



Lester Life



FEBRUARY 2010

Safety Reminders

by Justin Sisul, Assistant Principal

As we reach the halfway point of our school year, it is a good time to review some of the policies and procedures that make Lester a safe place for all of our students.

- Please remember that staff supervision of students begins at 8:15 a.m. Unless your child has a specific appointment with a teacher or a specific reason for arriving earlier, please make every effort to time their arrival between 8:15 and 8:25 a.m.
- Traffic around our school increases in the winter months, and hazardous conditions make our procedures even more vital. Please make every effort to follow all of our traffic procedures, including:
 - Have your children exit on the passenger side of the vehicle. This ensures their safety as they arrive in our drop-off zones.
 - Obey all posted traffic signs - these include the "no turn" signs at specific times, as well as the posted "no parking" signs.
 - Please realize that double-parking along the streets after school can create a terribly dangerous situation for our students. We do not want students to run between cars to approach their vehicle.

With 493 students, traffic will be a continuing issue at Lester. Obviously, we want to move efficiently through the drop-off and pick-up procedures, and we all want to see our children arrive and leave safely. We count on your cooperation and compliance with these policies to help us ensure the safety of each and every student at Lester. If you have any questions or concerns about these policies, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Remembering Therese Creamer

As we continue to move through the school year, the Lester PTA and Staff have been discussing ways to remember our beloved Therese Creamer. Therese was part of District 58 for 20 years, and spent the greater part of it as secretary of Lester School.

Anyone who entered the building could count on a smile from Therese; it was so warm and bright that you could hear it through the phone. The very best parts of Lester School are personalized in Therese - she was thoughtful, gentle, and kind, and ensured that the students, staff, and parents of Lester were well cared for each day.

Those who truly knew Therese know that she would not have wanted us to spend the year in sadness. We need only look at examples she set in her last year with us - even as she was fighting a significant illness, she was determined to continue working, to tend to the details of the school and the needs of all us in her loving way. She took no time for despair, but lived each day to her fullest.

As we look toward Spring, we seek to remember Therese in a way that will honor her. In keeping with her love of nature, birds, and the outdoors, the PTA and Staff would like to dedicate the garden area at the entrance of the building as the Therese Creamer Memorial Garden. With contributions from the staff and families of Lester, we would hope to purchase some items to beautify the entrance of the school (including the garden) in order to welcome everyone in the way that Therese's presence always did.



The PTA will facilitate the collection, but please know that all contributions are voluntary. If you would like to contribute to our fund to remember Therese, please send all money (through backpack mail) to Andrea Radigan, Memorial Chair, attn: Therese Creamer. If you are writing a check, please make the check to Lester PTA. All funds will be placed in an account to be used for the improvement of our entrance. We feel like this is a fitting way to pay tribute to Therese, a woman who spent much of her time bringing warmth and kindness to Lester School, and will continue to greet Lester families for years to come.

Thank You-
Lara Vazquez, PTA President
(laravv@comcast.net)
Andrea Radigan, Memorial Chair (ajradigan@yahoo.com)

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Dear Lester Parents ,

As we enter the second half of our school year, let's look at the importance of putting school work first.

Schedule time to complete school work. Make sure you are aware of the teacher's homework system, special assignments, and long-term projects. Be firm in communicating to your child that school work must get done.

Make sure that you are clear about: Materials. Does your child have the necessary materials to complete the assignments - pens, markers, dictionary, etc. **Distractions.** Is your child studying in a quiet place? Make sure that TV, phone calls, and siblings are not distracting them from their work. **Attitude.** Children will be affected by your attitude about school. Make sure you model and support your child's need to complete school work.

Scale back. Is your child's life outside of school so full of after school and weekend activities that there is no time for family and school? Outside activities should never replace school as a primary focus of learning and the building family relationships.

Stop yourself. Many parents "help" their children by actually doing

some of their school work. This is never okay. School personnel can tell when the work is not that of the child. Children need to learn the importance of accountability on their own.

Be involved. Your children need to see that you care about what they are doing in school. Check their assignment notebook. Praise the work that they do. Compliment their hard work and study habits. Let them know that you are behind them all the way!

A big "thank-you" to our PTA for sponsoring our latest assembly. The "Rope Warrior" visited our students to demonstrate a variety of different ways to jump rope and do rope tricks. He even showed us how he broke the world record for jump roping sitting down! He was just in time for our Jump Rope for Heart event taking place on February 6th.

Life certainly does not slow down at Lester during the winter months! We have Valentine Parties taking place on Feb. 12th, the Author's Fest on Feb 17th and 19th, Six Flags Read to Succeed Forms due Feb. 19th, and our Science Olympiad the evening of February 23rd. Our students are also in the middle of

Principal's Message



our Young Author's Contest. Encourage your children to let their creativity shine through writing an original story. Entries are due February 23rd - let's get our pens sizzling!

In addition, our 4th Annual PTA "Trivia Night" with Silent Auction is taking place on February 20th. We welcome all Lester families and friends for an evening of fun! Come out one and all for the chance to take home all sorts of goodies!

Stay warm~
Mrs. Novak



Young Authors Reminder

Young Authors is now in progress at Lester School. Entries are due to your child's classroom teacher by Tuesday, February 23rd.

Encourage your children to participate in this writing activity. It supports their efforts in the writing process, and it enables them to share their creativity and talents with an eager Lester audience.

Nominate a teacher for annual DGJWC Award

The Downers Grove Junior Woman's Club is sponsoring the 19th annual Outstanding Teacher Award to recognize teachers in Downers Grove area schools. A student must write an essay (60 words for K-3, 100 words for grades 4-8) describing the teacher and what makes him or her special. The essay does not have to be about the child's current teacher.

Students with winning entries will honor the teacher they nominated with a plaque courtesy of the DGJWC on March 23. Entries must be postmarked by **Friday, Feb. 26**. Send them to bholloway14@comcast.net, or mail them to DGJWC, Attn: Barbara Holloway, 6630 St. James Court, Downers Grove, IL, 60516. Visit www.dgjwc or e-mail Holloway for a form.

Nominate a staff member for a 2010 Distinguished Service Award!

Is there a staff member in District 58 who goes above and beyond in making your child's educational experience the best it can be? Please consider nominating that individual for the District 58 Education Foundation's 2009-10 Distinguished Service Award!

Anyone who is on staff at District 58 is eligible, including teachers, principals, secretaries, custodians, aides, social workers/counselors, and employees at D58's central office and Longfellow Center.

Applications will be available in early February at the central office, at the schools and online at www.dg58ef.com. Due date is **Friday, March 5**. All nominees will be honored at a ceremony in April.

PTA President's Letter

Happy February!

Who says we Midwesterners like to hibernate? Quite the opposite is going on in the Lester PTA this month! In addition to many District and school events, the PTA will be busy with a full calendar as well. Valentine Party planning is already underway, thanks to all the parents who organize and execute this fun day.

Our biggest fund-raising event of the year is coming up on February 20th - our Annual Trivia Night and Silent Auction! Last year we raised \$16,000, much of which was used to purchase several Dukane projection systems, as well as adding seven more white boards to classrooms. One of this year's goals is to use Trivia Night funds to purchase and install a new sound system for the gymnasium. Imagine being able to really hear our kids sing (or hear Mrs.

Brown)! Just a few more classrooms need whiteboards, and we are hoping to use some funds for additional Dukanes as well. In addition, this event helps us cover many other costs such as field trips, assemblies, and fun after school events.

Speaking of fun after school events, the Science Olympiad is set for February 23rd. This is a great night that makes science fun and engaging for kids as well as parents! This event does require many parent volunteers, so if you'd like to learn something new and help out as well, please contact Tricia Tokash. And speaking of assemblies, the next one is a visit from Jane Addams (1860-1935) herself! Jane will visit the school on February 25th to tell us about her life as Chicago's Hull House founder and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. The kids really enjoy watching history happen right in front of them.

A few days off and all these fun activities make February fly by....then we can look toward Spring. This spring the PTA is coordinating efforts to beautify the garden at the entrance of Lester, and to rename it the Therese Creamer Memorial Garden, in honor of our beloved secretary who passed away last summer. Therese loved birds and nature, and as secretary greeted visitors to Lester School - we think she would enjoy this fitting reminder of her and what she loved. Monetary contributions for the garden are to be sent to Andrea Radigan, Memorial Chair, attn: Therese Creamer. We would like to begin this project as soon as the weather allows.

Thanks for your continued support of the Lester PTA - we can't do it without you!

Lara Vazquez, President
Dawn Sirianni, President-elect

Exhibit Your Child's Creativity

The PTA is excited to bring a creative new fundraiser to Lester this month. Display My Art is a program in which every child can participate.

Each child will have the opportunity to create an original drawing or painting. That artwork can then be transferred to a variety of permanent keepsakes for purchase, with a portion of the proceeds benefiting the Lester PTA. Items include mugs, coasters, t-shirts and much more. These keepsakes make great gifts that family and friends would be proud to display. Regardless of purchase, each child will be provided with a magnet featuring their artwork for free.



About Display My Art

Display My Art program enables schools and organizations around the country to raise money for their important needs while building students' self-esteem and inspiring their creative abilities.

Showcasing each student's art work on our products demonstrates to them that their work is worthy of being transformed into a permanent keepsake. Families can have their child's work transferred onto selected products making treasured gifts that everyone can wear, share and display. Products

are personalized at no additional cost and every artist will receive a free magnet displaying his/her drawing.

Look for more information and an order form in the coming home in backpack mail in the coming weeks.

To get a sneak preview of what the products, visit www.DisplayMyArt.com, click on "SAMPLES" at the top of the



POINTS FOR PACKAGES

We still need your General Mills box top coupons and the Labels for Education on Campbell's soups, Pepperidge Farm products and V8 beverages.

So far this year we have earned almost \$600 in Box Tops! We will be sending in more Box Tops at the end of February, so be sure to get yours in today to be counted.

For a full list of General Mills products with the Box Tops coupons, visit www.boxtops4education.com.

Lester Life is produced monthly for the students and families of Lester Elementary School, District 58, Downers Grove, Illinois. Questions, comments or content should be directed to lesterlife@comcast.net. The next deadline is **Friday, February 19**.

Lester PTA Meeting Highlights

Meeting was held Tuesday, January 19, 2010, in the LRC

Business Briefs:

Website Update: Take a look at the site: www.lesterpta.com (or www.lesterpta.org).

Treasurer's Report: Ending balance of \$30,857.31 on 12/31/2009. Whiteboards have not been paid.

Trivia Night Update: We are on track with donations and all tables are sold-out.

Display My Art Update: Every teacher receives a packet for an art project, students pick their choice. We will have the opportunity to buy their art on items (like T-Shirts, mugs, aprons, etc). We will receive a magnet of the project (which we keep, regardless of ordering).

Chair Folders: A reminder for Chairs to turn in their blue folders within one month of their event. This is especially important for those chairs that are not returning next year.

Jamba Juice cards/tags were dropped off for backpack mail today, they are going out to every family member and staff; extras are available, just ask Lara Vazquez.

Spirit Wear: Spent \$1750, received \$1500. We had to have minimum orders for sport bottles and caps - so, we have extras that we will be selling.

DARE: There will be a DARE meeting with MaryBeth Webeler on October 23rd. Get in touch with Lara if you need more information. They will be talking about what the district/PTA roles will be moving forward.

Fit Fair is coming up: Family and child event on February 24th from 6-8:30.
Summer Math Club : a grade appropriate math packet program that takes place during the summer at the library. A motion passed unanimously to participate in the program this summer.

Social Emotional Learning Conference: will be conduction a district-wide parent meeting coming in the spring (no date set yet).

President's Report:

- Lara will be sitting in on the interviews for the new Superintendent of Curriculum on January 29th. If anyone has concerns or questions you would like addressed with the candidates, please let Lara know.

" We are looking for a new chair for Hot Food next year. The new order form is coming out in February and the new person could sit with Jen Braun during this last order session. Please contact Lara or Jen if you are interested.

" Therese Creamer Memorial letter will be going into backpack mail next week. All funds will go to the front garden and a memorial for Therese.

" The Science fair is coming up and we have 90-100 MORE entries (district wide) from last year.

Principal's Report:

- Report cards coming out at the end of the month and parent teacher conferences are on 1/28 and 2/2.

- We are continuing the Grand-Friendship initiative. Miss Brown and Miss Fisher are representing Lester on the committee and Tricia Tokash volunteered to by the parent rep. The group is looking for ideas and is open to suggestions.

Teacher's Report:

" 3rd Grade gave a recap of the costs associated with their upcoming Chicago Field trip. Total is \$4677.50. This is budgeted and already approved. 6th grade is going to Robert Crown and yearly trip to Herrick (including locker practice). They are also doing Greek festival in about a month which ties in with their ancient Greece curriculum.

Committee Reports and Ongoing PTA Fundraisers:

Science Olympiad: Registration form should have come home today and is due by the end of January. There is a volunteer section on the form for parent participation.

Author's Fest: February 17th we will have Craig Pierce presenting to Kindergarten classes and 4th Grade; also Phil Bildner for 5th and 6th grade classes. On February 19th, Annie Crawley will be presenting to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade classes.

6th Grade Farewell Party: Kathy Johnson spoke on behalf of 6th Grade Parents requesting funds for a farewell party at the end of the year. The event would include soft drinks/water, light refreshments, and entertainment by Coach Josh. The event would take place the last full Friday of school (May 21st) from 4-6. A motion was made to include this into the budget and create a new chair position; the motion passed unanimously. Kathy agreed to be the chair.

PTA Minutes are posted online and can be found on the PTA link through the Lester School website.

The next PTA meeting is February 16 at 7 p.m. in the LRC.

Fun Fair

March 19th
Watch for details!

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

We are looking for a new Hot Food Chair for 2010. Jen Braun, who has made great improvements to our Hot Food program, will no longer be able to chair. If you are interested, please contact Jen directly at braun4@comcast.net. She would like to have the next chair available to help with the last order for this school year, which will take place during the last week of February. This would give the new chair a great head start in understanding the system. It should be mentioned that on our new website, we will be automating the order system in time for next school year, which should make the job easier for a new chairperson! Please consider taking on this important and rewarding job - the kids will thank you!

Prizes, Fun on Tap for Trivia Night

Trivia Night is quickly approaching. We have some great prizes this year! Here is a sample of the many awesome prizes we will be giving away!

Can't make it to Trivia Night? No worries, look for your opportunity to win these prizes through backpack mail.

Walt Disney World Vacation

One day four person park hopper passes good for all four Disney parks in Orlando Florida

To help get you there two airline tickets with Southwest Airlines

Laptop Ensemble

ASUS Eee PC 8.9" notebook

High end earphones

Laptop carrying briefcase

Web cam

Portable notebook lock

1G memory card

Wireless mouse

Printer

We still need your contributions for Trivia Night Gift Baskets!

What: Gift basket collections for Lester Trivia Night & Silent Auction

When: Items needed by February 5 (for the big night on February 20th)

Where: Collection bags are located in each classroom

We need new items in any of these categories:

Girl toys: Polly Pocket, Groovy Girls, Littlest Pet Shop, Barbie, anything girls like

Boy toys: Star Wars, Legos, superheroes, Thomas Train, cars, anything boys like

Games:: Board game, dice, playing cards, puzzles, 'how-to' book, craft kit, etc.

Gift Cards: Any gift card valued \$25 or more that you won't use (please make sure it is still valid!)

We need your help for a successful Trivia Night - Thank You!

Questions? Call Tammy Crosson (630) 434-0366 or Candie Roberts (630) 769-0192

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY

5 NO SCHOOL - President's Day
16 PTA Meeting - 7 p.m. in LRC
19 Market Day Pickup (4 to 4:45 p.m.)
20 Trivia Night PTA Fundraiser
23 Science Olympiad
26 NO SCHOOL - Teacher Institute

MARCH

1 Pulaski Day - NO SCHOOL
2-12 ISAT
16 PTA Meeting - 7 p.m. in LRC
19 Fun Fair
26 End of Third Reporting Period (K-8)
26 Market Day Pickup (4 to 4:45 p.m.)
29-31 Spring Break - NO SCHOOL

APRIL

1-2 Spring Break - NO SCHOOL
5 NO SCHOOL
6 Classes Resume
8 Kindergarten Round Up
13 Report Cards Sent Home
15 Family Reading Night
20 PTA Meeting - 7 p.m. in LRC
23 Market Day Pickup (4 to 4:45 p.m.)
30 Teacher Institute - NO SCHOOL

WORD OF THE DAY - JANUARY

4 GLIMMER shine faintly with wavering light I saw the snow glimmer under the streetlights.	5 ROMP <i>rough, energetic play</i> My brother and I like to romp in the snow.	6 COMMUNITY <i>people living in a particular area or place</i> We live in the community of Downers Grove.	7 DELICATE <i>easily broken or fragile</i> My grandmother's doll is very delicate.	8 GRAND <i>magnificent</i> The graduation was grand.
11 MISPLACED <i>put in wrong place or lose</i> I misplaced my math homework.	12 COLLABORATE <i>work together</i> We will collaborate on the state report.	13 OBSTACLE <i>a thing that blocks one's way</i> The fallen tree was an obstacle in the road.	14 HEARTY <i>wholesome and substantial</i> I had a hearty breakfast before school this morning.	15 LEISURE <i>free time</i> In my leisure, I like to read.
18 NO SCHOOL	19 NUTRITIOUS <i>healthy</i> I have a nutritious lunch today.	20 STRIVE make great effort to achieve I will strive for a good grade on my report.	21 ARRAY <i>an impressive display of a particular type of thing</i> There is an array of choices in the LRC.	22 STARTLED <i>to feel shock or alarm</i> The bell startled me as I walked in the hall.
25 REDEEM <i>gain possession of something in exchange for payment.</i> I will redeem my Lester loot for lunch on the stage.	26 VITAMINS <i>Essential for growth and nutrition</i> My mom tells me to take my vitamins every morning.	27 VITAMINS <i>Essential for growth and nutrition</i> My mom tells me to take my vitamins every day.	28 TRANQUIL <i>peaceful or calm</i> My mom had a tranquil afternoon.	29 INFLUENCE <i>to have an effect on the character or behavior of someone</i> My dad is a great influence on me.

February 2010

LESTER SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN ROUND-UP 2010-2011



In preparation for the Fall of 2010, we are beginning to collect names of students who will attend kindergarten for the 2010-2011 school year. State law requires that the child be **born on or before September 1, 2005**.

Please complete the tear-off section at the bottom of this page to receive information about starting kindergarten at Lester and about the **2010-2011 Kindergarten Round-Up scheduled for Thursday, April 8, 2010, at 1:00p.m.** Please return the form to the school office as soon as possible.

The names from this survey will comprise the list of prospective kindergarten children whose parents will be invited to attend the Kindergarten Round-up on April 8, 2010. Please ask family and friends who will be new to Lester with Fall kindergartners to call our office at 630-719-5855 for an information packet.

TEAR HERE

NAME OF CHILD _____
Last Name First Name Middle Name

BIRTH DATE _____ SEX _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____

RETURN TO OFFICE