

Distance Learning Newsletter

Submitted by Christy Hubley & Betti Percival

The first half of the 2009-2010 had many great programs taking place throughout our district. Thank you to everyone who integrated their curriculum with Distance Learning Programs and collaborations the first half of the year. If you didn't have time in your class schedule at the beginning of the year but would like a program the second half of the school year please contact us now because we are booking through June. We would also like to say thank you to all staff for their flexibility when booking programs. Also a huge thank you to our Tech Staff for supporting our teachers during programs and taking the time to do test calls to make sure everything is working properly.

CONTENT PROVIDERS:

Elementary Schools:

- ✚ “SAILING INTO THANKSGIVING” by the Mariner’s Museum was a popular program this fall. Mrs. Hamilton’s, Mrs. Mone’s, Mrs. Wright’s and Mrs. Daenz’ kindergarten classes along with Mrs. George’s and all of Sandown North’s first grades connected with the Mariner’s Museum in Newport News, VA for this program. Students acted out experiences, sang a song and viewed artifacts and images of items from the Mayflower and Plimoth Plantation.

Program Description: Students learned about the Pilgrims’ journey across the ocean on the Mayflower. Students discovered how the ship moved, life on the Mayflower, their life in America and what inspired the Pilgrims to celebrate the first Thanksgiving. The program provider also sent supplies to make a small ship that would float.

- ✚ Fifth Graders in Mrs. Robichaud’s class participated in the Program “Age of Exploration” with the Mariner’s Museum.

Program Description from the Mariner’s Museum:

This popular program takes students on an imaginative journey through time. They will explore an era when cartographers were still mapping the world and mariners were discovering new landmasses, thus fueling the desire for knowledge and riches. Museum teachers will lead discussions about the economic and cultural life of the Old World, present spices for hands-on examination, and discuss the importance of these spices to those cultures. Other factors that accelerated the interest in exploration are also examined. Third grade and above will see and handle navigational instruments spanning the period from ancient times to the golden age of sail. Be sure to visit our [Age of Exploration Online Exhibition](#) to learn more about early exploration.

- ✚ Kindergarten students in Ms. Hamilton’s classes took a journey to Antarctica during the program titled “Critters in the Cold”. During this program the Ann Arbor Hands on Museum in Michigan taught the students about various cold weather animals and how they survive in the cold. Students pretended to be penguins and tried to pass their eggs back and forth without letting them touch the freezing Antarctica floor.

Teacher Comment: *“As we did last year, the students and staff enjoyed the program. Ann is very perky and keeps things moving which is great for the attention span of 5 and 6 year olds. The information supports what we have taught. I wish that we had the materials to make the hats prior to the am event...but otherwise, it was terrific.”*

- ✚ First grade students in Kathy Low’s class participated in a video conference session with the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo about Bats. Students learned myths and facts about bats from a cackling witch.
- ✚ Pam Dolan’s and Justin Bentley-Melle’s art class connected with the Amon Carter Museum for a program entitled “Art Comes Alive”.
- ✚ Mrs. Guy’s 4th grade class participated in a video conference with LEARNCO in Ohio for the program entitled, “Everyday Geology”.

Teacher Comment:

“Andy was so great. My kids were a little shy and their answers were a little off at times but Andy just helped them get to the right answers. The hands-on activities were perfect and the kids were excited to participate. Thanks for setting it up. The kids loved being on TV!”

Program Description: Everyday Geology takes a look at different properties of rocks and minerals using two group explorations: Properties and Edible Minerals. Layers of the earth and formation of rocks are studied using the explorations: Plate Tectonics and Metamorphic Taffy.

•**Properties** explore physical and chemical properties of rocks and minerals, such as hardness, crystal habit, luster, streak, cleavage, color, specific gravity, and reactivity, and what their results can tell us.

•**Edible Minerals** looks further into a minerals crystal habit and demonstrates what they look like.

•**Plate Tectonics** examines how the surface of the Earth is broken into large plates and how convergent, divergent, and conservative motion affect the formation and reformation of the Earth’s surface.

•**Metamorphic Taffy** demonstrates the act of a rock being transformed into Metamorphic rock using pressure

- ✚ Mrs. Osborne’s, Ms. Allen, Mrs. Lozowski, Mrs. Targonski and Mr. Shawley’s 5th grade classrooms participated in “From Dawn to Dusk: Slave Life at Mount Vernon”.
Teacher Comment: *“The speaker was entertaining and well informed about the topic. He encouraged student participation, and they enjoyed being so involved.”*

Program Description: This videoconference introduces students to Billy Lee, Washington’s manservant who lived and worked at Mount Vernon. At the time of Washington’s death in 1799, there were over 300 slaves on the five farms that made up Mount Vernon. As a working plantation, slaves worked from dawn to dusk in the fields, stables, and gardens, and at the mansion house caring for the Washington family and their many guests. A pre-videoconference lesson plan will provide primary documents that will help students write their own story about a slave at Mount Vernon to share with Billy Lee.

- ✚ Jess Skelton and Denise St.Hilaire third grade classes and fifth grade students in Nicole Osborne’s and Amanda Allen’s classes participated in a video conference connection entitled “Fractured Fairytales” with East Central Ohio Educational Service. The program was altered for the various grade levels.

Teacher Comments:

“The program was very interesting and engaging. The children seemed to be interested in the speaker and she used a lot of expression when reading to us. She also shared a story that we had read in class so there was a nice connection to something that we did in school. The children participated and seemed to enjoy the distance learning activity.”

Teacher Comment: *“The speaker was great. She really knew her content.”*

Program Description: Beginning with clues, objects from fairy tales for younger grades, and quotes from fairy tales for older grades, students will demonstrate current knowledge of traditional fairy tales. We then share a traditional version of a fairy tale, followed by a discussion about common story elements. Classes are encouraged to share a class fairy tale during the video conference as well. We also highlight parts of speech, and show how they make a story meaningful through the use of mad libs. Finally, a fractured fairy tale is shared (by fractured, we mean a different take from the standard traditional fairy tale).

- ✚ Mrs. Wright's Kindergarten classes participated in the program "Visit with St. Nick" straight from the North Pole. Students were overjoyed with their chance to speak with St. Nick and hear what he had to say about the North Pole.

Program Objectives: Students will learn about the climate at the North Pole, what animals live at the North Pole and about what reindeer eat how they stay warm, and other reindeer facts. Students will get to practice public speaking by asking Santa questions and by providing him with their Christmas List.

- ✚ Students at Sandown Central participated in a distance learning program with the Seacoast Science center during their enrichment day, A Day at The Coast. Students learned about horseshoe crabs and their habitat. Four programs were done with the Seacoast Science Center in Rye, NH during this special day.
- ✚ Cathy Riley's 5th grade class participated in the program "The Music & Games of Mount Vernon's Slave Families" Students heard songs that would have been sung by slaves working on one of Washington's five farms and discussed topics such as farming, slave life at Mount Vernon, and the Washington family. A pre-videoconference trunk of colonial instruments and games was sent to the school prior to the program.
- ✚ Author Patricia McKissack met with the students in grade 4 and 5 to share her experiences about writing *Stitchin' and Pullin': A Gee's Bend Quilt*. Students had the chance to ask the author questions during the conference.

Program Description: The book she shared is for students ages 9-12; "Mother and daughter, grandmother and granddaughter, aunt and niece, friend and friend. For a hundred years, generations of women from Gee's Bend have quilted together, sharing stories, trading recipes, singing hymns—all the while stitchin' and pullin' thread through cloth. Every day Baby Girl listens, watches, and waits, until she's called to sit at the quilting frame. Piece by piece, she puzzles her quilt together—telling not just her story, but the story of her family, the story of Gee's Bend, and the story of her ancestors' struggle for freedom." (Amazon.com)

- ✚ Danville's 4th grade students learned about "Owls From the Inside Out" with the Ann Arbor Hands on Museum in Ann Arbor, MI. An avian expert from Leslie Science and Nature Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan used live birds to compare and contrast the characteristics of different owl species. Students learned how owls have adapted to a predatory way of life. Students dissected real owl pellets to investigate the diet of a barn owl, learn about food chains and the role of avian predators in an ecosystem.

Teacher Comment: *"The program needed more time at the end for the students to dissect the pellets."*

- ✚ Mrs. Osborne's, Ms. Allen's and Mrs. Antonakos' classes participated in the program "We're All in This Together": The American Home Front in WWII" by the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, LA.

Teacher comments: *"Very informative, speaker had students engaged, good slides/computer visuals."*

"Fifth Grade students at Danville loved that Distance learning fieldtrip. The speaker was very knowledgeable and worked with the kids wonderfully!"

"The program was amazing and the students were interested every second we were in there. The presenter was very knowledgeable and had this amazing power point that students just loved. We listened to songs, read posters, and listened to actual speeches made during WWII."

One student made this comment, "It seems like the spirit the USA had during WWII was amazing. Why can't we be like that now?" The presenter answered by saying that was one of the most interesting questions he has ever been asked!

Program Description: The Home Front program begins with a brief background describing how the U.S. entered the war. Students then tackle four challenges of the Home Front: making all the materials we need to win, dealing with food shortages, and keeping America optimistic and "war-minded." Through photos, posters, editorial cartoons, songs, and speeches, students learn about the triumphs and mistakes that were made at home during the war.

- ✚ “Music in the Movies” by Cleveland Institute of music was presented to one of Mrs. Quigley’s second grade classes and all four of Mrs. Cook’s 4th grade classes.
Teacher Comment: “The presenters knew how to speak with and engage children. The content was interesting and supplemented my curriculum well. I especially liked learning how composers and directors decide on the “hits” in the scene that the music should accent. The students really enjoyed watching a movie scene and determining their own hits for the music.”

Program Description: *Music in Movies* is a fun look at the movies, with an ear towards learning how music helps to tell a story and heighten the emotional impact of movie scenes. A variety of musical and video examples will be used as we explore what underscores some of our favorite films, including *Ice Age*, *Harry Potter* and many more. No musical expertise is required!

TRMS:

- ✚ Groups of students in Ms. Mallett’s classes had the chance to connect with the Observatory on top of Mount Washington twice in October. One of the connections was done in Ms. Mallett’s classroom with our portable distance learning unit, which is available at the MS and HS.
See Mount Washington’s Distance Learning programs:
<http://www.mountwashington.org/education/distancelearning/>
- ✚ Another group of students with Ms. Mallett ventured to the Fort Mifflin Museum where they learned about the Life of a Revolutionary War Soldier.
Teacher Comment: “The program did not cover the material as advertised.”
Program Description: A Soldier’s Story: Revolutionary War Soldier Life
Students will learn how late 18th century soldiers lived prior to the war, how they were recruited, what type of training they received, what items they were issued, and what conditions were like in the field, especially at Fort Mifflin in 1777. Of particular interest will be how these men survived what historians have called, “the greatest bombardment the North American Continent has ever witnessed.” A “volunteer soldier” will be recruited from the group and outfitted in a Revolutionary War soldier uniform and all of the equipment required by a soldier in 1777.
- ✚ Mrs. Doucette class connected with the WWII museum for the program titled “Day of Infamy” by the WWII museum.

Program Description from the WWII Museum: A Day of Infamy The Japanese Attack on Pearl Harbor
In the war that changed the world it was the day that changed the war—a “Day of Infamy.” That day brought the United States into WWII, adding the strength and determination of the American people to the Allied arsenal as it struggled to defeat the Axis. Students explore Japanese and American motivations and actions through animated maps and both Japanese and American primary sources.

TRHS:

- ✚ Students in James Kelly’s class participated in the Titanic program with the Mariner’s Museum in Virginia.
Program Description: The moving stories of the *Titanic*’s passengers and crew are told using visual images and reproduction items. Students will examine the ill-fated ship, the lives of some of her passengers, and the events surrounding her 1912 sinking.
- ✚ Katie Strey’s and Dan Donovan’s Health class participated in “STD’s Are Not for Me.”
Teacher Comment: “Overall, the program provided good information. However, it seemed that there was a lot of direct instruction and information coming from the instructor. Not as much time for students to interact. I also thought that the last activity with the dice could have been debriefed and discussed more. There was a lot of information in one session—more time for questions at the end.”

COLLABORATIONS:

TRMS:

- ✚ Four of Carol Liss’ classes connected with four of Marcia Quigley’s technology classes at Danville to teach the younger students about internet safety. Middle school

students shared technology projects about internet safety. Projects ranged from skits, movies, glogster, posters, power points, stick animation and games.

- ✚ Erica Drenzo, Christy Hubley and Lois Paul met with Perrin Chick, to discuss the collaboration between Erica's science classes and four local providers. The collaboration will take place throughout the second half of the school year. The collaboration will help students learn about how the environmental changes in NH affect the animals, ocean, lakes, mountains and sky.

Sandown North:

- ✚ Students in Cathy Daenz AM class connected with a kindergarten teacher in Texas for a collaboration. This was their first connection so students introduced themselves and shared about the school and their favorite things to do in the fall.
- ✚ Cathy Daenz' afternoon kindergarten class connected with a kindergarten class in Louisiana. Similar to the afternoon class they introduced themselves, shared about the weather in NH during the fall, leaves and their favorite things to do in the fall. Students had a question and answer time and the students in Louisiana shared about their school and weather.

Danville Elementary School:

- ✚ Lisa Furman's first grade class connected with their friends in Texas at the St John's school. The students shared what they have learned about butterfly migration using Photo Story.
- ✚ Stephanie Mezquita's kindergarten class participated in a collaboration with students from Louisiana. Danville students shared about their school and the fall weather in NH. Louisiana shared a book about the sites and animals in Louisiana. During this video conference a special guest appeared to share a book with the students too, The Cat in the Hat.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: (District Staff)

- ✚ During August we gave a short presentation to the new staff members at Sandown North about Distance Learning. During this short presentation we connected with the Cleveland Museum of Art. The Museum shared the various programs they have available and how they can be used to enhance our classes.
- ✚ Staff at the HS and MS connected with The Library of Congress to learn about Civil War Poetry. The program shared poetry from the Civil War and explained the various pieces written during this time period. The Library Congress shared how teachers could access the archives to teach their students about Civil War Poetry.
- ✚ During the professional development day district staff had the chance to attend a video conference session with Doug Meyers from CILC. Doug shared with participants how to plan collaborations via distance learning. Doug discussed integrating Interactive Video Conferencing into curriculum and how to work effectively with providers and other partners.
- ✚ District staff connected a second time with the Library of Congress on the Staff Development Day. Participants learned how to access information from the Library of Congress site.
- ✚ Distance Learning training took place at the middle school and high school during the first semester. Teachers were shown how to operate the equipment and discussed how to solve simple problems that may arise. Proper distance learning etiquette was discussed also.

Please remember if you are interested in a program that many providers book at least 2 months in advance. Please contact us early for the best choice of times.