

In the Center



Students Showcase Ideas at Invention Convention

Thomaston Center School

Five Thomaston Center School Students highlighted their entrepreneurial skills during the Connecticut Invention Convention (CIC) Western Regional Competition at Western Connecticut State University on Saturday, April 1, 2017. All Thomaston Center School students were invited to compete in this event.



A three-judge panel at the school level selected the five students to move into the regional competition from the schoolwide competition. Sixth grade students Breanna Albrecht, Kylie Decker, Daniel Guerrero, Zachary Maxfield, and Angelina Woods competed in the regional competition at Western Connecticut State

University. The inventions incorporated a variety of ideas, including a prototype for a garbage can on wheels, a hidden drawer, and boots with built in ice picks.

Sixth grade student Kylie Decker's invention "Always in Style" was selected to advance to the final round of the CIC Final Invention Convention at UCONN in Storrs on April 29, 2017. Kylie's design is a sports jersey that the wearer can easily change the sports number by using a Velcro patch. The apparel always remains current and is economical.

Through their participation in the regional competition, students gained a better understanding of what it means to creatively express and display their skills in a real world setting. The enthusiasm for the entrepreneurship experience was inspirational. According to Kylie Decker, "The event was very energetic and fun. We had a chance to see a lot of inventions that I wouldn't have thought of! I'm looking forward

to competing in the finals!"



Ms. Melissa Saramanidis, Library Media Specialist and Mr. Douglas Craig, Technology Education Teacher, facilitated this endeavor. Both served as local judges along with Mrs. Bernier. This was the first year Thomaston Center School participated in the statewide affair.

For more information on the Connecticut Invention Convention, please visit: <http://www.ctinventionconvention.org/>.

Character Projects Underway

At our last Character Assembly on April 7, 2017, we learned about the character trait of "citizenship." Students discussed what it means to be a citizen of our school, community, nation and greater world. We explored different needs of different communities and learned how good citizens address those needs.

To help make this con-

cept meaningful and purposeful for students, we are embarking on citizenship projects throughout the month of April. In small, mixed grade level groups, students selected a special project to address a specific need in our community. Facilitated by our teachers, students will be making and sending cards of grati-

tude and goodwill, and visiting our younger peers at Black Rock School. Students will make posters and place-mats for various organizations and groups. We are also collecting non perishable food for our Thomaston Food Bank. Students began planning the projects after the April 7, 2017 assembly and will complete their special collaborations by the end of April.

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Dates to Remember:

- 4/27/17-5/4/17~ Smarter Balanced Assessment Testing
- 5/9/17-5/18/17~ NWEA Benchmark Testing
- 5/17/17~ PTA and PAC Meeting
- 5/18/17 and 5/19/17~ Peter Pan Musical Production (at Thomaston Opera House)
- 5/20/17~ Grade 6 Celebration (Sponsored by the PTA)
- 5/26/17~ Memorial Day Assembly
- 5/29/17~ Memorial Day Observed (No School)

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Arbor Day Celebrated at Center School

On Friday, April 21, 2017, just in time for Earth Day, the Thomaston Lions Club visited the fourth grade class at Thomaston Center School to discuss conservation efforts. This program is part of the Fourth Grade Foresters USA. Since 2007, more than 677,280 fourth graders all across America are planting trees to help revitalize a remarkable idea: Arbor Day at School.

The Lions Club visited the fourth grade and provided a tree for all students to plant at home. The students were excited and

appreciative to receive these gifts.



Lions Club members take questions from grade 4 students before distributing the trees.

Arbor Day was established in Nebraska in the 1800's to help educate others in agriculture and to help promote the planting of trees and other plants. Over the years, the idea of Arbor Day has lessened in popularity. Typically, Arbor Day is recognized during the last Friday in April. For more information about the program, please visit: <http://www.fourthgradeforestersusa.com/>

We are grateful to the Lions Club for their generosity!

Grade Six News

The team is very proud of the Core Reading Skill progress that our sixth graders have made. The fundamental component of Core Skills is identifying and analyzing main idea and supportive details. While this may sound very basic, please keep in mind that we are challenging our students with a variety of genre and increasingly difficult reading levels. Please continue to encourage your child to read and remember to take an active interest in your child's reading through sharing or questioning!

In science we studied how the candy coating on an M&M dissolves. It was so gratifying to hear the students explain that it was the higher density of the sugar water that made it sink to the bottom, and that the colors didn't mix be-

cause they were the same density and couldn't "shove each other aside" as it could the water. The students have been doing a series of experiments to determine the identity of an unknown, "mystery," powder. They checked its appearance, crushability, solubility, and recrystallization to see if they could figure it out, (all physical changes). It is so much fun watching the students design their own tests, and sometimes redesign them, to answer their questions. This led us into chemical and physical changes including acids and bases.

In Social Studies we have been studying Egypt. The students have practiced their hieroglyphs by making cartouches for

themselves, (sort of an ancient nametag). They have also completed a webquest on all aspects of Egyptian life, and have created skits.

Expressions, exponents, evaluation, variables, operations, and coefficient are a few of our familiar words we have incorporated into our math language involving algebra. We have used them in many real world problems about height, pizzas, markets, and many more. At the beginning of the module, our students were perplexed as to how and why we need to learn about everything connected to this concept. They have a much clearer picture now!

Grade Five News

As we enter the final fourth marking period, there are some exciting events coming up to finish out the year. We are hopeful to end the year on a strong note!

The fifth grade will be participating in a Memorial Day program. We are encouraging students to let family or friends who have served in any branch of the service (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, etc.) to join us on May 26th in the

morning. Of all the programs throughout the year, this is a real tear jerker and one not to miss.

We will also be conducting several project/inquiry based lessons in various subjects during the last quarter. For example, students in math classes just completed "Helping the Homeless" where they had to apply math concepts related to fractions to determine how much food to cook for a large group of individuals. In Science,

we will be building solar cookers in early June. Start saving boxes that can be used. Throughout all subjects, the integration and application of language (including our knowledge of poetry, prose, and drama) along with math will continue to be a focus.

Please help your child to remain focused in this last quarter as the weather continues to improve.

Ancient Egypt, Modern Style

The students in Mrs. Knowlton's Social Studies classes have been learning about Ancient Egypt but have been using twenty-first century skills to showcase their work.



After learning the content in Social Studies classes with Mrs. Knowlton, these students created a short skit on life as a merchant in Ancient Egypt. As the performers act out the scene, the director films the skit using the iPad.

With the assistance of Library-Media Specialist Ms. Saramanidis, the students have been making short films and skits in the media center using green-screen technology on the iPad.



With Ms. Saramanidis's help, the students edit their work on the iPad. Here they are comparing their performance with the script they wrote using Google Docs.

In addition to acquiring social studies content, students are learning the "super skills" of communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. When the projects are complete, they will be posted on our website for all to enjoy!



The director uses the iPad technology to create the background for the scene. In this film, the student chose an ancient marketplace.

Fitness Fun

In the month of March we had our annual fitness assessment and I would like to acknowledge a few students who went above and beyond.

Completing 60 curl-ups: Maddox Lahey, Natalie McGurik, Jason Beaudry, Emily Morton, Jacob Hotchkiss, Vincent Russman, Megan Campbell, Justin Dorso, Nicole Decker, Jillian Alena, Isabela Schiavo, Ethan Smith, Nicholas Jacques, Lola Cellupica, Linene Simmons, Hannah Parker, Mark Ayoub, Michael Grant, Julia Bond, Corbin Dillane, Kiera Fainer, Morgan LeClair, Nathan Kowalski, Connor Foss, Natalie

Walker and Julia Snyder.

Outstanding 20 meter Pacer totals: Isabela Schiavo 57, Vincent Russman 70, Nicole Decker 74, Nathan Marsh 72, Corbin Dillane 72, and Michael Grant 72.

Outstanding push-up results: Sloan Walmsley 10, Jason Beaudry 30, Clair Saunders 40, Justin Dorso 40, Jocelyn Caruso 19, Evelyn Lavertue 19 and Corbin Dillane 30.

Outstanding flexibility scores: Jenna Johnson, Justin Dorso, Manuel Villamarin, Kaydence Meyer, Emma Guilmette, Anya Zielinski and Stevilyn Fox.

Students who reached scores to exceeded levels: Evelyn Levertue, Corbin Dillane, Rejhana Aliu, Clair Saunders, Maddox Lahey, Jocelyn Caruso and Kiera Fainer.

These students were also recognized for these accomplishments at the April 7, 2017 Character Assembly. Congratulations to all of these students!

From The Desk of Mrs. Bernier

May will prove to be an exceptionally busy month as students take the Smarter Balanced Assessment tests and the Spring MAP Assessments. Student attendance is critical during these weeks and we appreciate your support with this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher with any questions about the assess-

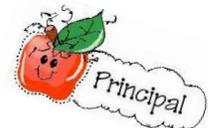
ments.

The month of May provides us an opportunity to thank the men and women who serve our nation. We are profoundly grateful to them and their families and on May 26, 2017 the community of Thomaston Center School will celebrate them with our annual Memorial Day Assembly. All are invited to attend at

9:00 am in the auditorium.

Please remember to check your email for Power School updates and notices. The end of the year is filled with many events and you don't want to miss any information!

As always, I appreciate your interest in and support of your child's education.



Thomaston Center School

1 Thomas Avenue
Thomaston, CT 06787

Phone: 860-283-3036

Fax: 860-283-3048

www.thomastonschooldesk.net



Mrs. Marilyn Banche and the entire Thomaston Food Service program was recognized at the Thomaston Board of Education Meeting on April 17, 2017 for recent health inspection reports. We are so fortunate to have Mrs. Banche and Mrs. Rinkus at Center School!

In our continuing efforts to ensure that your child – and all children/students – in Thomaston Public Schools are prepared for success, our teachers have implemented the Connecticut Core Standards that provide consistent guidelines in English language arts/literacy and mathematics at each grade level. These standards provide clear expectations of the knowledge, skills, and abilities students need to be successful beyond high school. The Smarter Balanced Assessment is aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards and is designed to assess student progress toward college and career readiness in mathematics, reading, and writing. Administered online, these assessments will adapt to each student's ability, giving teachers and parents/guardians information to help students succeed.

As required by Connecticut General Statute 10-14n, all students are required to take a mastery examination in Grades 3 – 8 for mathematics, reading, and writing. The Smarter Balanced Assessment Test measures critical thinking with questions that ask students to demonstrate their research, writing, and problem solving skills. Center School testing will be from April 26-May 4. All testing is administered using a secure online assessment system that includes a variety of tools and technology enhanced test questions that will improve the assessment experience for our students and includes accessibility tools for all students and accommodations are provided to those students who need them. Assessments are untimed and students can take breaks so that they can do their best.

To learn more about the assessments, explore the Smarter Balanced Practice Tests (<http://ct.portal.airast.org/training-tests>) with your child. For more information about the Smarter Balanced Assessments in our district, please visit. Visit the Connecticut Smarter Balanced website (www.ct.gov/sde/SmarterBalanced) to find additional information for parents.

As educators, we are committed to working together to support all students and families with resources and information on the Smarter Balanced Assessment, in the hopes that each student will achieve his or her personal best.



NEWS AND NOTES...



- ◇ Students will be taking the spring benchmark tests for the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) . Beginning in early May, students will be tested in Math, Reading, and Language Usage.
- ◇ **Save the date for Peter Pan!** This year's drama production will be held on Thursday, May 18 and Friday, May 19. The show will be held at the Thomaston Opera House. Tickets can be purchased at the Box Office by calling 860-283-6250 or **o n l i n e** www.landmarkcommunitytheatre.org 
- ◇ Step Up Day is scheduled for Monday, June 5! At that time, all students will "step up" to their new classes and meet their new teachers.
- ◇ The Sixth Grade Celebration will be held on Saturday, May 20, 2017 and will be sponsored by the PTA. All 6th graders are invited to attend.
- ◇ **From the Nurse: Get Ticked Off!** Spring ranks as a high-risk time for Lyme disease. Spring is the time the smaller nymph form of the deer tick is the most active in the northeast. Ticks

live in bushes, tall grasses, marshes, and the woods. If you are out hiking, raking, or just playing in these tick habitats, follow these simple rules to prevent tick bites: wear light-colored clothing so you can spot ticks more easily on your clothes, wear long-sleeved shirts and tuck shirt tails into your pants, tuck your pant legs into your socks or boots, and bug/insect repellent sprayed onto your clothing, when outdoors, may be helpful. Also, do a full body check after being outdoors to find, and remove, any ticks before they have a chance to imbed in your skin. Don't forget about your pets- they can also get Lyme disease. Ask your vet about tick-control products. **Sixth Grade Parents/Guardians:** The end of the school year is fast approaching! If your child does not have his/her state-mandated, 6th grade physical on file in the nurse's office, please send it in as soon as possible. If you have not yet made an appointment with your child's pediatrician, please do so before the end of the school year. Your child will not be allowed entry into 7th grade without the required physical and updated immunizations on file in the school nurse office!! Call Mrs. Aniki with any questions or concerns.

- ◇ As of April 7, 2017, 8,669 BEAR Bucks were distributed to TCS students for displays of Behaving Exceptionally and Responsibly. Way to go, Center School students!!
- ◇ Field Day is scheduled for June 14, 2017 with rain dates on June 15, 2017 and June 16, 2017. Parents are encouraged to come and help make the day a huge success. Your help is greatly appreciated. Please contact Mrs. Wojtczak if you can come help out for any if not the whole part of the day. Email  rwojtczak@thomastonschools.org for more information.
- ◇ Spring is a great time to get out and get moving! Encourage the family to work together in the yard. Going on a bike ride or a hike at our local state park are just a few things to do together as a family.
- ◇ We will be taking orders for the TCS Yearbook. Yearbooks are \$15. each and orders are due by May 6, 2017.