

## November 2007

### 6-9 Class News

#### **Burke Museum**

October was the beginning of many field trips for the 6-9 class. The second year students went on their annual trip to the Burke Museum in Seattle to experience the museum's permanent collection and time line of Earth history. After eating lunch at the Student Union Building, we took a "walk through time" by exploring the exhibits related to Earth's eras. The time line includes interesting facts on Washington's geological development and extends through the Ice-Age. Most children gasp in awe when discovering fossilized animals from thousands of years ago and enjoy sizing up large dinosaur bones. Of course, they are always excited to return to class to share stories about their experiences. The following quotes come from the second grade group during a class discussion about the field trip:

"There was a skeleton of a saber-toothed cat and you could see how long its teeth were!" ~Maren

"I had a lot of fun because we saw all these crystals and minerals from volcanoes." ~Zach

"The dinosaurs looked pretty cool, all of them. There was a show about the giant squid. I liked it all!" ~William

"I think it was really good because of all the crystals. There's a huge dinosaur bone bigger than me!" ~Elliot

"I especially liked the triceratops head. It was totally amazing." ~Kyle

"There was a woolly mammoth skeleton that had long legs and it looked to me like the length of it was probably the length of the large tables in the classroom put together." ~Quinn

"My favorite part was learning about all the crystals, minerals, and dinosaurs." ~Sienna

I've found the Burke to be an excellent museum for children. It's small in size, has a good variety of interactive exhibits, and is very user friendly. Children

leave the museum feeling successful, intellectually satisfied, and inspired from their discoveries.

#### **Pumpkin Patch**

There's nothing like going to a u-pick farm to get the class excited about fall, plant growth and identification, and working together on a new unit of study. If you haven't made it out to Bellingham Country Gardens I highly recommend it. It's a great little farm out Kelly Rd. The farmers, Sam and Jan, are delightful people who enjoy sharing the fruits of their labor and the many stories that come from living on a farm.

At the farm, the class was divided into two groups to learn about the life cycle of the pumpkin, herbs, and to select pumpkins in the field. I think the simple joy of mucking around the field in anticipation of eyeing the perfect pumpkin made the trip a complete success.

Back at school the class participated in a unit of study that integrated math, language, and the cultural areas. Children worked in small groups to measure "pumpkin vines" and the circumference of pumpkins. This was either a needed review or the first introduction to circumference and learning to use and read a ruler. They also got a chance to cover their eyes and stick their hands inside a pumpkin. This activity helped evoke great adjectives which were used for creative writing activities and thank you letters to the farmers. Some of the cultural work included further study of seeds and the pumpkin lifecycle, and cooking.

#### **Thank You**

We've had so many parents eager to help in any way they can. Thank you for all the support, especially during field trips. Saila and Haidyn, thank you for helping the 6-9 class cook pumpkin cookies. 9-12 readers, we look forward to seeing you each week!

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