



# Alexander Middle School

*"In the middle -- kids come first."*

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October 2008

The International Crane Foundation has been a tradition with our fourth graders for a number of years. Once again this year on Friday, October 3, students were able to spend a day at the foundation learning about habitats, ecosystems and much more. The fourth grade has been studying an integrated unit on cranes and had a wonderful day of learning.

Our fifth grade has been working on an interdisciplinary unit involving related arts and social studies. Students had the opportunity to spend a day at Wakely House on Thursday, October 9; this trip has proven to be very entertaining, fun and educational. Again this year students had the chance to experience the rotating historical stations: Wakely House, Fire Starter, School, Trading Post and Tools. What a great way to learn about history hands on.

Also on Thursday, October 9 our sixth grade traveled to Elroy/Sparta Bike Trail for a day of fresh air and exercise after reading the *Biography of Lance Armstrong* and learning about the history of the railroad. AMS has been blessed with many parent volunteers for this trip. Some of them have continued to volunteer even after their children have moved on in grades. We are very thankful for their time and support. Some wonderful lasting memories were created with their help. Thank You!

Our 7th grade students are responsible for their own checking account here at AMS. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade teachers developed a student checking account system, which has had much success. Students are "paid" for showing responsibility such as attending class, or good behavior. Each week on payday they deposit their money into their checking accounts. Money is deducted from their checking accounts for turning in late assignments, leaving the classroom or going to their locker. The class has periodic auctions where students can purchase various items such as Subway cards, free assignment passes, etc. Recently, the 7th grade team presented the student checking account system at the Wisconsin Association of Middle Level Educators annual conference. Way to go 7<sup>th</sup> grade team, we are proud of all the effort put into this project.

The AMS MVPS (Motivated Volunteer Parent Support group) will once again work with our AMS staff and families to collect clothing to be given away during our Parent/Teacher Conferences. Tables will be set up outside of our guidance office and everyone is welcome to help themselves to the clothing during the two days of conferences. If you are interested in donating items please drop them off to our guidance office anytime before Wednesday, November 5.

Believe it or not we are approaching our school-wide, state-mandated testing dates in October/November. The WKCE tests will be given to students the weeks of October 28 thru November 13. We appreciate the help and encouragement provided by parents, as our staff members take additional measures to ensure our students are adequately prepared for each day of testing. Exercise, healthy snacks, the timing of the tests, and a quiet environment are just some of the preparations in place. It is our hope that all of our students will have the confidence they need to do well on the tests.

Some important upcoming dates and events:

October 16	Vision Screening for grades 4, 5, 6, & 8
October 17	Picture Retake Day
October 23	District Flu Shot Clinic 11:30 – 1:00 p.m. on our AMS stage
October 30 & 31	No School
November 4	Last day of First Quarter
November 5	Second Quarter begins
November 6 & 7	Parent Teacher Conferences – Nov. 6, 4:30 – 8:00 p.m., Nov. 7, 8:00 a.m. – noon
November 7	No School

HAVE A WONDERFUL AUTUMN.