

November 2014 Student Committee and Club Reports

Ambassador Committee (hosted by Jan Boudreau): The Ambassador Committee is made up of Woodland students. There are four fifth graders, and four fourth grade students on this committee.

The Ambassador committee was off to a very fast start this year! Our group met quite frequently in the fall as we prepared to work with Troy Temple to produce a video tour of our Peace Garden. With help from Larry Ritchie a script was written to highlight each country in our garden. Our Ambassador friends each chose two countries to speak about on the video. Students rehearsed in groups of two, using iPads to record themselves. Filming day went well. The weather cooperated nicely for our filming and we are looking forward to viewing the finished product which should be up on the Nerstrand website by December!

The Ambassadors have also been practicing their touring skills. Fifth grade Ambassadors are paired with fourth grade Ambassadors as they practice their "talking points" for potential visitors.

The Ambassadors have also been asked to help Lori write Thank You notes for the many donations that our school has received. We will begin working on that project in the near future!

As we look ahead, our group will begin to prepare for the Peace Prize Festival which is hosted by Augsburg College in early March. Our group has tentatively decided to study Malala and her efforts to bring peace through her support of education.

Lori Arndt will be attending a "pre- Peace Prize Festival meeting" which has now become a requirement for those planning to attend the festival. Former President Jimmy Carter will be speaking to the group this year!

School Spirit Committee (hosted by Jan Boudreau): The School Spirit committee's six members meet monthly to plan our special early release day activity. There is one representative from each homeroom on this committee. This committee was also very busy in the fall as they helped to prepare the Welcome Back signs for returning Nerstrand Alumni on the Faribault Homecoming pep fest day!

So far, this committee has also helped to promote our Favorite Stuffed Animal day. Next on our agenda is Mis-match, Backward, Inside out Day!

Behavior Plan/Playground Committee (hosted by Carmen Bonde and Lori Arndt):

The committee of 12 members met in October for the annual review the school's behavior expectations and problem solving plan. Students continue to be supportive of the annual review, and did not have any suggestions for changes this year, before it was sent home to all families. Playground behavior and equipment use expectations were also discussed and to follow up, Carmen created a monthly calendar for the playground shed equipment for committee member to rotate as equipment managers.

Learn and Serve (hosted by Paula Shroyer):

Six students participate in the Learn and Serve Committee, about twice each month, sometimes more often depending on what projects are happening. The project ideas are generated mainly by students. Our goal is to have 100% of the students at Nerstrand Elementary participate in Service-Learning projects throughout the year. So far this year,

- we helped clean up/rake the school courtyard
- written thank you cards for the business that gave treats for the Harvest Parade
- Picked up flower pots from downtown businesses and cleaned them up. In the Spring, we will plant flowers and distribute them to the businesses again!

We are planning to:

Make blankets for babies at Children's Hospital

Help get the tickets, punch cards ready for school carnival

Help with the food drive in January

Collect money for March of Dimes or the American Heart Association

Write letters to service men and women in February

Assist the Nerstrand Women's Club clean up the park area and plant in the Spring.

Peace Garden Committee (hosted by Carmen Bonde and volunteer Larry Richie):

Six students attend weekly meetings on Thursdays, during lunch and homeroom. The committee is comprised of three 4th graders and three fifth graders. Every week one member invites a friend as a guest to the meeting. They introduce their friend and share something about their friend with the committee and they are formally welcomed to the Peace Garden.

The students have been observing items that Larry believes may be artifacts dating back thousands of years that he has found in a river bottom. The students discuss what particular "artifacts" could have been used for and how they were possibly made. The work in the China exhibit of the Peace Garden has been the main focus of the time and work of the committee. The students decided on the type of pavers to use for the walking path that leads to, around and through the moon door on the Chinese exhibit. They chose crescent shaped pavers to use as the stepping stones after much consideration and discussion. They also chose rock with a contrasting color to put in between the stones so the stepping stones would be more noticeable. The committee members were also responsible for moving in a few larger, flat quarry rocks to put in a bed of sand. They had to work cooperatively to move the rock with rollers and plywood inches at a time across the front yard of the school. Some collective problem solving was also required when they encountered some difficulties. They also spent some time getting the beds of the various gardens ready for winter by digging up old bulbs, cutting back old greenery, planting new bulbs, and laying hay for protection.

The family of Dennis Denovich has given a memorial in honor of his time here at Nerstrand School. We have used the memorial funds to purchase crescent moon shaped stepping stones and borders for the China part of the Peace Garden. We are grateful to the Dennis Denovic Family for this memorial.

The group looks forward to planning and constructing a small foot bridge through the winter that will lead to the newly constructed path. Spring will bring more opportunities to get back outside into the gardens.

Nerstrand Student Clubs and Crews

Book Bunch @ Lunch Club (hosted by Tara VonDrasek and parent volunteer Jenni Hegseth):

Book Bunch @ Lunch is a book club offered to 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders that meets once a month during lunch time. Each month a book is chosen to be read by the student and or their family. At the end of the month students will meet over lunch to discuss the book and do various activities that pertain to the story. This year the students will meet in October, November, January, February, March and April.

Our first meeting was held on October 27th with a total of 30 members. We ate lunch together and discussed the book From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler by E.L. Konigsburg.

Last year the club raised \$72.00 by making a variety of crafts to be sold during the school carnival. Students decided that the money will be used to purchase copies of books to be used during Homeroom. At the meeting we discussed possible book titles that will be voted on to be selected for this year's Homeroom read aloud.

Our next meeting will be November 24th and we will discuss the book An Elephant in the Garden by Michael Morpurgo. Seeing that we will be reading a few books about animals this year the club is thinking about doing some kind of animal project.

The Knitting Club (hosted by Sarah Johnson): has not yet had its first meeting. I am trying to figure out the logistics of how to watch the club members and get my students to lunch at the same time, as Woodlands leaves for recess before Savannah leaves for lunch. A solution seems to be close. We will also need to do a communication piece to families for yarn donations, as Maggie took the yarn supply with her. She did, however, leave her needles in Nerstrand, so the students will be able to borrow those.

Work Crew (hosted by Lori Amy):

Our work crew is part of the Youth Service Learning Corps. There are two work crews—one is the morning work crew, which takes place before school each day. Students arrive by 8am and do a variety of jobs to help keep our school clean and ready to go. These volunteers wash tables and lockers, dust, recycle and sharpen pencils. This year the morning work crew has 11 students.

The noon work crew also volunteers by giving up recess and helping to keep the lunchroom running smoothly. These students wash lunch tables and help supervise the silverware and trays area. We have 44 students helping with the noon work crew this year. Many thanks to all these wonderful students who volunteer to support Nerstrand School.