

YNP El Portal School
September 21, 2009
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www.elportalelementary.com

Mariposa County Unified School District



Yosemite Park High School
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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FRI 9/25 Yosemite Facelift Field Trip – all grades
FRI 9/25 Pro Day – all students dismiss at 1:06 pm
WED 9/30 Mono Lake Field Trip – grades 1 – 6
FRI 10/2 Pro Day – all students dismiss at 1:06 pm
FRI 10/9 Project Pluton field trip – grades 4-5-6
FRI 10/9 Pro Day – all students dismiss at 1:06 pm

Yosemite Facelift for K-6 this FRIDAY

On Sept. 25, all El Portal students will travel to Yosemite Valley to participate in the Yosemite Facelift, organized by Ken Yager. Student groups are assigned different areas around the valley to clean up. Gloves, bags and all supplies are provided by the work crews. We need parents to join us! **Students need to BRING A LUNCH, snacks and drinks in a BACKPACK. Wear comfortable shoes (no sandals), light coat for morning and clothes for walking and cleaning.** We will be leaving at 8:00 am and returning at 1:00 p.m. The school lunch program can provide a bag lunch for the same cost as hot lunch, but **must be ordered by Wednesday.** We also need **school approved DRIVERS.** Our bus will not hold all the students. Let us know if you can drive or chaperone!

FIELD TRIP REMINDER: Please return your permission slip for the Sept. 25 Yosemite Facelift field trip (grades K-6) and the Sept. 30 Mono Lake field trip (grades 1-6). We do need parent drivers for the Mono Lake trip so contact the school if you can drive and to see if you meet the district's volunteer driver criteria.

We will host a preview of **THE NATIONAL PARKS: AMERICA'S BEST IDEA**, a Ken Burns film featuring Shelton Johnson and many others, on **Thursday, September 24, at 11 a.m.** The public is welcome to attend. The entire film will begin on your home TV on Sunday, September 27 on PBS, and will include six episodes. We encourage you to watch it with your family.

On Friday, Sept 25, for their **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY** ("pro day") activity, all teachers, Mr. Xavi, and Ms. Weber attended an on-site training on our Step Up to Writing curriculum that we have been using in all grade levels for the past 3 years. We have seen very positive results, and our trainer was excellent. Last week teachers spent their Pro Day writing their professional goals for the year and putting their math and language arts plans on a year-long calendar to that all they hope to accomplish gets done.

SWIM-A-THON El Portal School students swam 5,067 laps during the Swim-a-thon. That is 38.39 miles! Please help your children collect the money from the people who pledged for them. All money is due by October 8th. We will have a pizza party after all pledge money is returned to the school. Our goal is \$6500.00!

CLASSROOM NEWS

From Mr. Marcis: To practice name writing at home please encourage your child to start with a capital letter and follow with lower case letters. Rehearse their last name in the same way, also. Does your child have your phone number memorized? Our Room 1 parent, Leslee Whatley, would prefer to communicate with you via email. I will send home a paper for you to write your email on and to send back to school. If you don't use email then just write your phone number. The sight words that we are using in class are [I, a, see, my, like, the]. Look for student writing coming home that uses those words. Ask your child to read for you. Word-less books will be coming home also for your child to create a story using the pictures.

From Mrs. Bown: In art, we looked at the painting "Peaceable Kingdom". Students tried to guess the name by looking at the elements in the painting. Then we created watercolor paintings of our own and gave each a title. Students practiced giving positive feedback to another artist by telling him/her ways that they thought their title fit the painting. We will continue to guess titles of famous paintings. Your child can practice titling their artwork at home or guessing titles of artwork they see around them! (Thanks Mr. Sakols for bringing us this program from the DeYoung museum!)

From Mrs. Sprague: Last week the 2nd graders showed how much they enjoy working on their math! They know several games that help with their counting, adding and subtracting. Ask your child about the math games he/she has learned and have your child show you what he/she has been learning with some dry beans or rocks. We also started learning about data and graphs. You can help at home by having your child take a survey of how many cars are on your street or how many people have dogs in your neighborhood (Be creative). Have your child record what he or she finds using tally marks.

From Mr. Moore: In Math the 4th graders continue to review skills. We have been working on adding larger numbers, and reviewing multiplication facts. They recently took the chapter 3 test. The 3rd graders have been working on putting numbers in order from greatest to least and remembering rounding facts. 3rd graders recently took their chapter 2 test. 3rd graders read a realistic story this week called "The Waterfall". In the story we looked for similes and metaphors. Ask your child about some of the creative comparisons the author made (the sun was as hot as a...) In writing we completed another thank you letter and we wrote an essay about what it takes to be a good friend. We did two drafts, adding our "red" sentences. Ask your child what that is! We are also working on our cursive writing. The 2nd and 3rd graders learned about California's 4 major regions. We worked on the study skills of looking for main ideas and supporting details. In Science we have begun our unit called structures of life. We examined seeds.

From Ms. Medema: Last week we read a story about the Titanic which gave an account of the ship's sinking and a family's survival. It also described the expedition that discovered the shipwreck in 1985. It's usually one of their favorites of the year. We have been brainstorming story ideas for the story telling contest. There are two choices: A day in the life of my shoes or a Monterey Bay Aquarium adventure. We will be working on how to make it very interesting to hear aloud. We started our typical afternoon schedule this week with art, music, library, PE, and computer skills. During these times students will be with Mr. Sakols. If you have questions regarding this time, please give me a call.

From Mr. Sakols: Last week we began studying early European explorers. Students in my class will all study an explorer and make a brochure in hopes of recruiting a crew for their expedition. In class we are learning to take notes from what we read. This not only helps reading comprehension, but also provides an outline that can be used for writing. The students just finished a five paragraph essay about the Age of Exploration. On Tuesday I started reading aloud The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth George Speare. This novel is about a girl who lives in early colonial America who becomes accused of witchcraft.