BEAR TRACKS

June 17, 2011 Volume I

Have a Great Summer!

School went out with a bang last week when the PTO organized a fun filled last day of activities around the campus. With all children out of school for 10 weeks, the following can help.

Prevent Summer Brain Drain

Children look forward to the free time and warm days that summertime brings, but the outdoor season can also bring brain drain, with students losing up to 60 percent of what they've learned during the school year.

According to a new report from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, brain drain during the first five years of school can hurt students later on, in high school and college.

The report also said that all children lost some skills over the summer, especially in math.

Parenting contributor Ann Pleshette Murphy offers strategies for keeping your children thinking and learning during the summer.

Do summer camps and programs at the library or community center really work for kids?

Those programs can be wonderful, and if they're available, go for it. Unfortunately, not all communities have summer programs for kids.

What reading tools do you suggest?

We all urge our kids to read, yet most of them grab a remote control before picking up a book. But, there are things out there that kids will be interested in. "Harry Potter" is a parent's best friend when it comes to reading. A poll done by the books' publisher found that 75 percent of kids now embraced reading after Harry entered their lives.

If you have film fans at home, one way to get them reading is with screenplays. They are often available at specialty bookshops, and many popular writer/directors publish their screenplays that you can find at some big-chain stores, and they are widely available online.

The folks a**t Flocabulary** have weaved learning and hip-hop music together. CDs teaches words.The company also makes CDs of Shakespearean plays and history, too.

What's a good way to keep math skills sharp during the summer?

For younger kids, get them baking. Your kids can do all the measuring, weighing and so on. They won't even realize they're doing math. And if your child is studying a foreign language, use a foreign language cookbook to keep their minds clicking on two fronts at once.

We all know there are kids who like to play with and spend money. So, set up a lemonade stand or yard sale.

Most kids love this summer staple, which is best for the elementary school set, but older kids can organize a yard sale, hire assistants, and maybe extend it to the entire block. A toy cash register is the perfect device for youngsters to add up their dollars and cents.

Obviously, figure out the cost of ingredients and supplies, and what your time is worth. These are real-life math lessons, and they can make their own movie money at the same time.

How can I inspire an interest in science?

Use nature as a covert classroom. Organize an outdoor scavenger hunt for bugs or tadpoles or rocks or flowers. Use a book from the library, or a bug kit — from the elaborate megakit to the simple box with a magnified lid or a jar. Kids will learn more about the natural world.

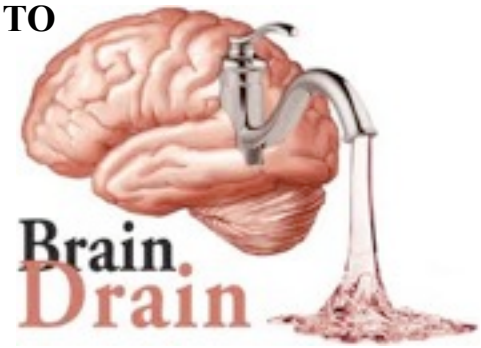
Another great idea is stargazing. Sit outside at night on lawn chairs and gaze upward. An $8.99 planisphere to a $20 celestial seeker come with cards that you use to locate your favorite constellations in the night sky.

Teens are interested in the environment. Many environmentally friendly events going on in your area have a musical or sports theme.

At the recent global Live Earth concerts, promoters gave out books titled "Global Warming Survivors Guide" to the huge audiences. And performers all spoke about the cause.

Your teens will learn something while they enjoy themselves.

SAY NO TO



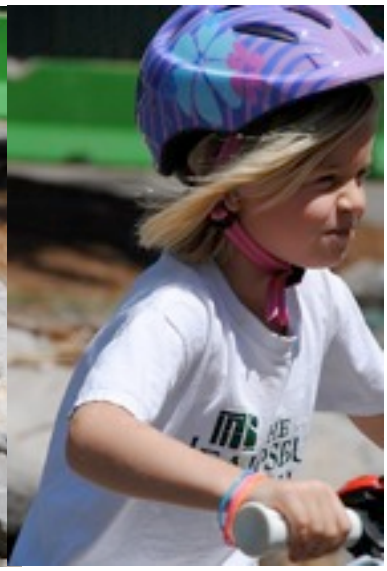
Check out THS's summer programs held on campus!

2011 THS Kindergarten Bike-A-Thon

What an adorable and fun event for the Kindergartners! The weather was perfect, as were the cheers from the students and parents who cheered on our riders!

The Healdsburg School is committed to giving back to those in need. One of the ways that we are giving back is for each class to become involved in a community service project. Since the Kindergarten class learned about plants and community we decided it would be a great project to plant trees and plants locally. We raised money for the Foss Creek Restoration Project in Healdsburg. This project helps restore the native plant community on Foss Creek in Healdsburg which improves wildlife habitat and makes Foss Creek a healthy sustainable waterway.

We helped in two ways! First, we raised money to donate to the Foss Creek Restoration Project by conducting a bike-a-thon here at THS called "Trike for the Trees". The students all brought their bikes to school and went around the THS track as many times as they could in 40 minutes. The students worked really hard raising money and had a wonderful time "Triking for the Trees". Second, we will be planing a “plant day” where the kindergarten class along with the seventh grade class plants trees and plants (that our bike-a-thon money funded!) at Foss Creek. For more information about the Foss Creek Restoration Project please refer to http://www.russianriverkeeper.org/index.php (article in the HB Tribune last week in May)



Education hot topics

What high-quality education research says about …

Extended School Days and School Years

How much time do US. students spend in school?
In 1983, when A Nation at Risk was published, the national average length of the U.S. school day was 6.5 hours and the school year averaged 180 days (1,170 hours per year). A Nation at Risk recommended (among other things) increasing the amount of time students spend in school to address shortcomings in student performance and academic preparation. According to a survey by the Council of Chief State School Officers, more than a quarter century after A Nation At Risk, the amount of time students spend in school remains relatively unchanged.

How does the amount of time U.S. students spend in school compare to other nations?
Exact comparisons are difficult to come by. According to a recent OECD report, "OECD countries show an average annual amount of total compulsory instruction time in classroom settings of 770 hours for 7-to-8-year-olds, 810 hours for 9-to-11-year-olds and 896 hours for 12-to-14-year-olds. The average annual number of compulsory instruction hours is 910 for the typical program in which most 15-year-olds are enrolled." Data for students in the USA is missing from this report.

Does more time in school matter?
Several scholars have argued that simply extending school time in and of itself will not produce the desired results. Larry Cuban, a Stanford University professor of education, has argued for example that what matters most is not the quantity but the quality of time students and teachers spend together in the classroom (2008).

In our 2000 meta-analysis of the impact of school, teacher, and student-level variables on achievement, McREL concluded that student achievement can be strongly affected if schools optimize their use of instructional time.

In 1998 WestEd researchers Aronson et al. examined the research on time and learning and arrived at three conclusions:

- There is little or no relationship between student achievement and the total number of days or hours students are required to attend school.
- There is some relationship between achievement and engaged time, that subset of instructional time when students are participating in learning activities.
- The strongest relationship exists between academic learning time and achievement.

However, in recent years some notable extended time initiatives have produced gains in test scores, graduation rates, and college attendance, including the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP), which increases the amount of time students spend in school by nearly 60%, and Massachusetts 2020. Conversely, a $100 million effort in Miami to extend school days by one hour and add 10 days to the calendar produced no significant benefits.

In its Expanded Learning Time Toolkit, the National Center for Time and Learning asserts that adding more time to the school calendar can be effective, but only when it accompanies a larger effort to rethink the process of schooling:

"Successful implementation of expanded learning initiatives occur in tandem with other reform strategies and practices that take place through the redesign process. Without conjoining expanded learning time with the redesign principle, more time risks being 'more of the same' and a promising school improvement strategy becomes a band-aid… Lengthening the school day, school week and/or school year for any significant amount of time requires leaders to rethink school reform in a way that is not incremental."

How might additional time help to improve teaching and learning?
The National Center for Time and Learning cites five potential benefits to extending school time, including:

1. Making it possible for students to spend more time on task
2. Allowing teachers to delve into subject matter in more depth
3. Encouraging more student engagement through project-based learning and elective courses
4. Building in time for more teacher-student interaction
5. Creating time for teacher planning and professional development

What arguments are made against increasing the amount of time students spend in school?
In 2008, the Center for American Progress published Taking Stock of the Fiscal Costs of Expanded Learning Time, addressing the increased costs associated with extending the school day and/or the school year. These costs were found to be primarily associated with the ways in which teachers, specialists, paraprofessionals, and other staff are deployed to support the longer school day and, if relevant, how compensation changes as a result. This report concluded in part that, "Since expanding learning time makes little sense without purposeful use of this time and effective instruction, schools and districts will need to design powerful curriculum and to ensure teacher understanding and skill with this time."

Silva (2007) identifies other hidden costs—namely to parents, employers, and a wide range of industries that are dependent on the traditional school day and year.

Grassroots "save summer" organizations in a number of states actively work to preserve traditional school calendars in order to maintain family summer vacation time.

Eighth Grade Graduation

"Lots done, lots more to do"!

Junior high school at THS are the bridge grades between elementary school and high school. That bridge has been crossed now by our 8th grade students who celebrated their graduation from THS last week in grand style.

The last few weeks on campus are now just a distant memory of finals, dances, award ceremonies and the graduation bash.

Our compliments to all Graduates! You never thought the moment would arrive, but here it is... you've finally graduated. Now it's time to move up to the big leagues. At THS we are confident that we gave you the best preparation possible to succeed in any High School you choose to attend.

Our past graduates have been accepted to some of the best High Schools in the Nation. Take their lead and step up proudly. As Graduate Student and Parent, you are automatically members of the THS Alumni Association. Please watch for your own quarterly newsletter and special announcements. Reserve the date August 24th for THS Alumni Homecoming at the Vineyard Club, details to follow shortly!

"It is time to spread your wings"

Meet the Graduates of the 2011

Kevin Bailey

McKaleigh Finnan

Hannah Holden

Clay Howard

Peter Lindee

Haley MacPhail

Adrienne Sarasy

Ashton Smith

Jordan Whitemore

Sarah Winton

Gianna Wright

Photo by Michelle Montalbano

Hog Heaven

The THS Pig Roast Buy-In Party was a great success!

As a last minute addition to the 2011 Bravissimo in February this auction item raised over $22,000.00 for THS.

Our thanks to Charlie and Lisa Palmer for the fabulous food, Phil and Sylvia Hurst for the outstanding wines at their new VML Winery, David Howard and Band for the music, John and Bettina Fruth for another great use for the BBQ, and the many THS Volunteers!

THS Awards 3rd Trimester

Fourth Grade:

Tasmin Arai – High Honors

Brennan Brown – High Honors

Sean Flowers – Head of School/Honors

Casey Harlan – Honors

Eva Hodes – Honors

Lydia Houghton – High Honors

Caroline Legro – Honors

Anna Miller – High Honors

Kimberly Nguyen – High Honors

Carissa Pisors – High Honors

Caillen Schwartz – High Honors

Sebastian Soros – High Honors

Porter Tett – High Honors

Ella Wright – Honors

Fifth Grade:

Leif Baxter – High Honors

Adele Biehl – High Honors

Conor Brown – High Honors

Dylan Kattengell – High Honors

MacKenzie Kerson – Head of School/High Honors

Brendan Loftus – High Honors

Brittany McCutchan – Head of School/High Honors

Samantha Meyer – Head of School/High Honors

Annie Smith – Honors

Sixth Grade:

Camryn Finnan – Honors

Max Grover – Honors

Hallie Hostetter – High Honors

Alick Khapenkov – Honors

Madison MacPhail – Head of School/High Honors

Casper Max – High Honors

Abby Powers – High Honors

Hannah Soros – Honors

Victor Sotelo – Honors

Alexandra Tett – Head of School/Highest Honors

Seventh Grade:

Cole Anderson – High Honors

Yoneo Arai – High Honors

Julia Dayton – High Honors

Simon Fruth – Highest Honors

Colby Groom – Honors

Tristan McCutchan – Honors

Lailah Meyer-Long – Head of School/Highest Honors

Eric Palmer – High Honors

Reed Palmer – High Honors

Zachary Vallery – Honors

Philip Wilkinson – High Honors

Julie Yparraguirre – Head of School/High Honors

Eighth Grade:

Kevin Bailey – High Honors

Hannah Holden – High Honors

Peter Lindee – Honors

Haley MacPhail – Head of School/High Honors

Adrienne Sarasy – High Honors

Ashton Smith – Head of School/Honors

Sarah Winton – Honors

The Music Man!!

All of our hard work paid off, our little production was a huge success! I am so proud of our Music Man cast members, they did an amazing job.

Outstanding job THS Music Man students!

Thank you also to our parents who helped out with our production. Without you, we just would not be able to accomplish a large project like this.

Special thanks to:

Celeste Yparraguirre & Sarah Petersen – the many hours you spent sewing and organizing our costumes.

Sheri Smith – thank you for creating our "Pick-a-Little Ladies" beautiful hats!

Laura Forgue, Sheri Smith, Patrick Rousche – for providing the yummy snacks during our rehearsals

Heather Cullen – for our vocal coaching & running the music for our production

Sue McCutchan – for helping where ever you were needed!

Geri Beihl – for organizing our volunteers for this production

Gary Finnan and Cameron Frey – for our set design and construction

THS Parents – thank you for driving and helping out with our rehearsals and helping out in other ways!

Faculty and Staff – thank you for your hands-on support during rehearsals and performances. This truly demonstrated the strength of our community.

Thank you everyone for your support! And now . . . we begin to plan for NEXT YEAR'S SPRING PRODUCTION!!

Have a wonderful summer! *Connie Schlotthauer*

Our Thanks to Jean Fruth for the wonderful photos of the Music Man Production!

2011 Foss Creek Volunteer Days

http://www.russianriverkeeper.org/what-we-do/habitats/foss-creek.php

The Healdsburg School volunteered at Foss Creek in May and had some nice things to say:

"It was amazing knowing that a class of seventh graders can make a difference." - Nolan Pisors

"I had so much fun working hard and saving the native environment." - Eric Palmer

"Actually working to help the planet is more fun than raising money." - Yoneo Arai

"The Russian River rocks!" - Simon Fruth

"The weather was a little overcast... a lack of sun - but ideal for transplanting. I was impressed with the communal effort of the seventh grade, the kindergarten class, and the Russian River volunteers. Together, we got a lot done, instilled a little hardiness, and learned about good environmental stewardship. In short, a wonderful outing." -Teacher Leigh Schmitt

Thanks Healdsburg School!!

BOARD OF TRUSTEES - We welcome the following new members

Rebecca Salzman Miller, parent of Molly in 1st grade and Anna in 4th grade.

Carroll Kemp, parent of Jude in 3rd grade and Jasper, an incoming kindergartener.

Jonathan Marvin, parent of Theo in Kindergarten.

Please see The Healdsburg School website for detailed bio's on our new and existing Trustees. Thank you!

Please send inquiries in regards to Bear Tracks to bettina@thehealdsburgschool.org. We'd love to hear from you!