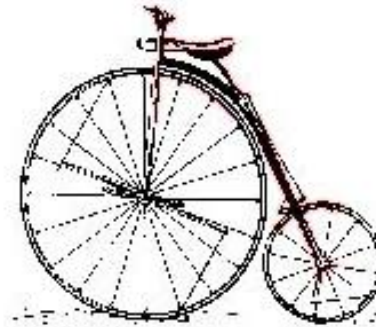


# Highwheeling Highlights



September – October 2008

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## Principal's Message

Dear parents and students, we hope you enjoy this first installment of our bi-monthly edition of Highwheeling Highlights for the 2008-2009 school year. I'd like to thank our PTA Historian, Jenny Mirmak, for collecting all the submissions and preparing this newsletter for publication. Due to a tight budget this year, we are making our Highwheeling Highlights newsletter electronic this year. By going paperless, we not only save on paper and printing costs, but we can deliver a color version of our Highwheeler Highlights by converting it to an Adobe Acrobat pdf document that can be delivered to you via email attachment.

To use a football metaphor, the students and staff are making forward progress, and there are many indicators that we are putting points on the scoreboard. First, our Academic Performance Index (API) rose from 889 in 2007 to 911 in 2008, a net gain of 22 points. This marked the first time in our school's history that we became a 900 school with respect to API. API scores are based on the California STAR tests that students in grades 2-6 take every year. All of our three major sub-groups (Asian, White, and English Language Learners) made statistically significant gains in student achievement.

In addition to an improved API, our facilities were completely renovated. As

many of you could see at Back-to-School Night, the school has a newly renovated interior and exterior. Exterior renovations included a new roof, new roof beams, wall panel replacements where needed, leveling the lunch "pit" for wheelchair compliance, and upgrading our parking lot. Major interior changes included a new HVAC system, a new intercom system, replacement of all accordion doors with hinged doors, and completely renovated bathrooms. Throw in new wall paint, new carpeting, and new acoustic ceiling tiles and you have a new-looking Northwood.

Another indicator of our success was becoming a 2008 Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. Of approximately 99,000 K-12 schools throughout the United States, Northwood Elementary was fortunate to be recognized as one of only 320 schools to earn this prestigious honor this year. At the official No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Blue Ribbon ceremony held in Washington D.C. on Tuesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008, Connie Fritsch joined me in receiving the award for our school. Mrs. Fritsch is the only teacher on staff who was a teacher at Northwood when our doors opened 28 years ago. We truly appreciate her extraordinary service to the children of Northwood.

Additionally, I am happy to report that our long-awaited shade structure was completed on Friday, October 24<sup>th</sup>!

Although this project took several years to complete, our students delighted in eating lunch in the shade for the very first time on Friday. In addition to blocking out 92% of UV rays, it's also a beautiful design that fits well with the architecture of our school. I would like to thank all who contributed to our shade structure by offering your time and raising money for our Jog-a-thon. I'd especially thank Mr. Travis Heflin who spent vast amounts of time seeking out corporate sponsors and helping to see this project through to completion.

Finally, the PTA would like to invite all Northwood Elementary families to our Blue Ribbon Barbecue and Shade Structure Dedication this Tuesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, from 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm. Hamburgers, hot dogs and drinks will be complimentary so please be sure to turn in your Blue Ribbon BBQ RSVPs that were sent home 2 weeks ago. The PTA needs these RSVPs in order to determine how many burgers and hot dogs to purchase prior to the event; we look forward to celebrating with your family under our new shade structure!



### Kindergarten News



We are off to a great start and are very excited about being Kindergartners! The students have been learning the school rules, classroom procedures, shapes and

color words. The Kindergartners enjoyed graphing and tasting apples. They had their first art lesson with Mrs. Cosgrove. The students were skilled at drawing shapes and created a train. We are looking forward to our Thanksgiving Feasts.

### First Grade News

First graders are very busy this time of year. We have already started library, computer lab and art lessons along with our core curriculum. First graders are enjoying the many aspects of the district's new math series called Math Expressions. First grade is also excited to have two new teachers to Northwood, Ms. Kim Vose and Ms. Paris Shahabi. Returning to Northwood after some time away is Mrs. Linda Gagnier. Mrs. Erin Bierman continues her time at Northwood, this year teaching a Kinder/First grade combo.

### Second Grade News

September was a busy month in Second Grade. Mrs. Meyer moved to third grade at Turtle Rock School and Mrs. Whitney Martin was hired to replace her in Room 10. The children in all three second grade classrooms have been busy reading about Johnny Appleseed, learning about safety in Health, starting a new Science Unit on Rocks, learning math facts, writing in journals, playing new PE games, and learning new centers. The second grade teachers have been learning about their new students and assessing each child in order to meet their academic needs.

October brings fun and exciting learning in math, culminating in a



math day on October 31, when parents are invited to the second grade rooms for pumpkin carving with their child.



### Third Grade News

Third Graders are off and Running! The third graders are off to a good start at Northwood Elementary. They are Off to Adventure in their reading, starting out with a story about an amazing adventure in one school's Lost and Found. They are also discovering adventures in their new math program, Math Expressions. The students are enjoying using their new white boards and math materials, and they are getting quite proficient at creating proof drawings and word problems. Their cursive handwriting is also coming along nicely. The third graders are getting better at writing in cursive each day! In social science, the students are learning about the four regions of California, and soon they will be learning about the Sun, Moon, and Stars in science. They will also be using their Step Up to Writing strategies to write paragraphs about what they are learning as well as using these skills to write creatively. In October, the students started preparing for their monthly projects, which will alternate between book reports and poetry presentations.

With such a great start, there are sure to be many exciting adventures ahead for these amazing third graders!

### Fourth Grade News



Where did September go? It seems just like yesterday we began the school year. Already the 4th graders have finished their first classroom novel, *Dear Mr. Henshaw*. Now that our library is up and running, the students are taking part in the Reading Counts Program. Parents, you should have received a letter explaining the program along with a sheet showing your child's lexile level. In Social Studies, we have been learning about California's 4 regions and the students are working on a Regions Postcard project. In Science, the students have been studying food chains and food webs. Finally, in Mathematics, multiplication has been the focus along with the introduction of properties and algebraic problem solving. As you can see, this will be a fast paced year!

### Fifth Grade News



Aye- Aye Captain!  
Northwood Elementary's fifth grade classes visited the Ocean Institute at Dana Point on October 2. The students boarded the tall ships, *The Pilgrim* and *The Spirit!*, to experience a day in the life of a sailor aboard a tall ship during the 1830's. By living the history, our students are able to relate the past to themselves. Sail handling, moving cargo, Shanty singing and many more activities

were experienced by our students. This fieldtrip was sponsored by the Ocean Institute.

In other areas of the curriculum, we are problem solving with manipulatives in math; studying the difference between plant and animal cells, photosynthesis and cellular respiration in science; and learning specific writing techniques in Language Arts. In their first essay, called the Memory Snapshot, a model lesson from the UCI writing project, our students are learning to “focus their lens” on the details when they write. Students use their own personal photographs as catalysts for reliving the moment and bring their memory and writing alive with details. We are looking forward to our student’s great progress as the year continues.

### **Sixth Grade News**

The 6<sup>th</sup> Graders at Northwood Elementary went to the Bower’s Museum for a field trip. There we learned about the Terra Cotta Warriors and a man named Shi Huangdi. Shi Huangdi was a brutal man because whoever disobeyed him had a risk of being killed. Since he was cruel to other people he built statues of the Terra Cotta Warriors to protect his spirit from other spirits. It was very interesting because we got to see how the Terra Cotta Warriors were made. This was a great experience for 6<sup>th</sup> Graders because we were able to learn about another country and its history. The 6<sup>th</sup> Graders had a great time at the Bower’s Museum.

Author: Ashley Fuchs

### **Medicines at School**

We’ve had a few parents sending their children to school with medicines lately, so I thought this might be a good time to review how we handle medication at school.

Parents are encouraged to work out a schedule of giving medication at home, outside school hours whenever possible. If the medication is to be given at school, use the Parent and Physician Request for Medication form which is available from the school and also on the IUSD website under Health Services. Use a separate form for each medication. New forms are required for changes in medication and these forms are valid for the current school year.

If the medicine needs to be administered at school and it is a prescription, the medicine must arrive in the original container, and be properly labeled by a registered pharmacist. Over-the-counter medicine must come in the original container and be marked with the student’s name. Adults are to transport all medications to or from school.

Please contact the Northwood Elementary school health office if you have questions or concerns about medicines at school. Thank you.

Vicki McRobbieralls RN  
School Nurse

## Northwood Teachers Rated Highly

We are pleased to report that for the 2008-2009 school year, 100 percent of the teachers at our school are "highly qualified" as defined by the federal No Child Left Behind law. Federal law gives the parents the right to request information about the certification of the teaching staff. Please direct your inquiries to Principal Dr. Stuart Payne.

## Box Tops for Education

The three classes that collected the most box tops are:

- #1 Mrs. Nakano's Kindergarten with 216 box tops
- #2 Mrs. Mroch's Fifth Grade with 190 box tops
- #3 Mrs. Trafford's Second Grade with 182 box tops



Prizes go to one class in grades K-3 and one class in grades 4-6. Congratulations to Mrs. Nakano's and Mrs. Mroch's classes for collecting the most box tops.

## The Yearbook Needs You!



Are you a photographer? Do you enjoy creative endeavors? Are you organized? The Northwood Elementary Yearbook Committee needs people to help create memories. We need photographers, people to upload photos to the

Lifetouch website, help with advertisement and book orders, and help with page layout. Our yearbook is completely digital and will be full color this year. If you are interested in any of these tasks, please get in touch with yearbook co-chairs Liz Brine (email: [brine1@cox.net](mailto:brine1@cox.net)) or Jenny Mirmak (email: [jen.mirmak@gmail.com](mailto:jen.mirmak@gmail.com)).

## Juice it Up Fridays



live life juiced™

Every Friday after school, Juice it Up will be out front selling smoothies for \$4 each. 25% of the proceeds will go to the Outdoor Education fund for 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades. Enjoy an after school treat and give to the fund at the same time!

## Weekly PTA Email

The Northwood PTA sends a weekly email listing upcoming school events. If you are not currently on the list and wish to receive the weekly updates, please send an email to Lynn Dann (email: [LynnDann@cox.net](mailto:LynnDann@cox.net)) with "Subscribe to Northwood PTA Email" in the subject line.



## Harvest Cup Soccer Tournament 2008

### Boys 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

I had the pleasure of coaching 14 hardworking and extremely motivated soccer players. I only had a few practices with them but they became a team instantly and had a great time together. Our team played on Friday night and the boys dominated the entire game. We were ahead 1-0 by a great goal from Connor Berger until the last few minutes when the opposing team tied the game. Unfortunately we lost in penalty kicks but the boys had a lot of fun. The boys are already looking forward to next year's Harvest Cup. **GO NORTHWOOD!** The boys that participated are: Curtis Nava, Morgan Foster, Sam Kim, Jason Peters, Denny Lee, Timothy Jou, Matthew Jou, Jona Lucero, Dylan Brine Connor Berger, Samuel James, Jared Ruffin, Myles Drye, Mouncef Lazim,

Coach: Gabriel Nava  
Assistant Coach: Paul James

Larbah, Samantha Lee, Shelby Marland, Annika Martinez, Elinan Milgrom, Beth Moore, Saja Nasrula, Brianna Rickels, Sydney Saxton, Abby Shobe, Blaysen Varnadoe, Reanna Villegas, Sara Wasefi, and Hailey Wirta. GREAT JOB girls! You Rock!

Coach: Trisha Saxton

A "BIG" thank you to Curtis Nava, Trisha Saxton and Paul James for coaching our Northwood Team!

### Upcoming Events

Minimum Days	Oct 24, 27, 29-31
No School (conferences)	Oct 28
Blue Ribbon BBQ	Oct 28
Family Night Out at Northwood Pizza	Nov 13
Picture Make-up day	Nov 18
Gift Wrap Delivered	Nov 21
No School	Nov 27-28
Family Night Out at Pat & Oscars	Dec 3
Barnes & Noble Book Fair at Tustin Marketplace	Dec 3



### Girls 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

On Sunday, October 19, 2008, the Northwood Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades girls participated in the City of Irvine's Harvest Cup Soccer Tournament. Northwood was matched up against the Deerfield Falcons. The girls battled tough throughout the game; however, Deerfield's experience prevailed. Deerfield ended up playing in the championship game falling to Bonita Canyon. Wait until next year! Team members included: Dominique Ambat, Serena Junejo, Hajar

