

ICS MONTHLY

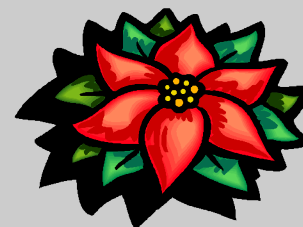
A monthly newsletter for families at Independence Charter School

January 2008 Issue

Dear Parents and Students of ICS,

Have you noticed the poster hanging in the hallway as you exit the elevator on the second floor? You see hands holding an illuminated Earth. The words written by John Wesley, an English evangelist and an influential abolitionist, were penned in the 1700's:

**“Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.”**



Although these words are now over 250 years old, they make sense for us today. I thought it was important for our ICS children to see it every day- so we bought several posters for each floor. As we approach the “turn” of the old year into the new, let us carry this important saying with us to “do all the good we can...”

At ICS, we take our job very seriously. You have entrusted your children to us, and for those 7 hours we shape, mold, celebrate, and remind, not only the academic child but the individual, the whole child. We thank you for the caring and support you display for your child every day. We thank you for the support that you give our teachers and our staff. We would love to see your support financially as well and there are several ways that you can do that. The financial support will help us realize some great and enriching programs for our students. To show your financial support, you can:

- respond to the annual campaign letter that you received last week keeping in mind to get that check sent out by December 31st for your tax purposes
- go on our (new and gorgeous) website at www.independencecharter.org and click on Donate Now in the lower left corner for a quick and secure online donation
- come on in and buy a big bunch of our fabulous 2008 ICS calendars- at only \$ 10.00 you will enjoy the beautiful artwork of ICS children and will be able to share the calendars with friends (great gift idea!)
- all of the above :>

Please consider setting aside **an annual gift** to ICS. The quality of education that your child receives at ICS rivals that of the great independent schools in Philadelphia. Please know that your gift will be much appreciated not just by me ,but by the kids of ICS. The way I figure it...we are preparing the kids to do all the good they can...your **annual gift** helps us make it a reality.

**Best wishes for a peaceful and meaningful
winter break,
Principal Jurate**

Inside this Issue:

Upcoming Events & Announcements..page 2
Classroom Connections.....	page 3, 4, & 5
P.T.A. Update.....	page 6
Past & Future Fundraising.....	page 7
Geography Bee Info.....	page 8
Board of Trustees Update.....	page 9
2008 Calendar Order Form.....	Page 10
New Building Update.....	page 11
January Lunch Menu.....	Page 12

Upcoming Events

12/21 Professional Development
Day- No School for Students

12/24-1/1 Winter Break

1/2– Classes Resume

1/8– National Geographic Bee
(Grade 4-8)

1/9– Board of Trustees Meeting

1/22– Math Night
(Gr. 6, 7, & 8)

FAMILY MATH NIGHT

IS COMING!

SAVE THE DATE!!

Grades 6, 7, and 8

January 22 6PM-7:30PM

Grades 4 and 5

February 5 6PM-7:30PM

Grades K-3

February 19 6PM-7:30PM

Look for more information in January about Family Math Night. Come and join us and experience math the way your children do at ICS.

-Tr. Barbara Kay, Math & Science Coach
(barbarak@independencecharter.org)

Summer Program Update

We know that many parents are already starting to plan for summer activities and wanted to let you know that ICS will not be offering a Spanish Immersion camp this summer.

2007-2008 Yearbook

If you have not ordered a yearbook for this year and would like a copy please see Tr. Tracey at the front desk.

Check Out Our New Web Site!

www.independencecharter.org

Please be mindful that the first day back to school after the Winter Break (Wednesday, January 2nd) is an Early Dismissal Day.

The kindergarteners have been working very hard this month. In math we are identifying and counting numbers through 31. In language arts we are matching letters and sounds, as well as identifying initial and last sounds in words. Following the break we will begin blending sounds and reading CVC (consonant vowel consonant) words. We have come a long way in these beginning months and look forward to continue learning all we can to prepare for first grade. Have a joyous holiday and a happy new year.



Kindergarten



November was an exciting month in the first grade! We took time to be thankful for all of the wonderful things in our lives. We continued learning about Colonial times, discussing African Americans and European colonists and some of their pastimes and clothes. We also learned about the Native Americans who were living in the Colonial times, specifically the Lenape people. We had the wonderful opportunity to visit the National Liberty Museum. There we got to see many beautiful exhibits, including Tiffany glass and a sculpture made entirely of jelly beans! We played team building games with our classes and celebrated what makes us special. We are also looking forward to beginning our unit on the Dominican Republic after the break!

Grade 1

The Second Grade Village is excited to share all of the wonderful things we have been doing with our classes this past month! Two of our classes took a trip to the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education to observe meadow, forest, and pond habitats. The other two hope to make the trip in the spring! We spent the day before Thanksgiving break and the Monday before winter break in our village groups to create crafts representing harvest celebrations and winter celebrations. Thank you to ALL of the parents who have helped make the start of this year's "Mercado de Frutas" a smashing success!



Grade 2

3rd grade students studied Ben Franklin and went on a trip to Franklin Institute this month. In reading students published scrapbook biography projects about a famous person. After the holiday break the 3rd grade will begin their studies of Russia and dive into realistic fiction.



Grade 3



Fourth graders are learning about the Oregon Trail. We just finished learning about Lewis and Clark. Now we are reading a book called Dear Levi. It is about a boy named Austin who is writing letters to his little brother Levi, from the Oregon Trail. In Math we are learning the concept of 1-digit multiplication, then we'll learn about multiple digit multiplication. In Readers Workshop we just finished our non-fiction books like A Dinosaur Named Sue. We also made documentary posters.

Grade 4

The fifth graders are wrapping up their study of Slavery and the Civil War. They have written political speeches, have participated in lively debates, and have written and performed their own slave spirituals. Next, we're excited to introduce the Civil Rights Movement. Any expertise you or anyone you know might be able to share with the class is greatly appreciated! In Language Arts, the kids have been working on original stories. These have ranged from Civil War period pieces to fantasy. We are also wrapping up our first guided reading unit, and will shortly be introducing the biography genre!!!



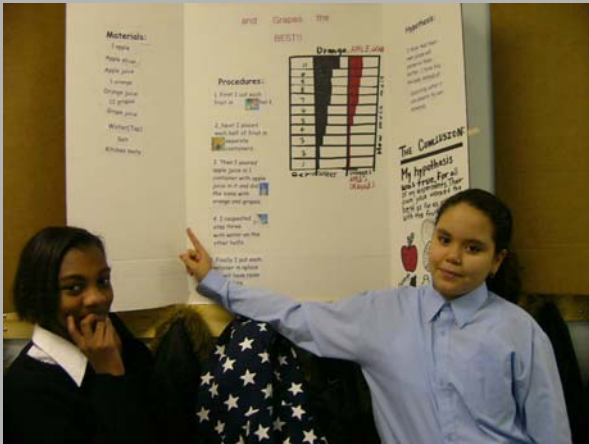
Grade 5

6th grade social studies students created plays about life under one of the four Mesopotamian Empires: the Akkadian Empire, the Babylonian Empire, the Assyrian Empire, and the Neo-Babylonian Empire. The plays highlighted the achievements of the early empires, such as the sun-dial, code of laws, and astronomy.



Grade 6

The 7th graders have been busy preparing projects and conducting experiments for the science fair. It's not all work, they have been playing quite a few games exploring probability in their problem solving classes. In social studies they just finished their study of the Byzantine Empire and are beginning to form groups for this years National History day who's theme will be: Conflict and Compromise.



Grade 7

After finishing an art unit on Impressionism, ICS 8th graders took a trip to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Students enjoyed their November 30th trip where they received a guided tour of works by the great artists from the age of Impressionism. In addition, they got the opportunity to tour the Contemporary Wing, which houses both African and Asian exhibits, as well as other masterworks. As shown in the picture, students capped off their afternoon by running Philadelphia's famous "Rocky Steps".



Grade 8

News from the P.T.A.

PTA Family Night = Good Fun

Family Night with the PTA earlier this month was a good time. *Many thanks to M. Ronith's 4th & 5th grade choir for serenading us at the beginning of the evening.* "Make Your Own Card" and "Make Your Own Picture Frame" kept the children (and some parents) happy and occupied while others enjoyed a variety of good eats brought in by ICS families. *Thank you to all the families that brought in those delectable treats: from the homemade chicken and pasta dishes to the mouth-watering brownies and gingerbread.* Tr. Alison's jewelry display was a popular location for our female guests, including some children with visions of bling for the holidays.

Next PTA Meeting will take place Wednesday, February 6th. Topic of discussion will be saving & investing for the future.

New Lunch Options Are Under Investigation

Representatives from the PTA are exploring options for new lunchtime vendors for next year. Two vendors have already been interviewed including Sodexho and Davemark, Inc., and a meeting with Aramark is being scheduled for January. The team and three middle school student officers visited a Sodexho-run cafeteria at a charter school in Camden, NJ. Our student taste testers gave two thumbs up for the food.

Barnes & Noble Holiday Book Fair raises money for Students in Need Fund

Pr. Jurate, Tr. Mary Beth and M. Mireya captivated ICS families with their favorite stories in early December at the Annual ICS Holiday Book Fair at Barnes & Noble on Rittenhouse Square. Special thank yous to *Jessica Jacquay, Rob Kopf and Susan Burrows* for hosting the gift wrap station from 11am until 3:30 that Sunday!

Cherrydale raises \$12,000!

A hearty thank you to all the students, parents, grandparents, co-workers, neighbors, and extended family members who participated and helped with Cherrydale this year. The lunchtime limo ride will be scheduled in January for those students who sold 40+ items. Those families will be notified prior to the lunch.

Box Tops Contest In Full Swing until 1/31/08

Keep those Box Tops coming! *Volunteers Lynn Hunt and Barbara Kilmartin* are busily collating, collecting & counting those classroom box tops. Contest ends Thursday January 31st.

We welcome & encourage your input

This is YOUR PTA and we strongly encourage your input. Is there a different fundraiser that we should explore? Is there an issue or topic that warrants general discussion at a PTA meeting (such as homework or gift-giving)? Do you have ideas on other ways to spend monies raised? Should the PTA organize more family events (such as the flea market or a skating party)? Please let us know your thoughts by email (at pta@independencecharter.org or drop a note in the suggestion box at the front desk. Your ongoing feedback will help develop appropriate family-wide ICS activities.

Grant updates

- PTA Officers crafted a letter of support on behalf of ICS for the \$25,000 Goldman Sachs grant. If you're interested in reading a copy of the letter, stop by the front desk and ask Tr. Tracey for a copy.
- Conswelia McCourt applied for a \$10,000 grant from Hidden Valley Farms. If received, the grant would include a vegetable bar and other fresh food initiatives. *A hearty thank you to Conswelia for spearheading this newly created Healthy Foods Initiative!*

The PTA helped sponsor all students in grade K-5 to experience *Sleep Beauty* at The Arden Theatre in December.

It's That Time Again...

The Silent Auction, Saturday May 5, 2008!

For new families to ICS, the PTA's Annual Silent Auction is our biggest social event. It's a night to dress up (or dress downtown) and have fun with fellow ICS parents & teachers – so mark your 2008 ICS Calendar for Saturday evening May 5th. There will be great food & drink, great fun and the monies raised go directly to the PTA's Arts Fund for arts related programs for the children. Last year's money helped to fund half the salary for the middle-school art teacher! The Silent Auction is a kid-free event - meaning no children allowed, adults only. A kick-off party will take place in early January. Many thanks to those who have signed up already, but there's always a need for more volunteers to help with collecting donations, working with teachers & children on creating gift baskets for raffles, children's art projects, writing thank you notes to donors, set-up & decorating, food & beverage coordination, registration, close-out, and clean up. Whew! Email pta@independencecharter.org or sjeburrows@earthlink.net to volunteer and let us know if there is something specific you would like to do. Look for sign up sheets coming in January.

Officers for the 2007/08 School Year:

Susan Burrows, co- President, sjeburrows@earthlink.net, or 215-805-2621
Nikki Butler, co- President, niks_space@yahoo.com, or 267-456-3603
Donna Devore, Secretary, dmd5611@yahoo.com
Leslie Burton, Treasurer, lburton@independencecharter.org
Tracey Hill, co-Treasure & go-to gal, traceyh@independencecharter.org
Conswelia McCourt, Membership, ptamom@conswelia.com, or 215-681-9657

Tienes Una Cita. Make it a date.

Brings in \$28,000 !!!

-Stephanie Kindt, Event Chairperson

On Friday, November 30, ICS families, supporters and teachers, made it a date for ICS. We had over 130 attendees celebrating the launch of our 2008 Calendar. The event is our fall fundraiser and features artwork created by twelve ICS students each year. This year's event also commemorated Beth Jacquot, a parent, founder, and friend of ICS.

Tienes Una Cita. Make it a Date. raised over \$28,000 for ICS through ticket sales, sponsorships, donations, calendar sales and the first ICS calendar art auction. Thanks to everyone who came together to celebrate and support our school. All proceeds go directly to the school's operating budget, which covers facilities costs, teacher salaries and professional development, field trips, and much more. It's not too late to add your support; buy a 2008 ICS Calendar, on sale now!

(Order Form & Art Work on Page 10)



Get ready, get set...



National Geographic Competition

ICS has been participating in the National Geographic Bee for a few years now. There is plenty of excitement among the students who are challenged personally to do their very best. At ICS we like to level the playing field by providing study materials for both of these events.

Grades 1-3 will participate during the **week of January 7th** during the school day.

Grades 4-8 will participate on the evening of **January 8th from 5:30-7:30PM.**

Helpful Study Guide Hints:

Think about getting the book written by the 2004 NG winner. It costs around \$ 12.95 and is available in some bookstores and online at www.nationalgeographic.com

1. Knowing latitude, longitude, the Equator, the Prime Meridian, the Tropic of Capricorn, the Tropic of Cancer, the North and South Poles, Northern, Southern, Western, Eastern Hemispheres: you should know where these are located because some of the questions will ask you to combine information for the best answer.
2. Name three continents mostly in the Northern Hemisphere. Name five countries located along the Equator Name three countries located in the continent of Asia that are closest to the Equator:
3. Know the US map very well. Study the major rivers and lakes and where they are located. You should know where the various states are. For example, is Wisconsin a northern or southern state? Is Alabama near the ocean or is it landlocked?
4. Check out the newspaper, radio news, etc. Look out for current events--what kind of explosion happened in Nigeria? What country just buried a former President? What state was he buried in? Learn combinations of city and state names such as Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Tempe, Arizona...
5. Know the continents very well. Pay attention to countries in each continent. What about the major "islands" in the world?
6. Name a mountain range in each of the following continents- Asia, Europe, Africa, South America, Australia, North America, Antarctica
7. Combining Information: Be ready to combine information that will help you make the most logical "guess". For example: Which city recently experienced an earthquake? Tokyo or Omaha? (*Tokyo makes sense because it is located in Japan along a fault line*).

Also these online sites feature games, etc.

www.nationalgeographic.com/geospy/ www.nationalgeographic.com/geobee/
www.carmensandiego.com www.quia.com/dir/geo flashcards, interactive games
www.prb.org source for population, recent news, country data
www.earth.nasa.gov click on "for kids only" explores, air, water, land
www.un.org country facts, statistics, maps... www.geography.about.com

A Message from the Board of Trustees

Holiday Greetings to the ICS community from the Board of Trustees. We hope all enjoy a happy and safe break from school.

At the December meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Board approved the creation of a new staff position, which will begin in the Summer of 2008. The Board has decided that the roles of CEO and Principal are too much for one person, and therefore, we will be hiring an experienced principal to handle the academic affairs of the school beginning September 2008. This change will allow the CEO, Jurate Krokys, to concentrate her energies on things like the business of the school and development, areas that require more and more attention as ICS continues to grow and mature. The CEO will supervise the principal and remain ultimately responsible for all aspects of ICS functioning.

The Development Committee of the Board was very busy in the month of November, planning for the Calendar Fundraising event, which was held on November 30th. It was a HUGE success, netting just over \$27,000 in unrestricted funds that will benefit the children at ICS. The Board is truly grateful for the staff and parent volunteers and committee members who made the event so successful.

The Development Committee will be a busy committee for the rest of this school year, as we begin our annual appeal, and continue the work of preparing for the move to the new building. A sub-committee of the Development Committee is organizing the work of volunteers interested in helping to fully develop some of the options for "extras" at the new building. A group is already meeting to discuss options for playground equipment. The PTA is helping explore options for the new kitchen that will allow more fresh food to be prepared and served. Other ideas about how to make the most of our new space are circulating, and more are welcome. To get involved with the Development Committee's new building effort, contact feedback@independencecharter.org.

Other matters the Board discussed at the December meeting included the results of the 2006-2007 ICS Family Survey. The overall results indicate that ICS is doing very well and is well-liked and regarded by our parent community. But there is always room for improvement and the survey will help ICS determine those areas needing change. Look for a link in the near future to those results, as well as summaries of the survey results from past years, on the new website.

Please be reminded that all ICS Board of Trustees meetings are open to the public and that there is always a public comment period on the agenda. To sign up for the public comment period, you can send an e-mail to: feedback@independencecharter.org or call Megan Steelman at 215-238-8000 extension 2292. You are also welcome to submit written comments if you're unable to attend the meeting in person. The ICS Board of Trustees meets the second Wednesday of every month at 7:00 pm, unless otherwise posted. Minutes from the meeting are available on the ICS website (www.independencecharter.org).

Warmly,
Rebecca Baehr
On Behalf of the Board of Trustees

CALENDAR 2008

Holidays from Around the World



January (Buck Reed Gr. K)



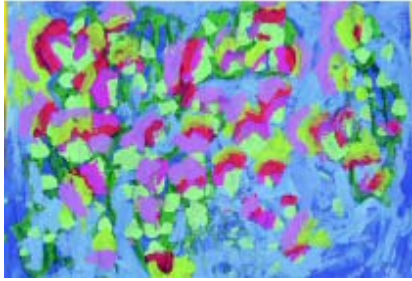
February (Jade Henderson-Haynes Gr.8)



March (Justin Kang Gr. 1)



April (Aysia Ali Gr. 6)



March (Malik Studivant Gr. 1)



June (Indigo Burton Gr. K)



July (Alhaji Koita Gr. 4)



August (Ravyn Stern Gr. 2)



September (Lola Genera Gr. 2)



October (Gisela Hernandez Gr. 4)



November (Demterius Brown Gr. 8)



December Claire Lennon (Gr. 4)

***** CALEN

DAR 2008 ORDER FORM Student's

Name _____ Room # _____

Parent's name: _____ Home phone#: _____

Quantity: _____ x \$10.00 per calendar or 3 for \$20.00

Total enclosed = _____

Send my calendars home with my child

I'll pick-up my calendar(s) at the front desk within the next week

“Home Sweet Home”

A Monthly Update on the progress of our new home at 16th & Lombard

-Robin Kohe



If you pass by the site you will see a big hole in the ground. This is the area of the new addition. The concrete pouring for the foundations has started. Concrete footings and foundation walls support the exterior walls and the steel columns for the building. When structural concrete is poured, a sample of the concrete is poured into a cylinder and tested in a lab to make sure it is strong enough. The cylinder is crushed and the weight that crushed it is recorded. This is called determining the compressive strength of the concrete. Concrete actually gets stronger over time. Samples from the same pour are crushed at 7 days and 28 days to make sure it will get up to the required strength. Any extra cylinders will be delivered to ICS if anyone would like to see what they look



like. After the concrete is poured the outside of the foundation walls will be waterproofed with a rubbery wallpaper type material. This helps keep our basement level dry. Look in mid to the end of January for the steel framing of the new addition to start going up!

Inside the existing building, the contractors are busy running conduit for new electrical wires, pipes for the new bathrooms and cutting openings for doorways in the existing brick walls. They have almost completed the demolition of the center stair which was a double helix stair (two stairways that wrapped around one another). We think the double helix stair was originally built to separate the boys from the girls.



Pictured to the left are photos of the movable doors that separate the classrooms. These huge four foot wide by ten foot high doors roll in tracks on the ceiling and can be easily rolled shut to create a wall or opened up to join classroom spaces. These doors and most of the original wood trim in the building is chestnut wood which is very valuable today since chestnut trees are extinct in N. America. Also the movable doors work well with ICS's village concept. Movie news update: There had been a rumor going around that a scene from the movie Sixth Sense was filmed in our new building, but after seeing the movie again this is not true.

The Playground planning group is looking for a volunteer landscape architect or civil engineer to help with the planning of the future outdoor space at our new building. Also, are there any athlete parents out there that may have connections to sports teams? Please contact Robin at robin_kohles@yahoo.com or 267-474-6299.

Add January Lunch Menu Here!

ICS Monthly Next Publication-

January 30, 2008

**Suggestion and/or comments about
ICS Monthly's publication please contact**

**Tr. Michael-
michaelf@independencecharter.org**
