Dear Parents,

It is always satisfying to see so many parents in our school. November was marked for wonderful opportunities for parents to visit us, with parent conferences, Veteran’s Day celebrations, Distinguished Student Recognition and various classroom activities. I hope you will continue to include school visits throughout the school year. Consider joining your child for lunch in our cafeteria, you are always welcome, even at the last minute.

Like many busy families in our community you may question if someone has the secret for managing time so that everything gets done. Balancing the many demands on family life can be overwhelming. One suggestion for maintaining a successful school year is to set good routines at home. Following a schedule can be very helpful to children. Children need a schedule they can depend on, one that includes definite times for homework, meals and sleep. They can work around those times to include the extras. As you build a schedule, I suggest you monitor and limit TV and video games. Decide how much of this kind of free time to allow and stick to it. Otherwise these activities can consume too much of children’s time and expose them to content that you may not feel appropriate for your child.

As busy as we can get, please remember to read, read, read. Children need to see you reading for the many purposes that you read, including newspapers, magazines even the comics (or... just sitting with a good book for your own pleasure!) Continue to read to children even after they can read by themselves. This allows them to enjoy stories that may be too difficult for them to read alone. It also creates special shared memories that will last a lifetime.

The last tip for busy families is a reminder to take a few minutes every day to check the backpack for any important messages. Remember Thursday is “take home folder” day! Ask to see their assignment book daily, let your child read to you the homework assignments. Talk with your child about school and the events of the day. This shows that you care about the things your child spends most of the day doing.

As we approach the winter holiday season I share my wish of joy for your family, and may you give yourselves the gift of time together. Family time is precious time, enjoy and treasure your time together.

Thank you for being our partner in education!

Susan Z. Owner

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**Principal’s Letter**

**Calendar**

**Check Out the Library**

**Counselor’s Corner**

**What’s Happening**

**Misc.**

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**LOST AND FOUND**

If you or your child have not had the opportunity, please stop by and check the lost and found bins located just outside the cafeteria. All remaining items will be donated to charity at the end of December.

Congratulations to our cafeteria staff on winning the Bronze Healthier US School Challenge held by the United States Department of Agriculture. We are so pleased that our school has been recognized for their outstanding nutrition efforts on behalf of the students.
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**BARNES & NOBLE BOOKFAIR - SHOP DECEMBER 1st through DECEMBER 7th** (coupon on school Website)

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**FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION - 5th and 6th Grade**

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**Winter Vacation - No School**

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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

- January 19 - Martin Luther King Birthday - No School
- January 20 - Inauguration Day - No School
- January 26-27 - Teacher Workdays - No School

**Winter Vacation - No School (Dec. 24 - Jan. 2)**
November Library Happenings

It has been a busy and fun time in the library this month. Here are just a few of the highlights:

♦ Using the Smart Board, first grade classes were introduced to nonfiction text features. Each first grader used their own table of contents and index to locate information. They did a great job!

♦ Using the Smart Board, second grade classes learned the difference between fact and opinion. They wrote their own facts and opinions that will be added to the lesson for next year's second graders.

♦ Ms. Asbie, Mr. Stillions and Mrs. Bomar’s 3rd grade classes learned about the many features of a dictionary and the importance of guide words in looking up words from their science curriculum.

♦ Ms. Adkin’s and Mrs. Markon’s 5th grade classes learned about the author and illustrator David Shannon and how he gets his ideas for his writing and illustrations.

♦ Using the Smart Board, Ms. Trudeau’s 5th grade class reviewed and mastered dictionary features. They came up with a list of at least 18 different text features available in most dictionaries.

Stay tuned for more library happenings!

6th Grade Book Club

The next meeting of the 6th Grade Book Club will be December 18th at 7:30AM in the library. The title of the book we are reading is Maze of Bones by Rick Riordan. New members are encouraged to attend. See you there!!

Library Catalog

You can access the Island Creek library catalog from home: http://libcat.fcps.edu/libcat/mysirsi/x/0/0/57/49?user_id=429WEB.
KINDNESS is the Croc’s Creed Character Quality we are emphasizing this month.

In our classroom lessons we are discussing kindness to friends, parents, siblings, teachers/staff at Island creek, animals and all people, and do not forget - to ourselves

Kindness is a simple act towards another person, it doesn’t have to cost money, it can simply be "hello", "please", "thank you", or "you are welcome".

Kindness is helping others to feel good, and in turn, your kind act can cause the giver to feel good for their actions.

Kindness is being kind in actions and words; and showing compassion and generosity towards others.

Remember kindness begins at home. Our children learn what they live. Children are very observant and will notice the smallest gestures or words without our consciously realizing it at times. It is simple to model kind behaviors for our children. Let them see you give the right of way to someone in traffic, say thank you at the grocery store, pick up trash on a street, or help another person or animal in need.

One of the major concerns that has been developing with children everywhere is self-damaging behavior. Watch to ensure they are not saying unkind things to themselves. It is common when a child is frustrated to hear them say "I’m Stupid" "I’m so Dumb" and often they strike themselves. These words or actions are damaging to our children and can lead to more serious self-destructive self-loathing behaviors as they grow older. Please reassure them about their high self-worth and downplay negative thoughts.

With the holiday season approaching we look forward to celebrating with family and friends; this is the perfect opportunity to demonstrate to our children how to be kind to other people, animals and to themselves.

Your partners in character education,
Virginia Hulke
Stefanie Shelesky
School Counselors
We are thankful for Kindergarteners! Kindergarten had an exciting month learning about the first Thanksgiving and celebrated with a Thanksgiving feast! Our November family project was particularly turk-rific. Kindergarten students and their families disguised turkeys so they wouldn't be eaten on Thanksgiving. We had some very creative entries such as an astronaut, a princess, a mermaid and even Sponge Bob. Thank you to all Kindergarten parents and families for your support. We are looking forward to learning about Holiday Traditions in the coming month.

Members of Island Creek Elementary Girls on the Run group have been hard at work training for the upcoming Reindeer Romp 5k which will take place on Saturday, December 6 at Reston Town Center. The race begins at 8:30 AM for those of you who wish to come cheer our girls on. For directions or more information about the race go to:

http://www.girlsontherunofnova.org/

The first grade team celebrated Veteran’s Day by creating replica flags and letters to active men and women in the military. We are really excited that the letters and cards have reached Afghanistan and Iraq. A father from one of the first grade classes hand delivered them to the soldiers.

Mrs. Markon’s 5th grade students on a recent field trip to the Natural History Museum.
MESSAGE FOR PARENTS OF CURRENT 5th GRADERS

Effective July 1, 2006, all students in Virginia must receive a booster dose of Tdap vaccine prior to entering sixth grade, if at least five years have passed since the last dose of tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine (DTP, DTap, DT or Td).

Please check your child’s immunization records carefully. If your child is required to have a Tdap booster, please do not delay in getting the immunization. The Tdap booster can be obtained from your child’s physician. Immunizations required for school also are available at the Fairfax County Health Department at no charge. Students receiving immunizations at the Health Department must be accompanied by an adult, and students should bring their immunization records to the Health Department with them.

Documentation must be provided to the school office. This documentation can be a copy of your child’s immunization record, or a note from your physician listing the date of their Tdap booster shot. If your doctor will not administer the shot until your child’s 11th birthday, we need a note from the doctor so stating. Sixth graders cannot begin school next year without documentation.

Please contact Gail Acker, the school public health nurse, at 703-704-6100 or gail.acker@fairfaxcounty.gov, if you have any questions.

SCA NEWS

SCA GIVING TREE

SCA will be sponsoring the Giving Tree. Bring in new or gently used hats, coats, scarves, gloves, mittens, etc. Place them in the box in the lobby and then fill out an ornament to put on the tree to show your donation. We will donate these to a local charity. It runs December 2-December 19.

SCA SPIRIT DAY

SCA Spirit Day will be PJ Day on Friday, December 12. Wear appropriate PJs and slippers and robes. Just bring shoes for PE and recess. One small stuffed animal that fits in your backpack is allowed.

Thank you so much to all the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts who met on Sunday, Nov 9th & 16th to make the entrance of Island Creek ES beautiful! All the plants for this project were graciously donated by NALLS PRODUCE so please make a point of thanking them for their generosity next time you visit them. The children are extremely proud of their accomplishments - please take note of their hard work next time you drive by the school.