

Lincoln Options

Opus

*A community dedicated
to learning, kindness
& celebration!*



December 2013

Calendar

December

6 – Early Release (district-wide),
12:32 p.m. dismissal
10 – OCC Meeting 6:30 p.m.
12 – OSD Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.
10/23 – 1/3 – **Winter Break**

January

6 – School Resumes
8 – District Late Start, No AM bus
14 – OCC Meeting 6:30 p.m.
16 – Growing Up Male 6:15 p.m.
17 – Early Release,
12:32 p.m. dismissal
20 – NO SCHOOL
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
23 – Growing Up Female 6:15 p.m.
1/27 – 1/31
Washington Children's Choice
28 – OCC Meeting 6:30 p.m.
31 – Early Release,
12:32 p.m. dismissal

*What are they really pointing at?
Find out in this issue of the Opus!*

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Maribeth's class rescues raspberries from morning glory

Greetings from the Options Community Council President

I love the change of seasons here in the Northwest. Today, it is a beautiful fall morning. It's a bit blustery and cool, but with a promise of some sunshine for the time being. Our classrooms are taking advantage of the season with field trips to Kennedy Creek to see the salmon spawn, more work out in the garden and visits to the wetlands. It is great to hear about the adventures kids have at Lincoln.

Parents and staff are also busy. Cate Pellicer recently held her second successful used clothes drive fundraiser. Cate also introduced a new fund raiser which recycles used electronics; bring your old cell phones and laptops into a box in the office where they will be responsibly recycled, with a financial donation for each item given to the Lincoln program. Our wonderful librarian, Donna Dannenmiller, held a record-breaking book and toy sale to benefit the library. There were so many books in the gym I could have stayed all night scanning the titles. Look for information about the Annual Pledge Drive coming home soon for ways you can donate and contribute to the financial well being of our school program.

The Lincoln Options community works hard to provide the resources necessary to offer students a dynamic education in a warm and welcoming environment. This important work, completed in a socially and environmentally responsibly manner, contributes to making this school special. It makes me proud to be part of the effort.

Cheers,
Rob Campbell

Used Book + Toy Sale Huge Success!

Thanks to the Lincoln community for supporting the twelfth annual library fundraiser. We earned over \$6,100 the first weekend in November!

Parents and students who helped with the many aspects of this amazing event were acknowledged at a recent Tuesday morning assembly. Several key volunteers were not in attendance to be recognized. **Catherine Young** and **Steve Hornsby** helped out, almost non-stop, before and during the two day setup *and* the two day sale! **Shannon Prescott**, **Barbara Weaver** (retired Options teacher) and her husband, **Linc**, put in very long hours. **Sydney Bonauto** (alum) became a skilled cashier and salesperson. **Claire Canaan** (alum) showed up for the haul away and clean up at the end of the sale.

IF YOU MISSED OUT ON ALL THE FUN THIS YEAR... PLAN TO VOLUNTEER NEXT YEAR!

(Remember: We collect adult and kids books all year round!)

Parents Can Reduce Stress Over the Winter Break by Donna Dannenmiller

“The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.”

- Commission on Reading, *Becoming a Nation of Readers*

TV and video games add physical, emotional and psychological static and clutter to our lives. Create a media blackout or greyout program. [Brainstorm with your family, before the break, a few activities that feed body, mind and soul.](#) (Some families have game nights together or with friends... Draw while listening to an audiobook... Explore a nature trail never seen in winter... Have a play day in the snow... Volunteer at the animal shelter or food bank...)

Plan to do less, leaving down-time for relaxing, creating, thinking, dreaming and playing in the fresh air.

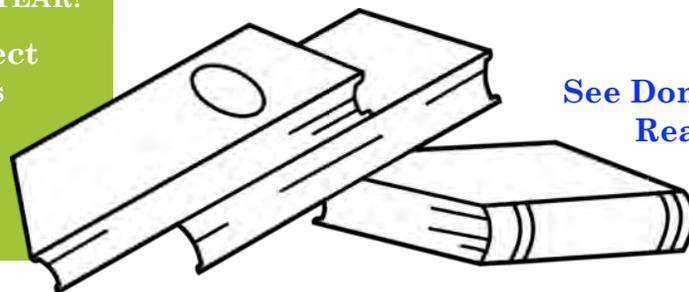
Singing, listening to or playing music is a known stress reducer.

Sugar stresses the entire body. Set boundaries on sugar intake.

Plan a Family Read Aloud to share together by reading aloud or listening to an audiobook.

Plan ahead when visiting friends or relatives for an extended stay. Take extra books (or audiobooks) along that you have loved, for young friends, cousins and others to read while your children are reading.

Also, if you need to self regulate... Remember that being in nature-- and being in gratitude-- works miracles!



See Donna for customized Read Aloud suggestions!

Lincoln Options Philosophy & a Culture of Standardized Assessment

by *Melissa Minjares*

The Options Community Council is currently working to determine how best to engage our larger community in a discussion about our program's philosophy. We want to explore how our philosophy, the current national culture of standardized testing (that dates back to the first Bush administration) and the new push toward the Common Core standards work together or at odds in our school program. In order to provide background for a series of Fact Sheets and community discussions planned for the coming months, we wanted to take this opportunity to remind you about the founding philosophy behind the Options Program at Lincoln. Here is the Statement of Philosophy from the Options Community Handbook.

* *Philosophy*

We believe that:

- *Each child is a unique being, developing at an individual pace, and with distinct interests.*
- *Curiosity and creativity are innate in all children, and that a school can enhance the child's natural drive to explore and experiment in the real world.*
- *Thought and expression develop out of experience.*

Sir Alec Clegg, a contemporary English educator, said that the purpose of education "is not so much to convey knowledge as it is to excite a determination in the child to acquire it for himself and to teach him how to go about acquiring it." (Charles F. Silberman, The Open Classroom Reader)

Overview

The activities of the classroom will be related to the interests and abilities of the students, and the curriculum goals will be in line with their developmental levels. With this approach, students do not fall behind or move ahead of themselves, because they are not judged against anyone but themselves.

They function successfully at the level they are developmentally ready for and move on when their personal development indicates readiness.

Reading, writing and arithmetic will be taught within the framework of a holistic program. The classroom will reflect the potpourri of life: reading is how one finds out about that in which one is interested; math is what one uses in conducting the business of one's life; and writing is one form of communication. These skills are necessary within the framework of a complete life—at least in our society. These are not isolated subjects to be pored over for prescribed amounts of time. Rather, they are an integrated part of the pursuit of knowledge of a special or general interest by an individual or group.

Some children cannot learn to capacity, and, in fact, reject much of what is presented to them when they are in isolated settings, apart from community interests and not in control of their direction. Within the Options program, adult roles will be as facilitators, experience providers, assistants, resources and guides. Children will develop skills in self-control, responsibility and decision-making and can thereby enhance their self-image. The Options classroom provides a developmentally-based curriculum that takes children from where they are "in total" and gives them opportunities and equipment to move forward at their own rates (in areas of their specific interest), enabling them to acquire life support skills (the basic education) in the process.

We hope you will take some time to reflect on our statement of philosophy. Perhaps you can engage in some conversation with other parents and community members, and prepare to engage in the next steps we need to take as a community to help our children flourish. Look for more information and opportunities to connect in the coming weeks.

* *From the Options Community Handbook: As amended April 19, 2012.*

http://www.lincolnoptions.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Options_Handbook_2012.pdf

Garden Work Parties *by Paul Rocks*

Most gardeners in the northern hemisphere look forward to fall and winter as a time to rest— not at Lincoln Options. On Friday, November 15, we had a successful work party in the garden. The garden committee started having work parties on Fridays to include the student body in the work of maintaining the garden. The wind and rain did not stop the *twenty* Lincoln adults that showed up, nor the eight classrooms that came out. Some of our winter projects: putting the outdoor beds to rest, planting garlic and flower bulbs, caring for the food bank beds, tending the raspberries and starting seeds. Our next phase in the garden is to plant lettuce starts in the greenhouse. The current plan is to share half of what we grow with the Thurston County Food Bank. The other half will go directly into our cafeteria. Our next work party is **Friday, December 6th from 9-12**. Come join us if you can.



Getting the garlic in!

Pledge Drive: Every Piece Counts *by Melissa Minjares*

Did you know that the Options Program at Lincoln exists because of you? The Options Community Council manages an annual budget of nearly \$30,000 that pays for essential aspects of the Options program like Spanish, the garden and the chickens, Harvest Festival, Camp Elderberry, classroom budgets for field trips, art supplies and other special activities. These all help to support the Options philosophy of educating the whole child.

Every fall we ask all Lincoln families to make a pledge that fits into their budget to help sustain our program. Our goal is 100% participation. You should have received an orange colored pledge form with your mailing of class lists in August. If you haven't turned it in to the office yet, there is still time. Also, if you work for the state (or are a retiree), you can have your pledge deducted automatically from your paycheck by signing up through the [Combined Fund Drive](http://www.cfd.wa.gov/) (<http://www.cfd.wa.gov/>); choose "Options Community Council- 0315737" as your charity. You can make a one-time donation, or donate through monthly automatic deductions from your paycheck.

The Fundraising committee is also working to create an easy portal for online giving through dwolla.org, available soon through the Lincoln Options website.

Whether you can make a one time pledge of \$10 or \$100 dollars, or a monthly, sustaining contribution of \$20 or \$50 through automatic salary contributions or bank deductions, every little bit counts and helps make Options at Lincoln the terrific program we know and love.

Who is Ruben Darío?

by *Marcela Abadi*

Our sister school in Santo Tomas, Nicaragua is called Ruben Dario, the name of a famous poet. (Just like our school is named after a famous president!) Ruben Darío (1867-1916) was born in Nicaragua. Darío developed a highly original poetic style that founded a tradition; he was a modernist poet who changed the path of Latin American poetry. The modernista movement effected a complete renovation in Spanish verse and prose style. Darío's influence on contemporary Spanish writers was immense. He revived and modernized poetry in Spanish on both sides of the Atlantic through his experiments with rhythm, innovative meter, use of daring metaphors and imagery. His poems flourished at the end of the 19th century. His poems, stories and articles have been translated into English, French, Italian, Portuguese, German and Scandinavian.

Here is a poem by him, *Morning Routine*. Thanks to Jill Lieske for bringing it to my attention that most people might not know the connection of Ruben Dario School and the poet.

Morning Routine

Clear morning hours
when a thousand golden trumpets
cry to the divine daylight!
Hail the brightness of the majestic Sun!

Anguished as we are in our ignorance
of what's to come, let us greet
the fragrance filled vessel
urged on by ivory oars.

Whether Epicurean or dreamers
let us love this glorious Life,
always wearing flower garlands
always bearing torch alight!



Let us squeeze from the bunches
of our transitory life
the pleasures for which we live
and the glorious sparkling wine.

Let us spin the yarn of Love,
Let us do good for its own sake
And then sleep as would the just
Forever and ever.

Science + Literature + History + Art = Learning by Paul Rocks

Did you ever wonder who named the clouds? To find out we read a book from the Lincoln library titled *The Man Who Named the Clouds*.



Luke Howard lived in the 1700s. He was an avid nature watcher, especially anything to do with weather. He always kept a nature journal. When Luke tried to talk to his friends about his observations of clouds, he had some difficulty. Everyone had a different way to describe the clouds. Luke began to sort the clouds into different groups; he used Latin names to describe the different characteristics of clouds.

The clouds high up, the ones that look like horses tails, he called **cirrus**, Latin for curly hair.

The clouds that look like puffy cotton balls, Luke named **cumulus**, Latin for heap.

Luke noticed that many clouds are spread out in layers; the Latin for layer is **stratus**.

Latin for rain is nimbus or nimbo. A **nimbostratus** cloud is a layered raincloud, a very common cloud in the Pacific Northwest.

Luke Howard put together combinations of the clouds he saw: **cirrocumulus, cirrostratus and stratocumulus**. A total of about ten clouds can be described using Luke Howard's method. Even three hundred years later we use this method. Go look outside, what kind of clouds do you see?

What IS That Thing? by Michael Dempster

Right now, of course, we're flying through space, sucked by gravity to a big round rock we call planet Earth.

The whole system that includes our planet and our star, the Sun, is so big, and moves so smoothly and steadily, that we're usually not even aware of the dance of this grand carousel (although we've all been riding on it since we were born!). Shadows here on Earth give us some clues.

Continued on page 8



What IS That Thing? *continued*

Since ancient times, people have watched shadows sweep across the ground, and lengthen and shorten. One ancient technique for keeping track of the seasons involved the construction of an **analemma**, a figure eight-shaped plot of the position of the sun at its highest point of each day, which happens at noon. Marking where a shadow falls each day at noon creates that beautiful figure eight.

Since 2005 an analemma has been under construction in the school's "bus loop," on the east side of the gym. White paint on the asphalt marks the position of the tip of the shadow of the lamppost near the corner of the garden, at exactly noon. Written in black on top of each white paint mark is the date when the pole's shadow reached that spot.

This concept is not an easy one for children to understand, but this discussion and the drawings below may help you and your child get a sense of what is going on out there with Lincoln's analemma.



WHAT IS THAT THING?

REMEMBER THIS IDEA?

OLYMPIA IN SUMMER, WE LEAN IN TOWARD THE SUN.

OLYMPIA IN WINTER, WE LEAN BACK AWAY FROM THE SUN.

WELL, **NOON** HAPPENS EVERY DAY WHEN

OLYMPIA TURNS MOST DIRECTLY TOWARD THE SUN.

EQUATOR

N. POLE

SO... AT NOON IN OLYMPIA, SHADOWS ARE SHORTER IN SUMMER, AND LONGER IN WINTER.

THE SUMMER SUN IS HIGH IN THE SKY AT NOON.

THE WINTER SUN IS LOW IN THE SKY AT NOON.

THE **ANALEMMA** IN THE BUS LOOP SHOWS WHERE THE SHADOW OF THE LAMP POST ENDS AT EXACTLY NOON ON DIFFERENT DATES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

THE SHORTEST SHADOW HAPPENS ON THE DAY OF THE SUMMER SOLSTICE, AROUND JUNE 21 EVERY YEAR.

... AND THE LONGEST SHADOW HAPPENS AROUND DECEMBER 21, ON THE WINTER SOLSTICE!

HERE'S A FUN WAY TO SEE HOW SHADOWS ARE LONGER IN WINTER THAN IN THE SUMMER:

- CUT OUT THE L-SHAPED "PERSON ON THE GROUND" ON THE DOTTED LINES.
- PUT A PIN THROUGH THE PERSON'S HAT.
- PIN THE CUTOUT ON THE X, BELOW.
- TURN THE CUTOUT SO ITS ARROW LINES UP WITH THE "SUMMER" ARROW. SEE HOW SHORT THE PERSON'S SHADOW IS?
- NOW PIVOT THE CUTOUT TO THE "WINTER" ARROW. SEE HOW LONG THE PERSON'S SHADOW WILL BE?

SUN'S RAYS

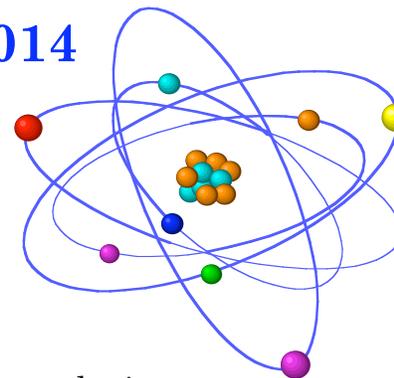
← SUMMER

← WINTER

PERSON ON GROUND CUTOUT

COME AND SEE THE ANALEMMA!

Mark Your Calendars: Lincoln Science Fair on February 12, 2014 by Paul Rocks



Dear Families,

It's time to start thinking about the Lincoln Science Fair. Last year many kids and families participated in our science fair; there were lots of great examples of thinking, communicating, experimenting and learning.

What is the Lincoln Science Fair?

The Lincoln Science Fair is a non-competitive exhibition of K-5 student-created science projects. Adults and other students view projects and offer compliments. Projects should be guided by an open-ended question. When answering their research question, students can conduct an experiment, design a field study, use the engineer design process or build a model. This is not a time for students to conduct a literature-based project (e.g. a study of birds). It would, however, be fine to do a field study on the types of birds in Olympia. Adults can help with these projects but please just remember this is all about kids developing into strong science thinkers.



A Special Note to 5th Grade Families

I want all 5th grade students to participate in the science fair. One of my goals is for all students to have a firm understanding of the scientific method or inquiry process when they leave our program. This will give them a big advantage when entering middle school and

beyond. If you think it would be a challenge for your family to pull off a science project, talk to me and we will work out a solution. We have many adults in our community with strong backgrounds in science who would be happy to help.



Dates & Info

I will send out more information after Winter Break. Until then, have conversations about the things your student finds curious. **The Science Fair will be on February 12, @ 6:30 p.m. in the Lincoln Gym.** Is it on your calendar?



-GROWING UP-

A Lincoln Elementary OCC Sponsored FAMILY NIGHT for parents and their 10-12 year old pre-teens

This Planned Parenthood program encourages family communication about issues of sexuality and adolescence, as well as provides factual information about the physical and emotional changes of puberty. Past participants praise the presenters for their ability to make youth and adults feel more comfortable discussing challenging subjects:

"I liked the way information was communicated factually without judgments attached." (Mother)

"It brought the subject up in an atmosphere that was comfortable and will stimulate further conversation." (Father)

"I liked that we talked about things I normally wouldn't." (10 year old girl)

"I liked that I got to learn about how my body is going to start to change." (11 year old boy)

"I was afraid to approach the subject of sexuality and this program opened the door to communication." (Mother)

The evening includes a short video, group activities and games, discussion, snack, a time to ask anonymous questions of high school peer educators, and tips and resources for parents to keep family communication going! **Groups are led by Tim McLeod and Shambricia Spencer.**

GROWING UP (Guys):	Thursday, Jan 16 th 2014
GROWING UP (Girls):	Thursday, Jan 23 rd 2014
TIME:	6:15-8:30 pm
PLACE:	Lincoln Elementary (in Library)
FEE:	Suggested donation of \$25/family (No one is turned away for lack of funds!)
REGISTRATION:	Fill out a form in the Front Office by 1/7/14



News to Note:

- Families are always welcome to join our Weekly Assembly each Tuesday at **9:00 a.m.** Assemblies are a time of celebration, community and lots of great music! Our top-notch Parent Band is full of singers, harmonica, tambourine, trumpet, guitar, drums and so much more.

- Keep up to date on Lincoln happenings by subscribing to the LincolnOptions.org website. It's a great resource and posts are updated regularly. Do you have school news to share on the website? Email opuseditor@gmail.com.

- If you have an item for the Opus please forward it to opuseditor@gmail.com. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month for the next month's issue. Questions? Feedback?