

COVENANT LINES

8TH EDITION

A Publication of the Eastside Christian School Board

A Year of Jubilee:

It is amazing to think that last year at this time we had not enrolled any students, nor hired any teachers or an administrator. The LORD certainly has blessed Eastside abundantly in 1997. We look to Him as we begin a new year as the giver of every good and perfect gift. May He continue to guide our endeavors to educate His children.

Multigrade Magnetism:

After teaching for her first semester at Eastside, Miss Ruth Dykstra observes that both she and her students (grades 1–3) are enjoying their new educational setting. Together they are discovering that some of the seeming staples of education, like classroom doors and school bells, are not primary tools to achieve their goals. Miss Dykstra gives thanks to God for the opportunity to teach such “enthusiastic students.” She explains that her First Graders challenge themselves to complete the entire Bible test—she plans one-third of the test for first and all for third. On the other hand, she reports that her Third Graders are curious about the new Open Court Reading Program that the First Graders are working on. They plead to spend a few minutes looking at the First Graders’ “Big Book,” and wish they could take the time to read the eighteen mini books in the First Grade Open Court Library. Miss Dykstra says that she gives thanks to God “for the privilege of teaching at Eastside Christian.”

As a School Board we are equally grateful for Ruth’s devotion, enthusiasm and expertise.

A Name at Last:

At their November meeting, the Fundraising, Fundamentals and Fellowship group adopted a new name. These supporters of the school, who gather on the third Thursday of the month (September–May) are now known as the Eastside Promoters. They have dropped the “FFF” title in name, but not in spirit or purpose.

Music Program:

Our music program was the focus of the November “FFF” meeting. For those who were unable to enjoy this very informative, energetic and encouraging presentation, we have asked Marilyn Adams to provide our readers with a brief overview of the work she, Lori Pastoor and Kristi Thompson

are dedicating their talents to this year. (By way of introduction, you should know that Kristi is teaching music classes to grades 1–3 and also to grades 4–6. Marilyn teaches a class in music appreciation to grades 7–9, and Lori directs our choir, which includes all students in grades 5–9.)

“Let me begin by defining the goals for our music program at Eastside. I believe our foremost goal is to teach the children to understand as much as possible about music so that they can: 1). glorify God Who is the Author of all things, the Mastermind behind the art of music, and 2). learn to use the discipline to express personally their worship and praise of our Creator and Savior to the best of their ability.

To help us accomplish this goal, we attempt to teach good singing habits—on pitch with proper breath control and clear enunciation. We also teach the basics of reading music and understanding all that is written on a page of music. Another aspect is trying to expose the students to some of the history of music and attempting to give them an understanding of harmony, musical structure and rhythm. All this increases their skills in listening to music as well as comprehending it.

Are we a bit unrealistic in tackling all this? Are we setting our goals too high? I doubt if that is possible. Learning is enjoyable. The more the children understand about music, the more they will appreciate this gift of God and will find it rewarding.

We as teachers are thankful that the Lord has given us the privilege of being involved in this worthwhile work. Please pray for us.”

Regional Spelling Bee Hosts:

During the month of January, the Spelling Bee Competition begins with local contests at each participating school. Two students (grades 5–8) from each school will advance to the Regional Competition, which is scheduled to take place on February 24, 1998 at Eastside Christian. Winners of this contest will advance to the Greater Grand Rapids Finals in the Creston High School Auditorium, Tuesday, March 17.

Beyond the Classroom Walls:

We are delighted with the participation of our students in numerous opportunities for learning outside their classroom walls. It seems that our teachers have also enjoyed showing their students, and letting them discover for themselves, many lessons that cannot be found in a book. What follows is a sampling of

East Side Christian School Association admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

the activities the students at Eastside have appreciated:

The First and Third Graders set off in the Eastside van with Miss Dykstra and Mrs. Thompson for a day of lessons in the Star School House at Blandford Nature Center. The boys wore knickers, with socks pulled up to their knees. The girls and the teachers wore dresses, and carried their lunches in baskets. With lesson plans suitable for learning 100 years ago, and a visit to the Nature Center including walks on the trails at recess, it was certainly a day worthy of the childrens' book chronicling the experience.

A few days later Mrs. Thompson drove the Pre-K through Third Grade Students and their teachers, Mrs. DeKryger and Miss Dykstra, to the Klackle Apple Orchard. Here they toured the orchard, picked some apples along the way, and learned about the different flavors and uses for apples.

In October, the Fifth through Ninth Graders visited the Gerald R. Ford Museum. The main focus of this outing was to take in the traveling Civil War Exhibit. While there the students eagerly completed a detailed questionnaire about the Civil War, before stopping for lunch and a trip to the Fish Ladder.

At the beginning of November, Mr. Ondersma, Mrs. Thompson and the Fifth and Sixth Grade Students enjoyed a performance at St. Cecilia Music Society by an Oboist, as part of its Bach's Lunch Series. This was a wonderful way to enhance the students' appreciation for music. The younger students and their teachers accompanied the others for the December concert, which highlighted a portion of the Grand Rapids Symphonic Choir. It was a great encouragement to hear the tremendous volume and beautiful sound/tone a choir of only 15 can produce.

Early in December, the entire school and faculty painted pottery at Naked Plates in Breton Village. After displaying great enthusiasm, remarkable creativity, and notable cooperation while painting the pottery, the students relinquished their masterpieces for firing. Later they wrapped these gifts to present at Christmas.

Mr. Ondersma and his Fifth and Sixth Graders also went

to the Grand Rapids Art Museum to view the Perugino Art Exhibit in December. Not only has the exhibit received international reviews and recognition, but is reviving local interest in the origins of this discipline. The students gained exposure to the artist, Perugino, and also experienced the artist's methods for expression in his era, while enjoying studio-time at the Museum.

Plans are already made to visit the Voigt House Historic Museum in January. Mrs. DeKryger, Miss Dykstra, Mr. Ondersma and Mrs. Thompson plan to join the Pre-K through Sixth Grade Students in gaining a perspective into a "Victorian child's world."

The Board is pleased with the efforts our teachers are making to provide a distinctive learning environment for the students at Eastside. Within the school, the students have also enjoyed a variety of "special" activities. It is a blessing to see the fruits of directive, yet stimulating and encouraging leadership in the students' cooperative projects. A few examples of these efforts include: the Thanksgiving/Grandparents Day Program during dinner, the Chapel and the "First Thanksgiving" mural. As well as, the Christmas Cookie and the Gingerbread House projects.

MathCounts:

Mr. Adams is coaching the 7th and 8th grade students in preparation for the 1998 Mathcounts competition.

MathCounts is a national coaching and competition program designed to stimulate students' interest and aptitude in math. The students are devoting 60 minutes of the time allotted to their math program each week to study sample problems for the February 13, 1998 competition at Grand Valley State University's L.V. Eberhard Center.

Thanks be to Him:

The Board extends its gratitude to all those who helped to make Grandparents' Day truly a day for Thanksgiving.