

# CLASS NOTES

## SPRING IS HOPPIN'!

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Busy, busy, busy, that's what we are at Renaissance Academy. There's lots happening all the time. Here are some highlights.

4th-8th grade Drama Club showcased a plethora of talented thespians at its grand finale performance of Aesop's Fables. Students entertained audiences at three different show times in order to ensure everyone had the pleasure of seeing the four separate fables. *The Lion and the Mouse*, *The Tortoise and the Hare*, *Pandora's Box*, and *The Fox and the Crow* were all put on by different combinations of the drama club.

Ms. Decker and Ms. Christy did a great job directing and we are all looking forward to the 1st-4th grade show which will be at the end of May!



### Coming Events

Saturday School  
Saturday, May 7

K-3 9:15-12:15  
4-8 9:30-12:30  
Family Pick-Up 12:45

Port-a-Pit Chicken  
Fundraiser  
Friday, May 6

Advanced Auto  
151 E. Highway 20  
Pick-up 3-4:30 pm



Fun(d)raising has been a big focus at school lately and its great to see our community pitching in to help.

The Descartes Ala Carte continues to serve our morning commuters with delicious hot beverages and tasty treats while generating funds.

The divine dining experience provided by Cafe' Gulistan at the give-back night was a wonderful example of fun(d)raising. Not only did it provide our community with an opportunity to mingle while enjoying fabulous food but we also were able to raise money at the same time! Thanks again to Livia's father Ibrahim Parlack for his warm hospitality and generous donation.

Port-a-Pit Chicken is coming soon and all our families have been busy selling tickets to help our school make the most of this great money maker. Don't forget that in each class the student who sells the most tickets receives a homework pass and the class that sells the most tickets gets an ice cream party!



Absence  
Make-Up Days

Saturday, May 14  
9am-1pm

Saturday, May 21  
8am-12pm



## EARLY RENAISSANCE -

### BELLINI CLASS



This month, Bellini students became soy bean farmers; planting and studying our first soy beans. You may have heard your child mention their "soy beanie baby." These "beanie babies" were 3 soy seeds planted in a small baggie of aqua diamonds. (Aqua diamonds acted as soil.) It was then worn as a necklace. To simulate a soy bean's underground environment we wore them close to our hearts where we could be reminded of their need for a dark and warm environment to sprout in. Each day we write observations on any changes. While waiting for our soy beans to sprout, we tasted a variety of soy products like organic soy milk, edamame, crackers and a protein bar. Each Bellini farmer was enthusiastic about their new endeavor this month.

## MIDDLE RENAISSANCE -

### GALILEO CLASS

When in Rome, do as the Romans do ...

and that is what the Galileo class has been doing! We have had an exciting month studying and researching famous ancient Romans and preparing skits. Each student worked in a group to prepare a presentation and perform a scene for the class. The children were really excited and enjoyed this activity while learning about many historic figures! They can't wait to do more!



The students have also been studying the structure and processes of plants in April. During the next couple of weeks, we will actually start planting real plants and using them for some exciting science experiments!

Our class and school have a lot to be thankful for this month. Ms. Eileen's baby had his heart surgery and everything went well. We miss Ms. Eileen and baby Cooper and are excited for their return!



# MIDDLE RENAISSANCE - COPERNICUS CLASS



Copernicus students are budding botanists! As we move into our botany work, students can't wait to explore nature in our backyard. We will take nature hikes as the weather gets nicer and learn about the native flora surrounding Renaissance. Students have already started learning about the parts of plants and the process of photosynthesis. We are also planting radishes, lettuce, soybeans, and mustard seed to watch plants germinate and grow.

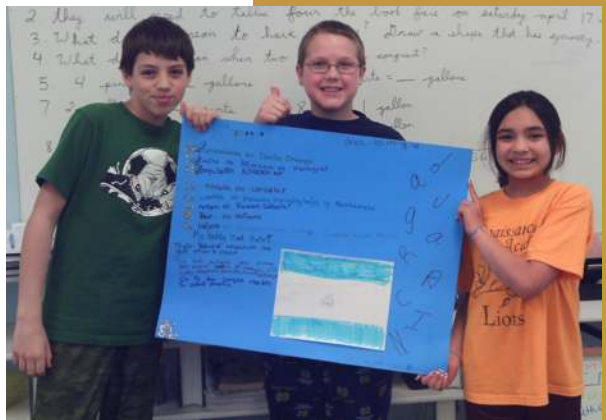


Our last history unit will center around the Ancient Romans. Students are researching the rise and fall of the Roman Empire. Other topics of interest include Roman architecture, clothing, and customs. We will

read Julius Caesar and many other interesting accounts of life in Ancient Rome.



Students have been so excited to welcome Snoopy, our new class pet. Snoopy is a tadpole who is well on his way to becoming an amphibian. He still has a long tail but is developing hind legs. We have enjoyed caring for Snoopy and watching him grow into a bullfrog.



As we conclude the year, we have a lot of great field trips planned. We will enjoy welcoming our future 4th grade friends on move-up day. Students are busy preparing for the final Name That Book competition and Formal Day. We anticipate a fun finish to a great school year!

*A book is like a garden carried in the pocket.*

-Chinese Proverb



## Ongoing Activities

### Sports & Clubs

#### Drama Workshop

1st -3rd Grade  
Tuesdays & Thursdays  
3:30 - 4:45 pm  
April 12 - May 19



## PRE-RENAISSANCE - MARCO POLO & GUTENBERG

Hello to all our Marco Polo & Gutenberg Families! Spring is here (theoretically) and we are all excited to start learning about “man's best friend” - dogs! With that in mind, we would like to extend an invitation to our canine friends to come in and visit the class! If you think your dog would enjoy coming in, please let Ms. T know so she can coordinate a time & date for your visit.

We have many exciting events happening this time of year! On April 26th our Kindergartners had a “Junior Achievement” day where they had the opportunity to learn about money, business, and finance with two of our classroom parents! Every one enjoyed learning new things and then dining with their J.A. Chaperones. The following day was our big field trip to the Curious Kids Museum and Krasl Art Center in St. Joe Michigan. Children loved spending time in the ‘Apple Orchard’, putting their whole bodies inside a bubble, and painting their faces! Thanks to all the chaperones who came along for this super trip!!

On Wednesday May 4th, and May 11th, we will have special morning events where moms and dads can come spend an hour in class with your student, have a tasty treat, and even hear a special performance (Dads are invited on the 4th and moms are invited on the 11th). I hope to see all of you so you can see what exciting things your children are working on!

In the spirit of spending more time outdoors as the weather improves, please make sure to send your child with everything they need for outside time. The class would really like to go out, even in the middle of a typical Spring drizzle, but most kids would need to have rain coats and boots for us to be able to do this. So, we just ask that you keep this in mind as you prepare your child for school each day.

In our Celebration of Earth Day, we have been discussing ways that kids can help the earth. You can help by encouraging these types of activities at home. All sorts of Eco-friendly activities such as gardening, unstructured outdoor play, recycling, composting, energy and water conservation (turning of the faucet, lights, etc), any of these things are great ways to get your kids excited to give a helping hand to Mother Earth!

The end of the school year will be here before we know it! Here's looking forward to finishing up on a high note!



## MIDDLE RENAISSANCE - ERASMUS CLASS



Hi my name is Olivia, and my name is Jayden. Ms. Tanya asked us to write this months newsletter, so here goes.

The Erasmus class had a very fun and productive month. We started many new science, history, and math works, learning many new concepts. Some of which were the Five Kingdoms, a timeline of ancient Greece and Rome, dividing fractions by fractions, entering language contests, and Spanish research projects. We have also been preparing for April ISTEP.

We started the Five Kingdoms charts. The Five kingdoms are plant, prokaryote, protocista, fungi, and animals. The work we can do is drawing and labeling examples from each kingdom in our science notebooks.



Everyone has also started working on a timeline of the history of ancient Greece and Rome. For the timeline, we have included events, scientists, philosophers, and architecture. We are currently working on research for it.

We have also enjoyed learning fun and exciting new math concepts including dividing fractions, Pi, and square roots. We do this using Montessori materials. Everyone has also worked on poems and essays for contests. The 6th graders had to write an essay on the topic of "If I were Mayor I would...?" Everyone has worked on a poem to enter in a contest set for April 28th. The Poetry contest has no specific topic and the prize is an \$1000 savings bond.



All of us have been preparing for the upcoming ISTEP test. To practice, we have been getting ISTEP practice math test homework. We then go over the problems we get wrong with our math groups and Ms. Tanya.

For Spanish class we have an exciting assignment to make a poster board of information about the South American countries that speak Spanish. We have to include information about the money, language, national flower, government, foods, animals, religion, and anything else we find interesting.



### Track & Field

4th - 8th Grade

Mondays & Thursdays

4:45 - 5:45

LaLumiere Track

City Meet May 5th

### Golf

Wednesdays

3:30 - 5:30

MC Municipal Golf Course

April 27 - May 25

### Games Club

4th - 8th Grade

Fridays in May

3:30 - 4:30



## EARLY RENAISSANCE - DA VINCI CLASS



Wow, the da Vinci class has been busy! We have been expanding our minds and learning many interesting things. We have learned about Greece, soybeans, life cycles, our community, and have even met some new friends.

We started the month with an awesome Saturday school. We were able to visit seven different stations to experience Greece. At some of the stations, we learned about Greek games. We also learned about Greek art and Greek gods. We had fun writing stories.

Soybeans entered our class in the form of beans. We added water to the beans and made them into necklaces. We observed the changes in the seeds through out the week. We learned that there are foods made from soybeans, some of us were not so sure we liked soy food. The life cycle of the soybean helped us understand all the work that goes into being a soybean farmer.

Over spring break Mrs. Michelle obtained some tadpoles. We have been watching the tadpoles grow and change. This has lead to the study of tadpoles and the life cycle of frogs. We have also studied the life cycle of a caterpillar. Spring allows us to learn so many neat things from an up close and personal vantage point. Junior Achievement joined our class at the end of the month to help us learn about our community. We built buildings and put together a town. In the town we learned that different building go in certain zones. We want to thank all the volunteers that helped make J.A. possible.

Another exciting opportunity we have had was spending mornings with our kindergarten friends. Some of our kindergarten friends have been joining our class in the mornings to help make the transition to first grade easier. We have really enjoyed showing them how our class functions.



*Give a man a fish  
and you feed him  
for a day. Teach a  
man to fish and you  
feed him for a  
lifetime.*

-Chinese Proverb

## MAY MOVE-UPS

May is move up time around Renaissance, meaning students will have an opportunity to spend time in classrooms they will be in next year. The 6th graders will be joining the 7th graders for the three day trip to Camp Tecumseh May 16-18, and one in-class day after they come back.

On May 17, the 3rd graders will join the 4th and 5th graders for two in-class days with an overnight in between.

Meanwhile, the Kindergartners will spend most of these two days in with the 1st and 2nd grades. How smart and exciting!

## LATE RENAISSANCE - DESCARTES CLASS



Last year, the students in Descartes worked together to produce a class portrait for a fundraising auction held in the fall. This year, we decided to make a tradition out of it and just recently completed our second annual class portrait. This particular project is a study in proportion, combining art with mathematics. Each student received one of 24 congruent pieces cut from a photograph taken of the class. After carefully measuring this small image and dividing it into a 4 x 2 grid with pencil lines, each student received a piece of drawing paper cut to similar proportions but 4 or 5 times as large as their picture piece. Students then made an identical 4x2 grid on the drawing paper. Using these gridlines as reference points, each student made a detailed pencil sketch of her image, trying to get the relative shapes and sizes as true to the original as possible. Finally, the picture was brought to life with colored pencils. Once each student had finished their "piece of the pie", the entire picture was reassembled. The result is fascinating - something between a collage and a Picasso painting. Have a look!



## EARLY RENAISSANCE - ALBERTI CLASS



What a great month April has been, full of great fun and great learning! April began with our special Saturday school featuring the study of Ancient Greece. History came alive as students had great fun sampling different aspects of Ancient Greek culture. Activities helped students learn more about Greek pottery, art, myths, drama, games and more. Our study of ancient times moves on to the Roman Empire.

Volunteers and friends from Junior Achievement provided a morning of great learning experiences focusing community, business and entrepreneurship. Each fun hands-on activity encouraged class participation and individual involvement. Many thanks to our friends at Junior Achievement.

Lastly, our April pajama day gave learning that warm and cozy feeling. What better way to start a 4-day weekend than in your pajamas!



*Teachers open the door. You enter by yourself.*

*-Chinese Proverb*

## Renaissance Academy

*Experience the Joy of Learning*

4093 West US 20  
La Porte, Indiana 46350  
219-878-8711  
www.rschool.net

### Class Times:

8:15 - 11:15 am AM 3-6 Class  
8:15 am - 2:45 pm Full Day 3-6 Class  
8:30 am - 3:00 pm Early Ren. (1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup>)  
8:45 am - 3:15 pm Middle Ren. (4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>)  
8:45 am - 3:30 pm Late Ren. (7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>)

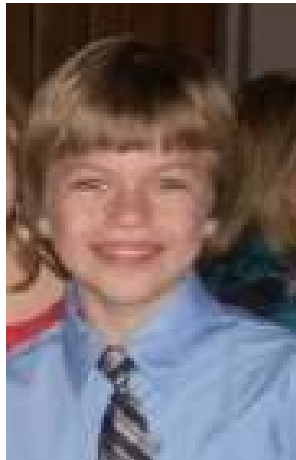
### Daily Extras:

7:00 - 8:30 am Before School Camp  
11:15 - 11:45 am Lunch Time Fun  
2:45 - 5:30 pm After School Camp

We're on the web:  
[www.rschool.net](http://www.rschool.net)



## A DAY IN COURT WITH JUDGE BOKLUND



The 5th grade students were invited by the Rotary Club to attend a special day in court to learn more about our judicial system. The Rotary then sponsors an essay contest in which the top essay from each participating school is chosen and then presented to the Judge who picks one winning essay. This year, our school's winning essay was written by Lucas Carroll. We hope you enjoy reading his account of a "Day in Court with Judge Boklund" and good luck in the citywide contest, Luke!

On April 1, 2011 every fifth grade Renaissance Academy Charter School student went on a trip. We went to the La Porte County Court for their fifth grade special event "A Day in Court." At the courthouse, we got to see court in action with real cases and people from the jail to learn about how America's justice system works.

When we walked into the Michigan City Courthouse, we were immediately greeted by Chris, Judge Boklund's bailiff. After our teacher talked with Chris for a few minutes, we walked into the courtroom. We all sat down and watched a video with all the other people about the rights of the accused. The video was very interesting and it was Judge Boklund talking and telling everyone about their rights which we all ended up getting in a pamphlet.

Chris the bailiff announced that judge Boklund was coming in and everyone in the courtroom stood up. Then everyone in the courtroom sat down and watched the first case. The first case started out terribly or at least terribly for the defendants. The first man was being charged \$1000 and 16 days in jail for intoxication in a public place and ended up pleading guilty.

Throughout court I was sort of sad and a bit disappointed because I noticed every convict (with an exception of a few) were in their 20's or 30's. That was sad because they are the next generation of our world leaders and though I know that there are many good 20 year olds in this world, maybe if all the bad people were older there wouldn't be crime in the future when all the bad people die off or quit their life of crime.

After we watched court, Chris called a recess so we could ask Judge Boklund any questions we had and talk about what its like to be in court. I had many questions but couldn't ask them all so I asked the ones most important to me. One of the most interesting questions I asked was how people got assigned jury duty and Judge Boklund said that there used to be a machine that dropped pieces of paper and they looked at the name on that piece of paper and that person would be on jury duty.

After that meeting we watched one more case before we went back to our school. The case was a lady who was talking on a web-cam from the jail. She was pleading guilty. Overall our trip was a great one and I hope to go to court and see Judge Boklund again. Maybe the next time I go to court, I'll be a court worker or even a judge like Judge Boklund.