

Wake County JMG - 4H Newsletter



Next Meeting: Thursday, February 11, 2010 7:00-8:30pm

Happy February to All JMG 4-H'ers, Parents, Leaders, and Other Newsletter Recipients,

I apologize for the difficulty we've had getting our newsletter to you on the time schedule that we believe is so important. We think we've corrected issues that we've recently experienced. Beginning with the February Newsletter, we'll be posting to the JMG web site <http://www.wakejmg.org/>; so please go there to read our February Newsletter. We will try to have it posted by the first of each month. We want parents and students to read the newsletter before our meetings. Parents, if your student does not have the reading skills to read it alone, please read it to them.

Let me take this opportunity to introduce you to our new JMG Newsletter Editor. Most of you will recognize Mimrah Hossain as a former member of our Weed Buster JMG group. Mimrah has been a member of our JMG program for the past 8+ years. She has excelled in every aspect of our JMG 4-H program, as well as numerous other 4-H activities. She is currently serving as a member of Dandelion Paws Leader's group. She is a senior at Athens High School and has been accepted at NC State where she plans to study to become an elementary school teacher. Please welcome Mimrah to both of the new leadership roles.

At the February meeting on February 11, 2010, I will be having a parent meeting in the front foyer beginning at 7:30 p.m., so make every effort to attend. This will be a good time to ask any questions that you may have. I will review some of our plans and expectations.

I look forward to seeing you!

Carol Norden



Sunflower Club News

We started off the New Year with 17 students, including a couple of new girls, Tiana and Olivia and three new teachers!

We are so glad that most of the children brought back their homework assignments about the paper white narcissus. After looking at the blooming bulbs and the pictures and writing they had done, we moved on to our lessons for the evening.

We had fun with the Sunflowers as we did an assortment of activities. Now they can tell someone how hamburgers come from plants. (Please ask them!) They certainly were thinking hard when they came up with ways that all of us depend on plants. Parents, ask your Sunflowers what those are. (Plants give us FOOD, CLOTHING, SHELTER, FRESH AIR and they add BEAUTY to our world.)

Sunflowers are not only great with rhyming words; they can identify the six parts of a plant. As we read the following poem, they formed a plant using laminated plant parts.

Plant Parts Poem (from JMG Teacher/Leader Guide, Page 8).

Plants are our friends, we give them special care. They feed, they shelter, they give us fresh air. Without plants in our world, we simply could not live, Because of all of the awesome gifts that they give. The tiny plant begins as a **seed** that germinates. And from this moment on, here's the journey that it takes. The **roots** are in the soil to help the plant grow, And hold it in place when the winds blow. Just like a soda straw, they suck up H₂O. And when the plant gets water, stand back and watch it grow. **Stems** hold the plant up, they carry water to, The leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds...that's what the stems do. **Leaves** grow from the stem. They soak up lots of sun. When they change it into food, then their job is done. The food is for the plant – it gives it strength and power. It helps it to grow and make a nice **flower**. Wind, birds, and bees...These are a flower's friend. They help the life cycle to start once again. The flower makes a **fruit** with a seed deep inside. Some are eaten, some are blown, or some just hitch a ride. Once a fruit is dried and a little seed comes out, The **seed** will find the soil and a new plant will sprout.

Then the most fun part of our time together was doing "Touch and Tell". The Sunflowers had to put one hand in a box where there were roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits, and seeds, and feel one part carefully, tell what it was, then pull it out to see if they were correct. It was a great time to look at roots as parts of plants that we eat...

Which lead into the book for the evening: Tops and Bottoms, by Janet Stevens. Everyone loves a great story, and this certainly was one of them, with the hares outsmarting Bear when it came to planting, maintaining and harvesting the crops. Parents, see if you can borrow the book from the library and read it to your child.

Homework: The assignment for our February meeting is to create a "Fantastical Plant": Sunflowers will create their own plant gluing things they find around their home, such as straw, buttons, string, balloons, or anything else they can find onto a sheet of paper. If they can't find things to use, they can draw their fantastical plant. Be sure the fantastical plant has roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruit, and seeds.

We hope to see you at our February meeting!

Mary Zimmerman, Jan Beresford, and April Pelton, Leaders

Dandelion Paws News



In our January meeting we went over the citrus fruits that were brought to class. We also did an activity making magnets out of different types of beans. Everyone seemed to have a great time.

The Dandelion Paws are happy to have Mimrah Hossain join our group as one of the leaders. She looks forward to working with the students and meeting all of the parents.

Since a Homework assignment was not made, we would welcome students to take a small plant or item that they would like to share and talk about at the meeting.

Jill Mills, Mimrah Hossain, Judi Harper, Peter Zierz, Leaders



Wildlife Club News

Thanks to those who remembered to wear their JMG shirts and were ready to begin class on time. We are always happy to see everyone excited about learning.

If you made a seed tape during the January meeting, be sure to store it in an empty jar or can with a lid to keep it until you're ready to plant it in your garden.

You should have received a Critter Critique questionnaire at the end of the meeting. Pick one adult (any parent, neighbor or teacher, for example) and ask them the questions listed on the sheet. Bring your completed Critter Critique to the February meeting so we can compare answers.

Bianca Bradford, Priscilla Haddad, Jason Botts, Leaders

Wildflowers/Weedbusters Club News

January's meeting was only my second with Liz and I'm really enjoying this group! My name is Cheryl and I will be assisting her with the Wildflower and Weedbuster JMGs. Liz led a post-harvest lesson, i.e. what happens to crops after they are harvested. We discussed storage and preservation of produce in shipment, at the store, and in the home. Each student went home with the following:

Sweet Potato Storage Experiment

- Keep your sweet potato in its treatment until our next meeting.
- Before you come to February's meeting, cook your sweet potato in the following way:
 - Check with your folks to make sure it is alright that you do this, ask for their help:
 - Thoroughly wash the sweet potato root
 - Punch the root three times with a fork
 - Make sure your oven rack is in the middle of the oven
 - Lay down a piece of foil on the oven rack and place the sweet potato on the foil
 - Heat your oven to 375F (don't preheat, the sweet potato can heat with the oven)
 - In 45 minutes, turn the sweet potato on to its other side
 - Check it in another 45 minutes – with tongs or a wooden spoon, gently squeeze the sweet potato to see if it is soft. If it is, take it out of the oven, wrap it in foil and bring to the meeting.
 - If you don't have time to cook your sweet potato on the day of our meeting, simply cook it a day or two ahead of time, store it in the refrigerator and bring to the meeting.

Banana Post Harvest Experiment

- Remember to record your observations on the quality of your banana over time. These observations might be written descriptions or a photo each day of what is happening.
- Email Liz at driscoll.elizabeth@gmail.com if you take photos and you want me to show them at our February meeting.

Cut Flower Vase-life Experiment

- Keep an eye on this experiment too. What are you observing? What does your control look like (Flower in plain water)? Your experiment (flower in your water mixture)? Which lasted the longest? Why do you think you observed the results that you did? What role did the ingredients you added to your experiment play in the vase-life of your flowers?

You might enjoy this time lapse video of rotting fruit (What do you think of the post harvest qualities of these fruits? What would be the best way to store these fruits?):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRV6kq84bm4>

Remember to observe, document and report the results of these experiments.
Looking forward to it! See you on February 11!

Cheryl Koch and Liz Driscoll, Leaders

Upcoming Events

- Plant sale coming up - Our JMG Plant Sale will be April 16, 17, 18 at the State Fairground. Please put the date on your calendar now. All JMG 4-H'ers are required to help sometime during the sale. This is our only fundraiser of the year and underwrites our expenses such as JMG shirts, curriculum, supplies, etc.
- Wake County Youth Garden Contest - Details of this contest will be made available at our March JMG Meeting. Until then, you are encouraged to think about planting your very own garden. This is strictly for youth. Now is the time to start planning what you want to plant and where. Using seed tapes is a great way to get started with seeds you may already have on hand.
- Wake County 4-H Presentations - Open to youth ages 5 - 19 (age as of January 1, 2010). Age groups are 5-8, 9-10, 11-13, 14-19. Tentative date is April 24 and will be held at the Wake County Extension Office. All students should consider participating in this event. More information will be available at our February JMG Meeting. Talk to your leader for more information.

Other Reminders:

- Remember to wear your JMG T-Shirts
- Be ready for class at 7:00 pm.
- Don't forget your homework! If you have not completed 4-H registration forms, please do so now.
- Parent Meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the foyer entrance while students are meeting.
- Remember our Severe Weather Policy: If Wake Co. Schools are cancelled; JMG 4-H will not meet.