

The Swanson Anchor

January 2014



From the Principal's Desk

January brings new beginnings and renewed commitment to striving for success. It also brings the end of the second quarter (and the first semester) on January 17. Note that students will not be in school on Tuesday, January 21, to allow teachers an opportunity to update grades and plan for the next quarter.

Students will start the registration process for next year's courses in January. They'll have a chance to reflect on which academic habits are helping them reach their goals and which are getting in their way as they tackle academic challenges. When your child brings his or her course selection card and accompanying information home, please take a moment to talk together about which electives courses or subjects he or she enjoys and would like to pursue next year. Talk with them about what subjects cause them to ask questions or about which they want to learn more. Throughout middle school, students are evolving from concrete to abstract thinkers. While every child travels his or her own journey, we offer many opportunities along the way for them to "think deeply and open their minds."

As important as it is to challenge and stretch our students' minds, it is just as important to protect their bodies as they travel to and from school. Please remind your walkers or bike riders to:

(Continued on page 2)

From the PTA

Welcome back to school! I hope you and your family had a wonderfully refreshing, restorative winter break.

The New Year typically is a busy time for students and families, and I know that Swanson features prominently in your collective schedules. Please be sure to check out the Swanson site (www.apsva.us/Swanson) for news and updates on the latest information on school happenings, including concerts, the school musical, sporting events and the Science Fair, and to sign up for the PTA listserv and keep up with important Swanson PTA events and activities.

Speaking of activities and all things Swanson, many thanks to those PTA parent volunteers who drive our many (MANY!) efforts, those most recently being the book fair; writing, proofing, editing and publishing the Anchor newsletter; getting the school directory copied for distribution; attending County Council PTA meetings; overseeing our educational grants process; and managing spirit sales. The activities

(Continued on page 2)

January 2014

January

8	PTA Reflections Reception 6:00 pm
9	Challenging Racism 7:00 pm School Board Meeting 7:30 pm
14	PTA Meeting 7:00 pm
15	Swanson Art Opening 7:00 pm
20	Holiday (No School for Students)
23	Swanson Science Fair 5:00 pm
30	Report Cards Issued

PTA Board

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and work products that our children and we enjoy are the result of volunteers who make them happen. Their contact information may be found at www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/1876/PTA%20Committee%20Chairs%202013.xlsx. Please contact them to support our many efforts in the New Year.

The January PTA meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 14 at 7 pm in the school library. We will hear a presentation from the counseling department on academic planning. Many thanks for your support this past fall, and I look forward to working with you in this New Year!

— Julie R. Jernigan, 2013-14 Swanson PTA President

From the Principal's Desk (Continued from page 1)

- Stop at the curb, look both ways, and do not cross until there is no traffic coming.
- Walk — don't run — across the street.
- Obey traffic signs, signals and school crossing guards.
- Cross roads in crosswalks instead of making mid-block crossings.
- Be aware of drivers in parked cars that may be ready to move.
- Look for cars that may be entering or exiting driveways or alleyways.
- Do not enter the street from between parked cars or from behind bushes or shrubbery.

Please remind bus riders of their responsibility to keep the noise level low on the bus and to refrain from behavior that may distract the driver. They should also practice safe pedestrian behaviors as they wait for the bus at their bus stop. Thank you for taking a moment to discuss this with your kids, and best wishes for a productive and safe second half of the school year.

— Bridget Loft, Principal

American Math Competition 8

In mid-November, approximately 150 students participated in the AMC 8 math competition held at Swanson. This is a well-known national competition that is extremely difficult. We had 6th, 7th and 8th graders accept the challenge.

A number of our students earned recognition at the event. Six Swanson students earned a place on the national honor roll, which recognizes students in the top 5% nationwide. Ben McCracken, Sarkis Ter Martirosyan and Hanna Xu, each with a score of 20 out of 25, were first for Swanson. Nathaniel Klein, Iris Martin and Yue Tang all scored an 18 on the contest. All of these students will receive honor roll certificates from the Mathematical Association of America. Plus, they are eligible to participate in the AMC 10 competition in February.

Just missing the honor roll cut-off with scores of 17 were Penn Bauman, Matthew Deily, Sam Goodkind, Alex Pasocello and Lily Wieland. Aidan Witeck was the top scoring 6th grader at Swanson. He just missed the achievement roll with a score of 14.

Congratulations to all the Swanson students who competed in this challenging mathematics contest.

—Laura Partridge, Math Coach

Continental Math League Contest

In early December, math students at Swanson participated in the second Continental Math League contest. As a team, the 6th grade is in the lead with a score of 68 out of a possible 72 cumulative points. They are followed by the 8th grade with 65 and the 7th grade with 62.

The following students received a perfect score on the second contest:

- Michael Curran (6th)
- Luke Holliday (8th)
- Derek Martin (8th)
- Ben McCracken (8th)
- Suruchi Sen (6th)
- Hanna Xu (7th)

After two contests, the following students have a cumulative score of 10 or higher:

Combined score of 10:

6th Graders:

- Henry Erwin
- Duncan Griffiths
- Robert Kirchenbauer
- Michael Kyrychenko
- Gabe Margosis
- Owen Maupin
- Patrick Rampton
- Jonathan Short

7th Graders:

- Claire Cofield
- Tom Dickson
- Angela Gormley
- Ferris Linde
- Jasmine Mondshine
- Yue Tang
- Cate Whitehouse

8th Graders:

- Kyle Gerner
- Ben McCracken
- Sarkis Ter Martirosyan

Combined score of 11:

6th Graders:

- Sam Bender-Prouty
- Michael Curran
- Mariana Holladay
- Zach Luzius
- Brendan Rindfusz
- Christina Sheckler
- Julia Trapanese
- Helyn Walther

Perfect Scores of 12:

- Suruchi Sen (6th)
- Hanna Xu (7th)
- Derek Martin (8th)

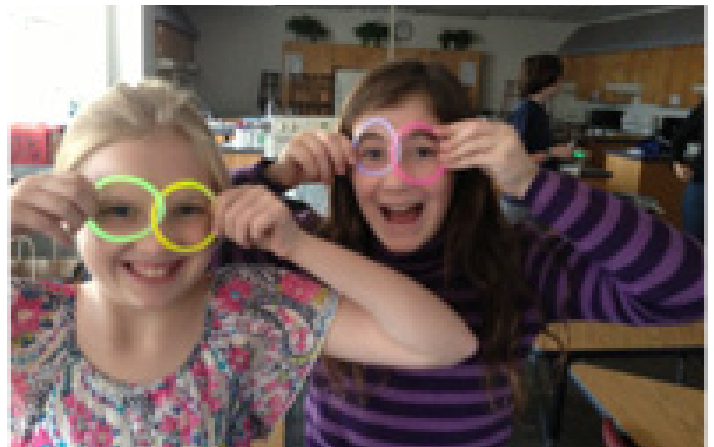
The next contest will be held in early January.

—Laura Partridge, Math Coach

We're Glowing!

The Science in the Kitchen club has been having fun at work this year! Our topic for December was chemiluminescence. Eighth grader Duncan Harvey led the students in a lively experiment and information-gathering lesson. Check out our glow stick experiments! Students learned that there are two chemicals in glow sticks that, when mixed together, create a chemical reaction that is influenced by temperature. Our next meeting is January 16 in room #114! See you then!

— Chris Taylor, Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher



Food Drive Success!

Congratulations to our Emerging Scholar and Student Government STAR students for motivating, organizing and coordinating the food drive for the Swanson Community in December. Thank you to the staff, students and parents for donating food to improve the lives of those in our Arlington community. We are anxiously waiting to hear if we reached our goal of 2,500 pounds. Thank you for helping make it a success!

— Chris Taylor, Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher



Gifts from the Heart

Approximately 163 gifts were collected and given out to local teens over the holiday season this year. Swanson staff, students and community business partner, Interstate Hotels and Resorts, worked together to fill 163 shoeboxes for the kids! This campaign brings forth a true spirit of giving. This is the 7th year we have worked together as a community to Light Up a Child's Life.

The generosity and outpouring of support for our teens is overwhelming. Our community partners, Interstate Hotels and Resorts, whose headquarters are located here in Arlington, have generously supported this campaign for many years. It is with deep gratitude that we thank them for joining our teachers and staff members here at school for their dedication and hard work. We do make a difference!

— Chris Taylor, Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher



The Latest in Latin – Io Saturnalia!

On December 16, one day before the date of the original Roman festival, Swanson Latin students joined fellow Latinists from all the APS schools to celebrate the festival of Saturnalia. Hosted by Yorktown High School, students dressed up for a costume contest (or didn't), shared a potluck supper and brought contributions for AFAC, "gambled" and had their fortunes told, tried their luck in fishing out "gold" (chocolate) coins at a sacred spring (where they had just as much chance of finding a Latin curse tablet written by W-L Latin students seeking catharsis or divine revenge), had mock gladiatorial fights,

wrote Latin graffiti, made clay figurines, played bowling, and sang a few holiday songs (in Latin, of course).

The Roman feast of Saturnalia was — as its name suggests — held in honor of the ancient god Saturn. As part of the festivities, it was traditional to exchange gifts, particularly small clay or wax figurines called sigillaria, gambling was permitted, and — most interesting of all — masters and mistresses exchanged roles with their slaves for the day: waiting on them, serving them a special meal, and doing their bidding for this special annual celebration. Every year, students suggest the same role reversal be applied in school...quid dicis, Ms. Loft?

— Melanie Stowell, Latin Teacher



Emily Kile at the Sacred Spring of Aquae Sulis



Stage 1, book 1...Latin students meet the colorful character, Grumio.



(Above) “You can do anything with duct-tape,” according to Ben McCracken...including create an instant Roman cuirass. Drew Kellenberger aimed higher on the Roman political hierarchy.

(Left) Latin I students celebrate Saturnalia

Scheduling and the Academic Plan

During January and February, Swanson counselors will be busy reviewing a range of important planning issues with students as part of their classroom guidance activities. These include core requirements and available electives for the following school year, high school graduation requirements, and academic planning. We will send course request forms (CRFs) home with students in February. They may include recommendations from current teachers about electives that will provide some students with extra support to be successful in the next grade. Rising 9th grade math recommendations will be made at this time, while math recommendations for rising 7th and 8th graders will be made at the end of the current school year. All teacher recommendations, including those for world languages, are open for review at year's end.

The purpose of these guidance presentations is to encourage students to begin designing a plan for their academic futures. We hope this approach will help students better understand and learn the importance of their course selections. We will also present this information to parents at Scheduling Night in February. Please remember that the academic plan is a working document, refined as students' goals and needs change.

Counselors will also be delivering lessons on the college and career information system, Naviance. Explore Naviance from home using your student's ID number and birthdate (— — —) to sign on. From the Swanson homepage, you can find Naviance under the dropdown Counseling menu.

In addition to providing career and college information, students will create SMART (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely) goals for themselves to aid in their academic planning and career preparation. They will also complete interest and learning style inventories.

8th Grade Reminders

It is getting to be that time of year when 8th grade parents and students are considering private schools or other high school programs (such as the IB) that require applications, transcripts and teacher recommendations. All applications and requests for teacher recommendations should be sent to the counseling office after the student has asked their teachers if they are willing and able to write the recommendation. Teachers are often asked to write many recommendations during a short time period. As a courtesy, please make sure teachers and counselors have two weeks to complete them. The counselor will distribute the materials to the requested teachers. The application and recommendations will be mailed directly to the schools from the counseling office.

Please email your requests for transcripts for the IB program directly to Mrs. Jankowski, the 8th grade counselor, at judy.jankowski@apsva.us.

Major Changes in Work Permits!

Virginia law requires students aged 14 and 15 to obtain a work permit prior to beginning a job. Parents can now electronically access, complete, and download the required forms.

The application requires submission of two documents: a **Permission for Employment form** and an **Employer Intent to Employ form**. These need to be submitted to the Virginia Labor and Employment Law Division.

- **The Permission for Employment form** must be completed by the youth's parent, guardian or custodian and signed before a Notary Public. A notary is required by law to affix a seal or stamp on every document he or she notarizes. The stamp or seal needs to be sharp, legible, permanent and photographically reproducible. Many banks provide notary public services.
- **The Intent to Employ form** must be completed by the employer. The youth must furnish a copy of an acceptable evidence of age document. The employer must retain and certify to the Labor and Employment Law Division the legal age for employment.

The Code of Virginia §40.1-94 establishes the following as legal evidence of age documents:

- A birth certificate
- An attested transcript issued by a registrar of vital statistics or other officer charged with the duty of recording births
- A baptismal record or duly certified transcript thereof showing the date of birth and place of baptism of the child
- Other documentary proof of age specified by the Commissioner, which includes any government-issued identification card such as a passport, DMV identification card or military identification card.

Only complete forms can be accepted for processing. Faxed documents cannot be accepted. Original forms must be submitted by U.S. mail.

After completion by the appropriate parties, mail the forms to:

Department of Labor & Industry
Child Labor Unit
1570 E. Parham Rd.
Richmond, VA 23228-2360

No child may begin employment until the employment certificate is issued. Upon approval, it will be mailed directly to the employer. Please allow seven to ten business days processing time. Incomplete forms will cause a delay, so double check them before you put them in the mail.

For more information and to access the documents needed for a work permit, please go to www.doli.virginia.gov.

University of Virginia Summer Enrichment Program (SEP)

In conjunction with the Curry School of Education, the University of Virginia announces the 36th year of its residential summer program for gifted and/or high ability students. Students enrolled in grades 4-10 during the 2013/2014 school year may apply to attend a 12-day session. SEP offers three summer sessions to choose from:

Session I: June 15 – 26, 2014

Session II: June 29 – July 10, 2014

Session III: July 13 – July 24, 2014

Applications are available online at www.curry.virginia.edu/community-programs/student-enrichment/sep/summer.

Swanson Activities

Service Projects

Swanson students truly embodied the Service pillar of the Swanson statement in December! Between fundraising, bake sales, and food drives, we've been able to support a multitude of causes. They include AFAC, A-Span, Lucky Dog Rescue, and Heifer International. Tune into the morning announcements during January to learn about upcoming projects and a winter clothing drive!

Box Tops for Education

So far, we have collected over 2,300 box tops through STAR! Thank you all for your generosity. Congratulations to the Environmental STAR for winning our collection contest, and earning themselves an ice cream party! You still have time to bring in more box tops and help Swanson raise some funds. Drop off your box tops with your name and STAR to your STAR teacher or to Mr. Holland. Collect the most tops before February 28 and you could win a great prize!

—Trevor Holland, Activities Coordinator