Direct Donation pledge form that will be coming home this week!

Every gift in any amount is appreciated!!

Please help our children reach their greatest potential by supporting school activities and enrichment programs not fully funded by Riffenburgh's budget. 100% of donations go directly to Riffenburgh, your gift is tax deductible, and this program takes the place of door to door sales.

*Thank you for supporting
Riffenburgh! J*



Music Notes

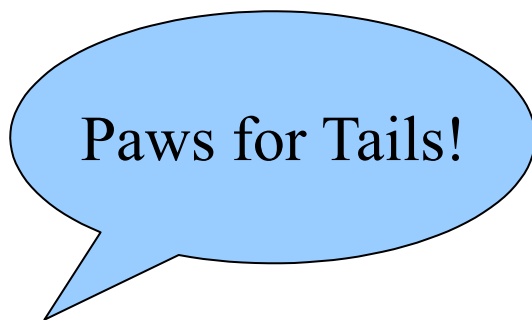
Hello! My name is Martha Bender and I am the new music teacher at Riffenburgh Elementary! I am so excited to be back in Fort Collins after spending the last year teaching K-5 general music in Denver. This year students can look forward to lots of singing, movement, instruments, dancing, performing, learning about composers, and experiencing music from all around the world. Students will also be reading, writing, improvising, composing, appreciating, and evaluating music. 4th and 5th graders will be welcome to join choir, which will begin in October. I will update students and parents on the dates for concerts and programs once they have been scheduled and are approaching. I am so happy to be working with the wonderful students of this school and am looking forward to a fantastic year!

Second Grade News

Second grade students have been busy studying about insects since school began in August. At the moment we are anxiously awaiting the arrival of our larvae. To conclude our study of insects, in October both second grade classes will host a "bug" party. During this event students will share poems and information with their parents about the insects they have studied during this unit.

This will be our fifth year in participating in the Paws for Tales reading program. Volunteers and their specially trained dogs come into the classroom and have the children read to their dogs. These dogs have been through various training programs including Delta Society, Therapy Dogs Inc., Guide Dogs for the Blind (career change and retired guide dogs). They have been socialized with other dogs, children, and adults and have been a part of Putnam and Dunn Elementary Schools reading programs for six years. The second grade classes are looking forward to reading to these special dogs.

We welcome back storyteller Mrs. Hazel Krantz to second grade. She is a volunteer with the Larimer County Spellbinders Oral Storytellers and will be weaving her magical tales once a month in each second grade classroom.



Four ways to help your child make this school year great

It's the start of a new school year and you want to make it a great one. Researchers at Indiana University found that children did better in school when their parents taught them how to:

Be positive about challenges. The children who do the best in school are those who approach a new task with a positive attitude. Look for ways to model that behavior at home: "I don't know how to use this computer program. Shall we figure it out together?"

Break down big assignments. Reading an entire chapter book may seem overwhelming. But reading one chapter is something your child can do. Teach your child to break down tasks into smaller, achievable steps.

Pay attention to instructions. A classroom runs more smoothly when students do what the teacher says. Your child's score on a state test could be lowered if he doesn't fill out the answer sheet correctly. So spend time at home learning to follow directions. Cook together and talk about what happens if you don't follow the recipe exactly.

Solve problems on their own. If your child can't figure out the answer to a math problem, help him think about a way to find the answer. Ask, "Have you worked other problems like this? Does your math book show how to find the right answer?"

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1st Graders are off to a Great Start!!

First graders have been busy these first few weeks of school! We have started reading and singing our stories of the week. "Sailor Bear" was a favorite. After we practiced reading and singing the stories, students were able to take home their books to keep in their "magic boxes." First graders had fun demonstrating their creativity as they decorated their magic boxes, which are kept in a special place at home and are used to keep all their take-home books in.

During math, students have been learning about tally marks and numbers. We enjoyed playing "Top It," a fun card game to practice number skills. Each student is having the opportunity to be the author and illustrator of a number counting book. First graders are beginning to learn about U.S. Symbols. We have learned about the U.S. flag and what it symbolizes. We will also be discussing the bald eagle, statue of liberty, and the White House. Hooray for the red, white and blue!

1st graders celebrate the Red, White and Blue

Kindergarten News

Kindergarten is always a place with a colorful spirit. It was especially bright and cheerful during our color celebration of "Rainbow Days" in September.

It was lots of fun to see the children dressed in the color of the day! We also had a project, a story, and a snack to enjoy for each hue.

Red Day gave the class the opportunity to enjoy and explore a watermelon with their five senses. We counted those slippery seeds and wrote the number we had in our piece of juicy watermelon. Students offered adjectives like slurpy, striped, juicy and scrumptious!

We're looking forward to a school year filled with more varied, vivacious and vibrant adventures in learning! Our first adventure away from school will be to visit Lee Martinez farm in early October. The week prior to our farm adventure, students will have the opportunity to discover a fire engine and learn fire safety. Kindergarten is such a magical time to learn and we will continue to provide lots of hands-on experiences.

Kim Baker
Kasiah MacDevitt



Establish homework routines for long-term school success

Imagine your child is a high schooler with hours of homework every day. How would he handle it? Help him prepare now by instilling basic study skills. The habits your child develops in elementary school will last a lifetime!

You can instill good study habits if you:

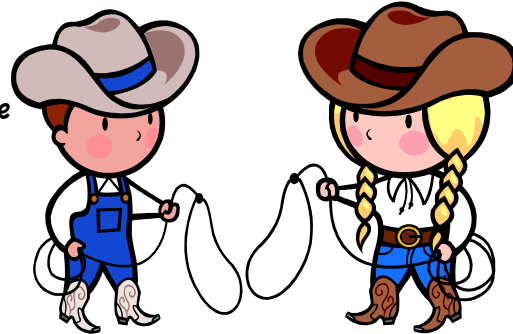
Enforce a study time. Choose one that works best for your child. Some kids need to blow off steam right after school, while others like to finish homework right away. Pick the time that works best for your child--and stick with it!

Create a study space. Make sure your child has a quiet, comfortable place to work. It should be free of distractions, especially from the TV. Stay nearby to supervise, and set a good example by reading or taking care of your responsibilities.

Finish early. Long-term assignments are perfect opportunities to teach the value of planning. If your child has to write a book report, for example, split the project into parts and set a deadline for each one. Ideally, it will be finished with time to spare.

Compliment success. How does it feel to work hard and see results? To do well on tests? To complete projects early? (Great!) Discuss this with your child. "I love what you did! You really took the time to be creative!" "You got an A because you studied every day. You earned it!" "Doesn't it feel great to be done? Now you can relax. Let's do something fun!"

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Your Throw Aways!

Please send any gently used toys, vinyl bean bags, games, building toys, puzzles, fun art supplies, business donations, or even healthy snacks our way! We would appreciate taking these items off your hands! We are using these items as incentives for students to reach their goals. Your support helps Riffenburgh's entire student body!

Thanks so much!

~ Mrs. DeHaan & Mrs. Frable