

Fireweed Academy's Gryphon Gazette

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The Importance of Arts in Education

Creativity comes in many forms. As a science teacher I made sure that students were given the opportunity to learn academic skills such as notetaking, identifying important information within a science text, and analyzing data. I also made sure that the students had the opportunity to complete hands-on investigations that develop creative problem solving skills. I did this knowing all of these skills will be a benefit to students throughout their lives.

Along with my love of science, I also have a passion for the fine arts and understand how important that are in education. Students demonstrate a variety of hidden talents when they are provided an opportunity to participate in visual or performance arts activities. That is why Fireweed Academy takes every chance to bring the arts to its students.

This past week Fireweed Academy hosted another Artists in Schools residency with local artist Sharlene Cline. With assistance from Sharlene the students were able to express their creativity through an

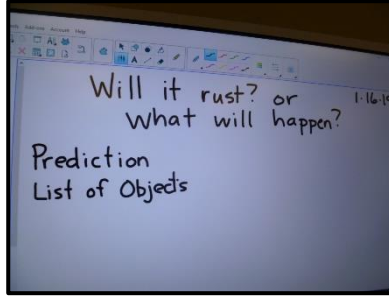
acrylic painting project, while partnering with Homer's Rotary Club project, the Peace Project. The end result of this collaboration was a lot of happy students that were proud of the work they had done and collection of beautiful art work. Please join me in thanking Sharlene for her residency and Bunnell Street Arts Center for its sponsorship of our own local Artists in Schools program. - Todd



Fireweed Academy believe that creative expression is one of the foundations for learning, living, and working.

Important Dates

January 23	Rescheduled Fireweed Frescoes Steering Committee meeting @ 2:30 at LFW
January 31 st	NAEP Assessment for 4 th grade only
February 6 th	Early release day, students will be dismissed @ 12:50 (LFW) & 1:15 (BFW)
February 7 th	Student-led Conferences, no school
February 8 th	Student-led Conferences, no school
March 1 st	Invention Convention at BFW, details will be provided as the event gets closer.



This week's science experiment in Mo's room is investigating the difference in two liquids (tap water and Coke) ability to make chemical changes to various metal objects.

Opportunities for Students

Youth Court: Mrs. Paul from WHE has invited the 5th and 6th graders from Fireweed to participate in the Youth Court program. This year's Youth Court will include a Restorative Justice strand and will begin on January 23rd and meets weekly each Wednesday. There is a \$20 fee; scholarships are available.

Math Club: Jon's afterschool math club continues this quarter. The math club will be held on Thursdays on the following dates January 24, 31; February 14, 21, 28.

Chess Club: Beginning next week, a chess club will be held after school each Wednesday at WHE/BFW. Depending on the schedule for the WHE Library, it will be held in the WHE Library or Krissy's room. Community volunteers are providing this opportunity.

BP Teacher of the Year and Educational Allies



During a Writer's Workshop, students in Kim's class are developing their writing skills.

BP Teacher of the year nominations are open. Students, parents, and community members are all invited to nominate classroom teachers. Over the past two years, Fireweed staff members have been recognized by BP for their outstanding efforts. Multiple nominations for a teacher is helpful in a teacher being selected for the honor. We would encourage you to make your nomination before the February 1st deadline.

BP has added another recognition this year, an Educational Allie category. This category will recognize other key members of a school, including but not limited to nurses, custodians, teacher aides, volunteers, etc.

We would encourage you to make your nomination before the February 1st deadline.

Go to <http://bpteachers.com/> to make your nomination today!

This Week's Field Trips and Guest Speakers !

No field trips are scheduled this week.

Friday: Emily Ault's presentation on Costa Rica at Big Fireweed.

Behind the Scenes at the US Post Office and a Visit to the Library

On Thursday of last week, the students at Little Fireweed had the rare opportunity to get a behind the scene tour of Homer's Post Office. The 45-minute tour was very interesting and it was surprising just how much work it takes to distribute the mail to the residents in and around Homer. Highlights included the loading dock for the truck arriving from Homer, the vault where stamps and valuable packages area keep, and the prep work done when loading the mail for neighborhood deliveries.

Speaking of the neighborhood, while we were down at the post office, we went to the city library to hear a true story about an African boy who invented windmills for his village out of scrap materials, to bring much needed water from underground. Then they had some time to explore other books about inventors and inventions.



Researching Inventors and Inventions !

In Language Arts, student have begun researching inventions and reading biographies in preparation for February's invention Convention. Students are also working on their Intent to Invent form that is due on Friday.



Stories in the Night Sky

During last week's visit to Big Fireweed, LFW students participated in two activities about stars and constellations. During one of the two activities, the older students worked with the younger students on an activity in which they used their imaginations to draw and name new constellations. They also visited Lisa Whip in Star Lab. In the Star Lab, Lisa shared ancient stories about constellations in the night sky.



District News

New Semester, New Volunteer Opportunities !

We would love to see more parents in the classrooms ! If you would like to be volunteering at the school or on field trips, please take a moment to complete this on line volunteer screening. It's easy! So... take care of it quickly and join us in the classroom!!!

Mandatory Volunteer Screening

Anyone interested in being a school volunteer needs to complete an online form and agree to a background check; only criminal activity will be checked. All information will be kept confidential and information can only be accessed by a few members of the Human Resources department. To complete the screening process, visit the District's web page at www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us and click on Employment, then click on Volunteer, then on Volunteer All Vacancies, and find the location where you wish to volunteer. Click the 'Apply' button that corresponds to that location, then follow the instructions. Please contact the Human Resources department at 907-714-8888 if you have questions.

[Reactivate Existing Application](#): If you are a returning volunteer and have an existing online application with KPBSD, please click REACTIVATE EXISTING APPLICATION to reactivate your volunteer application.