

Kendrick Comet

A Newsletter for the Kendrick Middle School Community

Volume 2, Issue 1

Carrie D. Kendrick Middle School

November 1997



1997-98 Teacher of the Year

Ms. Iris Gibbons has been selected to represent Kendrick Middle School as *Teacher of the Year*. Ms. Gibbons is the in-school suspension teacher and one of the coaches for girls basketball.

A native of Clayton County and graduate of Forest Park High School, Ms. Gibbons received her bachelor and master degrees in health and physical education from Georgia State University. Ms. Gibbons taught for two years in DeKalb County and has been in the Clayton County schools for the past twelve years. Before coming to Kendrick, she was at North Clayton Middle School.

Being an in-school suspension teacher gives Ms. Gibbons an opportunity to work with students individually. Structure, behavior modification, and self-control are stressed along with the academic subjects. She feels that to have the maximum impact, it is important to know every student assigned to in-school suspension.

BETA Club Growing

The Kendrick Beta Club is off to a very busy start. The club has grown to 42 members this year. Many members are preparing to attend the Beta State Convention in Macon on November 20-21. They will perform an original song which was selected as one of the top five for the state.

This year's officers are: Cassie Diaz, President; Jennifer Griffin, Vice-President; Jennifer Roberts, Secretary; and Joel Loftis, Treasurer. Among the many projects planned for this year is a canned food drive for Thanksgiving.

Reading in the Middle School

The reading program in Clayton County is now in its second year. Each child receives forty-five minutes of reading instruction each day in addition to instruction in the four academic areas. The reading skills that are key to success in each of the academic areas are emphasized. Instructional experiences in independent reading are also a component of the program because studies indicate that extensive independent reading benefits students in a number of ways: enhances reading comprehension, enlarges the student's body of knowledge, accounts for as much as a third of a student's vocabulary growth, and promotes reading as a lifelong activity.

The goal of the reading program is to promote progress in reading for every student. This involves improvement in reading skills and strategies, a positive attitude toward reading, and growth as indicated by increasing independence and competency in reading.

The needs of students fall into three categories. Those whose reading achievement is below their current grade need help in acquiring the skills necessary to become fluent readers. The fluent readers are making good progress but may be challenged by the requirements of using textbooks. They need instruction to strengthen their reading skills to help them meet this challenge. The students with high reading achievement need to be encouraged to read widely from all genres since success on the SAT is directly related to the ability to read and comprehend difficult passages of expository writing.

Because of Kendrick Middle School's commitment to preparing its students for success in high school and promoting lifelong independent learning, reading and writing, basic literary skills, are emphasized in all areas of the curriculum.

Forum Features

The sixth grade FORUM students meet on Thursdays and Fridays. They started the school year with a self-science study: EYE IDENTIFICATION. The students analyzed personality traits and identified learning intelligences and styles. Interesting personality visuals were created. The next step for these Comets is a study of the stars: SUPER HEROES. This study is sure to intrigue the students with its 3D imaging and allegorical thinking.

The seventh graders meet on Tuesdays. They are creating artifacts resembling those of ancient cultures. Research and creative thinking skills help students as they develop original skits depicting events based on historical fact. Each group will simulate an archaeological dig for the other groups to uncover.

Eighth grade FORUM students meet on Mondays. They took a pre-architecture venture to Paris, France, to study the basics. Where better to explore the meaning and elements of architecture than there! The first site was the Eiffel Tower. With the content building a success, plans for construction are underway. Methods of construction, weight stress involving domes, and design elements will clear the way for innovative structural developments.

The students are reading and enjoying the Reading Workshop. They choose what to read and tell each other about it by "deliver the letter, de sooner de better" friendly letter classroom postal service.

One of the reading skills took students to Paris, 1933. Using French phrases and words, students have set up a French exchange.

GAMA Update

The GAMA (Georgia Association of Media Assistants) chapter at Kendrick Middle is very active within the school. Students design and maintain the school's web page, produce the morning announcements, and assist in the media center in the mornings and afternoons.

GAMA officers are: Amber McLin, President; Raychel Jones, Vice-President; Takara Hicks, Secretary; Calandra Willingham, Treasurer; Shanelle Booker, Reporter; and Jermica Bradley, Historian.

Team News

Team 6D has been busily studying ancient Egypt. Students created wonderful booklets describing the mummification process. The new literature book has helped them explore exciting places and meet interesting characters while building their knowledge and skills. In science, students have explored the universe while creating rocket balloons to test Newton's Law of Motion. Decimals, hands-on equations, and problem solving have been the focus in math.

The students on Team 6A built an extensive exhibit as part of their study of Egypt. The displays include mummies, pyramids, hieroglyphics, original art, and facts about Egypt. The work was proudly displayed in the sixth grade hall. The science classes just completed the "Blast Off" unit which included studies of space, motion and forces, light, telescopes, and the Space Program. Upcoming units include the metric system, physical and chemical changes, the periodic table, rocks and minerals and electricity.

Red Ribbon Week a Success

Youth to Youth's sponsorship of Red Ribbon Week was a resounding success. The week was designed to promote a drug-free life. As part of Red Ribbon Week, Youth to Youth sponsored a pledge wall, poster contest, and door contest. The students raised \$40 through the "put a cap on drugs" fund raiser. The support of all who participated is greatly appreciated.

Yearbooks on Sale

The yearbooks for Carrie D. Kendrick Middle School are still available for \$25.00. Students may purchase them in the morning from Mrs. Brooks who is the yearbook sponsor. Take this opportunity to order a copy to keep for years to come to preserve the middle school memories.



Reading Aloud to Children

All parents are encouraged to read aloud to their children every day. The time spent in this simple act is a true gift to a child, for the ability to use language is the foundation for educational success. In 1983 a report by the Commission on Reading entitled *Becoming a Nation of Readers* asserted that "the single most important activity for building knowledge for the eventual success in reading, is reading aloud to children." Study after study has shown that top-ranked high school and college students were usually read to as youngsters.

Children are never too old or too young to be read to. Reading aloud is often seen as an appropriate activity for preschool children but not for the older child. However, the middle school child enjoys a good story as much as anyone. The key is to make it a positive time that the parent and child share. For this reason, care should be taken that books do not appear to be responsible for depriving the child of television time or play time. Ways to avoid this are to read to the child at a time when other activities are not going on such as at mealtime or bedtime and keep the reading time short, about ten minutes.

The benefits of reading aloud to children are many. Children who are read to develop language, good grammar, vocabulary, and improved writing skills. Their imagination, creativity, and curiosity are stimulated.

Through reading aloud the parent can provide experiences for the child that are impossible in real life. Such experiences enlarge the child's body of background knowledge. Research demonstrates that what a child learns is directly related to what he already knows because prior knowledge is essential for new learning to take place.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of reading aloud to a child is that it creates a bonding experience between the parent and the child and enhances self esteem since it provides a natural setting for a conversation. It is talking about the reading that makes reading aloud such a powerful tool in a day when it is often difficult to find ways to spend meaningful time with children.

Reading aloud can provide heroes and role models for a child. Often fictional characters in books such as *Reluctant Hero* by Philip Brady exemplify the highest moral values. By imagining what a favorite character would do in a given circumstance, the child has a reference point for building abstract thinking skills necessary for making good choices.

The public library is a good source of books. Most children like to help select what will be read. If it becomes obvious that a book is a poor choice, it should be set aside at once and another selected. Both the reader and the child should enjoy the reading.

If there are several children in a family, it is possible to find books they all can enjoy together. Gipson's *Old Yeller* is a perennial favorite enjoyable to almost anyone of school age or beyond.

Another form of reading aloud is to enjoy recorded books, especially while traveling by automobile. On an extended trip, this is a good way to pass those hours on the freeway between sight-seeing stops. A good choice for middle school students might be a recording of *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien. It is a wonderful classic children's fantasy, but its great length can be discouraging. Many shorter books are also available on tape.

During the middle school years is a time to read those classic novels which every child needs to know but may not read for himself. Some good choices are *Red Badge of Courage*, *The Call of the Wild*, and *Where the Red Fern Grows*. The chapters in such books provide natural starting and stopping places along with a built-in continuity.

The Read-Aloud Handbook by Jim Trelease is an excellent resource for anyone who wants to read aloud to children.



Kendrick Middle School Calendar

November

- 20 Begin 3rd Six Weeks
- 20 8th Basketball at Home vs. Lovejoy Middle
- 21 7th Basketball at Home vs. Lovejoy Middle
- 26-28 Thanksgiving Break - No School**

December

- 2 Chorus Concert at KMS 7:00 p.m.
- 4 8th Basketball at Jonesboro Middle
- 5 7th Basketball at Jonesboro Middle
- 11 8th Basketball at Home vs. Forest Park Middle
- 11 Band and Orchestra Concert PAC 7:30 p.m.
- 12 7th Basketball at Eagles Landing Middle
- 17 Progress Reports

**December 22- January 2
Winter Break - No School**

January

- 5 School Resumes
- 8 8th Basketball at Home vs. Adamson Middle
- 9 7th Basketball at Home vs. Adamson Middle
- 10 8th & 7th Basketball at Riverdale Middle
- 15 8th Basketball at Pointe South Middle
- 16 7th Basketball at Pointe South Middle
- 19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
No School**
- 20 Teacher In-Service - No School**
- 22 8th Basketball at North Clayton Middle
- 23 7th Basketball at North Clayton Middle
- 24 7th Basketball at Home vs. Mundy's Mill Middle
- 26 8th Basketball at Home vs. Mundy's Mill Middle
- 27 Eighth Grade Writing Assessment

All Thursday and Friday basketball games begin at 4:15 p.m. All Saturday basketball games begin at 10:00 a.m.

The Comet is a publication of Carrie D. Kendrick Middle School. Editor: Carolyn Head. Layout and Design: Susan McCauley.



1997-1998 Comet Basketball

7th Grade Girls

Deidra Baitey,
Keidra Baitey,

Bridget Benitez, Kameron Bradley, Valeri Burnough, Kennesha Grant, Andria Hall, Jamie Harvey, Takara Hicks, Coquisha Kirkpatrick, Meggan Reed, Erica Rose, Tracale Topps, Nakia Washington, and Danica West.

8th Grade Girls

Ashley Amiger, Rachel Cook, Cassie Diaz, Erica Hammond, Jennisha Mason, Jasmine McNair, Natasha Parham, Bethany Stevens, and Chassie Taylor.

Coaches: Dan Ray and Iris Gibbons
Managers: America Stone, Sheena Maine, and Charlena Coles

7th Grade Boys

Wole Ajayi, Jamall Brown, Darren Burton, Antwann Carson, Bryan Davis, Jeff Gilbert, Chris Hill, Kevin Johnson, Eric McBeth, Brent Ragsdale, Herbert Waters, and Artis Young.

8th Grade Boys

Sam Burton, Mark Coles, Tajuane Crummie, Antoine Harvell, Fred Hodges, Johnny Humphrey, Greg Lee, Padrick Marshall, Antonio Mitchell, Jermario Smiley, Chad Taylor, and Marcus Walker.

Coaches: Kelly Polk and David Hill
Managers: Karen Williams and Brandon Newton