Dear Parents,

Happy Earth Week! I hope that everyone had a rewarding Spring Break. Thanks so much to the parents who were able to drive on our March 17th field trip to release our salmon and to Deep Bay Marine Station. We released 194 healthy fry (200 eggs were delivered)!

Earth Day - A variety of things will be happening around Cumberland Elementary to acknowledge Earth Day, April 22nd, today. Many classes went out into the community to clean the streets. We cleaned up behind the Jr. building. The trash we cleaned up will be transformed into 'Trash Art' Salmon; they will show up on our bulletin board in a day or two. Our 'Trash Art' will also be on exhibit at 'The River Never Sleeps', Rosewall Salmon Hatchery's Open House which is on May 3rd. Tomorrow we will watch 'The Story of Stuff'; a very worthwhile view for everybody www.storyofstuff.com.

Socials - The boys and girls have been learning a lot about the historical culture of Coast First Nation peoples. The students learned about the homes, food, clothing, celebrations and general ways of life that Coast Salish peoples lived in this area five hundred years ago. The students learned that the Cedar Tree is 'The Tree of Life' and they learned that First Nations people were natural environmentalists as nothing was ever wasted. The boys and girls worked in groups to build beautiful dioramas of Salish Winter Villages and Salish Summer Camps. Division 6 students also learned details about the Potlatch ceremony. We have had a few special guests come into to help share information including Gail Martindale and Suzanne Camp from SD71's Aboriginal Department. We were also honored to have Chief Michael Recalma from Qualicum First Nation come and talk to the students about First Nation governance and the very significant Potlatch.

P.E. - We are fortunate to have the school district gymnastic equipment at Cumberland Elementary for a couple weeks. Last week and this week, Cumberland School mom and Gymnastics coach, Sherry Roffey, is teaching gymnastics to the students. On the other days, we are outside learning Track and Field lead-up activities with student teacher, Mr. Meuser.

Language Arts/Health - Presently, the boys and girls are doing some comedy story workshop writing with Mr. Meuser. This will lead up to sharing some comedy Reader's Theatre with the class. Soon, the boys and girls will be reading their way through a Fire Safety manual which was generously provided by the Cumberland Fire Department. We will be 'share reading' through the material and partaking in discussions and activities as we go. The students will occasionally have reading/homework assignments associated with the Fire Safety book.

Math - Mr. Meuser is working though a unit linear measurement and perimeter and will soon be learning about 2-D Shapes as well as 3-D Solids. The focus will also be for the students to recognize symmetry, tessellations and transformations. As in previous months, we always return to practice and reinforce our multiplication facts and well as other operations.

Art - Last week we got together again with our little buddies to learn about the amazing nature artist, Andrew Goldsworthy. He is a Scottish artist who takes elements from nature and, using only his hands or natural tools, transforms articles from nature into amazing works or art. As with all
elements of nature, Andrew Goldworthy’s art is temporary and only documented permanently through photography. Google him!

Neat Guests! - The week before last the amazing Diana David, from Vancouver, came to do a show with K-7 students. The theme of the performance, which included mime, juggling and more, was about ‘screen time’ (computer, video gaming, tv). Many people have difficulties with face-to-face connections as a result of too much screen time and not enough people time. This is especially affecting children nowadays and influences their school and social confidence and abilities. We were also on the receiving end of a great concert by musicians, Kristin Andreasson and Jon Neufeld from Portland, Oregon. They were travelling and singing in Cumberland the weekend before and offered to share some music with our Grades 1 to 3 students in the library. Fun Times!

Maypole Dancing - Many students in our class are involved in the Cumberland Tradition of Maypole Dancing. The practices are Tuesday and Friday at lunch and Thursday after school. The involved students will perform their beautiful dance at Empire Days on Monday, May 18th.

Field Trips - I have a few upcoming field trips planned. Permission slips will come home with students about ten days before trip date.

a) On Friday, May 15th we will go to the North Island Wildlife Recovery Centre in Errington for a very interesting tour (eagles, bears, turtles, etc.) of their facility. Following, we’ll lunch in Errington and then stop a Coombs Market so that students can shop for half an hour. We need to leave the school by 9:15 am and will be back for 2:40 pm dismissal. Students should wear weather appropriate layered clothing. They also need to bring a nutritious lunch and water to drink. Students are welcome to bring up to $8.00 spending money for the Coombs Market.

b) On Thursday, June 4th, we will go to Willow Point for an intertidal zone and reef study. The boys and girls will have done an eel grass, seaweed and marine invertebrate unit by this time and this trip is to culminate our studies and actually see what we have learned about. More info will come in May.

c) Friday, June 12th we will head into Courtenay to participate in the Storm Drain Marking Program. This involves painting yellow fish by storm drains to bring awareness that they lead to fish habitat.

d) We will be doing a couple walking trips in the second week of May. As part of Mr. Meuser’s ‘Water Cycle’ unit, we will make a visit to Perseverance Creek. We will also be doing a ‘Mapping the Village of Cumberland’ activity. Students will write the day before in their planners.

Other Dates to Note:

May 6 & 27 - Two more PLCs; dismissal at 12:30 (none in June)
May 15 – Trip to Errington and Mr. Meuser’s last day
May 18 – May Day and Empire Days in Cumberland (no school)
May 31 – PAC Giant Garage Sale

We have been embraced with some beautiful spring weather! Hope it keeps coming!
Thanks for all your support! Thanks for continuing to view and share the blog (link below)! There are new entries on the blog for our salmon release and visit to Deep Bay Marine Station. I am usually updating it every week or so.

Pam Twin, Division 6/Grade 3 Teacher
ourforest.edublogs.org