

# Pembroke News

February 2014

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## Miss Andrea

Oh no! Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow on Sunday, meaning 6 more weeks of winter! And what a winter it's been. Avon Lake has had a reasonable amount of snow, enough to make it interesting. The winds and cold temperatures have caused a dangerously low wind chill, forcing everyone to stay indoors . . . all day . . . all week. At this writing, the sun is shining, the wind is low, the snow is great, and the children are outdoors! Let's hope for moderate temperatures for the remaining winter weeks. Here's a warm thought – we are currently working on our schedule for summer camp at Pembroke. We will have our schedule completed and up on our website on March 1<sup>st</sup> so you can start planning a fun-filled summer for your child!

Thank you to all parents who participated in Parent-Teacher conferences. Our teachers worked diligently to prepare and were pleased to be able to share your child's progress with you.

I would like to introduce our newest staff member, Stefanie Fischer. Stefanie will be our new First and Second Grade teacher when Miss Clare leaves at the end of this school year. Stefanie is a graduate of Hiram College with a BA in Elementary Education (K-4). She also has a MEd from Baldwin Wallace in Educational Technology. Stephanie has had a number of teaching experiences, teaching first grade and fourth grade. She also taught for two years in a special education classroom at Redwood School in Avon Lake. While still at Redwood, Stefanie moved to a first grade classroom where she stayed almost four years until her oldest child (and Pembroke alumnus), Lauren, was born.

Stefanie, Krista, and Clare have already started working together planning for a smooth transition for next school year. Please stop and say hello to Stefanie in the hallway! She is here everyday for her kindergartner, Kaitlyn.

We continue to accept registrations for the 2014-15 school year. We encourage you to turn in your registration as soon as possible to ensure you get the schedule you want. Please stop in the office if you need a registration form. Our tuition remains the same for next year, although some of our class options have changed.

Be sure to check out our "Wall of Valentines" as you enter the school. We hope to display at least one valentine for every child at Pembroke. Can you find the heart your child made?



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## Snow pants, Boots, Mittens, and Hats

We make every effort to provide our students outdoor playtime on a daily basis, so please make sure you send your child to school with appropriate outerwear. Besides a warm winter coat, snow pants, boots, mittens and hats are a must!

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## Miss Sue and Miss Sara

A big THANK YOU to everyone for coming in and chatting with us at conferences about your child's progress. We really enjoy talking with all of our wonderful parents and sharing your child's successes. We are proud of all of our students!

As we start the month of February, we are hoping that snowy, frigid temperatures are behind us and we can get back to more consistent school weeks.

We will be finishing up our transportation theme this week and our train set is sure to be a big hit. We will play math and letter games within that theme to strengthen our number and letter recognition.

The week of February 10 will be devoted to Valentine's Week. Check our board outside the classroom for various sign-ups. We will have many writing opportunities for your child to work on fine motor activities. We will do a week of Olympics, which will coincide with the Winter Olympics, and our Math Night on Feb.19. A fun fairy tale week will end the month of February.

Our popular Music With Mr. Steve has started up again and Mr. Steve has some great "spring" inspired songs to get us thinking warmer weather.

We will be challenging the students by adding last names to their name cards for sign in or, for some, the last name initial. Many are more than ready for it. The goals for your child that we discussed will be worked on in small groups.

We are looking forward to this second half of the school year and seeing your child grow even more.

Also, please provide shoes for your child to wear in the classroom (bring boots to change into for outdoor play). They are much more comfortable in their shoes and it cuts down on tripping accidents.

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## Miss Theresa and Miss Cecilia

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Our classroom featured a lot of dramatic play in January. With themes of both transportation and winter, our housekeeping area reflected authentic child-initiated learning at its best. The children helped us brainstorm ideas as to which mode of transportation they wanted to create in the back corner of our room, and majority vote ruled that it would be an airplane. We then generated a list of things that their airplane would need. It was amazing to learn that many of the children are already experienced air travelers! They told us we needed seats, windows, seatbelts, cockpit, luggage and, most importantly, snacks, drinks and trays to serve with. We went straight to work and, voila, an airplane was created! The children had fun taking turns being pilots, passengers and cabin attendants.

As we began our theme on winter, the buzz in the classroom was definitely focused on the movie *Frozen*. Taking the lead from the students again, we decided to turn housekeeping into an ice castle. After they covered the walls with "ice" (aka, foil wrap) and snowflakes, the children decided they needed several essential ice castle items like icicles, ice steps, a fancy chandelier and, of course, a magical door that opens by itself. The children loved their creation and surely talked about it at home. Thank you for coming in (we know at their urging) to check out their masterpiece.

The last couple weeks of January also presented us with a social experiment of sorts. As our ice castle was built, we noticed that only the girls were playing in it, as they were pretending to be queens and princesses. So, we sat the children down and had a discussion about whether it was okay if boys played in the castle and could girls play in blocks? With a bit of encouragement from teachers, the children agreed that it would indeed be okay. Behold! Later that day we saw the boys slowly migrate to the castle and the girls went to blocks! What's all the fuss about gender stereotypes? BUT, after watching the children play closely for a few days, we found that the boys were using the magic wands in the ice castle as swords and the girls were playing with cars and blocks as the "baby toys" as they played house! The nature versus nurture debate continues.

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## Miss Katie and Miss Elena

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Wow! We can't believe it is a new year already. Not only that - we are already finished with the month of January! Last month, we learned about winter and hibernation. The children looked at a variety of animals that do and do not hibernate. We discussed different locations in which animals hibernate. For example, a bear will hibernate in a cave and a field mouse will hibernate underground. With all the snow we've had, we brought some indoors to our sensory table. The children had a great time exploring snow indoors.

Our next topic was arctic animals. We introduced the word "camouflage" and what it means. The children gave reasons as to why it is important to these animals to be camouflaged. We made a "snow-like" mixture by combining shaving cream and cornstarch. The class loved playing with it. We hope you had a chance to see our classroom cave. The children liked to practice hibernating in it! They hibernated with the bear inside and with their friends. Their excitement was evident!!

Thank you so much for meeting with us at our Parent-Teacher conferences. It was very enjoyable for us to get to know you better and discuss all the progress we have seen in your children this school year.

We have decided to have our Mixed-Age Valentine's celebration on Wednesday February 12<sup>th</sup>. Our Young 3's will celebrate on Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. Please check the sign-up sheet located on our board in the hallway if you would like to donate to the classroom parties.

Pre-K Families: Don't forget to check out our blog to see what we're doing!

<http://katieandelenaprek.blogspot.com/>

## Miss Krista

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"Once upon a time . . ." was the theme in kindergarten! We spent the month of January focusing on fairy tales, royalty, and castles. We wrote fiction stories in writer's workshop. The children really enjoyed writing pretend adventures. We took a field trip to the Cleveland Museum of Art where we went on a special royalty tour. We saw swords, armor, and artifacts right from castles!

In February, we will be celebrating 100 days of school! We will spend the 100th day doing various counting games and activities. We will also be focusing on the Olympics! This will be a great opportunity to learn about other cultures and various parts of the world.

[kristaskindergarten.blogspot.com](http://kristaskindergarten.blogspot.com)

## Miss Clare

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What would be a more exciting way to learn about different cultures than the Olympics? We are lucky to have the Winter Olympics going on during the month of February. We are going to use this as our theme and bring it into all aspects of our curriculum. We will be learning about different cultures in social studies, graphing Olympics data in math, and writing and researching about different countries in Reader's Workshop and Writer's Workshop.

We are also working on developing our independent study skills. Although we are still doing many of our activities in small groups and I am giving one-on-one support, we will be practicing doing some work more independently to give us the study skills that are needed as we grow in our educational careers. Additionally, the

students are working on being responsible for themselves. They are required to remember their homework and Friday folders. This will help them practice taking responsibility and being accountable.

[missclareclassroom.blogspot.com](http://missclareclassroom.blogspot.com)

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## Box Tops for Education



Keep bringing in those box tops!

We now have snowflakes on our Box Tops Penguin display. The snowflakes are colored coded for each classroom. Each snowflake represents 50 box tops. See how your classroom is doing. Better yet, have your child count how many snowflakes his/her class has!

Our winter drive runs through the end of the month. The classroom that collects the most box tops will win a hot chocolate and cookie treat.

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## Open House - Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>

Our next open house is Thursday, Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> from 1-7 PM. If you know of anyone considering preschool for their child in the fall, please let them know about us! We encourage visitors to bring their children to our open houses.

We are holding one more open house this month – Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 9 AM-noon.

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## Valentine's Day Parties - Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>

Our Valentine's Day celebrations will take place Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. Check with you child's teacher if you are unsure of which day your child's class is celebrating. If you'd like to make a donation (plates, napkins, etc.), see the sign-up sheet outside of your child's classroom.

Students may bring valentines for EVERYONE in their class, but please **do not** put names on the outside of the envelopes.

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## President's Day - Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>

Pembroke will be **CLOSED** on Monday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, in observance of President's Day. School will resume on Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>.

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## Math Night - Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, 5 - 6:30 PM

The next big event at Pembroke is Math Night on Wednesday, Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>. Our theme is "Math Olympics." Every child who completes the math "challenges" in our classrooms will receive an Olympic medal!

This is a hands-on event for the whole family. We invite you to learn more about our math curriculum and explore

our math games. You may even be inspired to make your own games at home!

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## Save the Date - Donuts with Dad

Looking ahead, we have our popular "Donuts with Dad" coming up March 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. This is a special time for dad or a special friend to spend time with our students. Besides donuts and cider, dads and special friends will do a fun project with their child. More information with specific times for each class will be coming home in a few weeks.

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## Inclement Weather School Closing

Pembroke's school closing policy follows the Avon Lake Public Schools. If Avon Lake Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather, Pembroke will also be closed. There are many sources you can use to find out this information. Besides TV and Facebook, we will post school closings on our Home Page by 7:00 AM at: [www.pembrokekids.com](http://www.pembrokekids.com). You can also call the school office (440-933-3782). We will change our main greeting by 7 AM.

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## Pembroke Tutoring

Pembroke offers one-to-one and group tutoring for pre-kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Each student's program is built around his/her personal needs. If you know of a friend or neighbor that could benefit from our services, please tell them about us. We offer tutoring focused on new legislation relating to the "Third Grade Reading Guarantee."

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## Before and After School Care

Do you have to leave for work before the school day begins or do you need a safe place for your child after school? Consider Pembroke's Before & After Care Program. Designed for students in kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade, we provide a safe, supportive environment guided by experienced teachers. Call the office for more information.

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## School Absences

We appreciate a phone call when your child is absent due to illness or other reasons. Please call the office as soon as you know your child will not be attending school – 440-933-3782.

## Dates to Remember

- Feb. 6 Open House, 1-7 PM
- Feb. 12-14 Valentine's Day Parties
- Feb. 17 President's Day – NO SCHOOL
- Feb. 19 Math Night, 5-6:30 PM
- Feb. 22 Open House, 9 AM-Noon
- Mar. 11-12 Donuts with Dad
- Mar. 24-28 Spring Break
- Mar. 31 School Resumes

Keep up to date with school activities by checking our school calendar in the Parent section of our website:  
[www.pembrokekids.com](http://www.pembrokekids.com).

Like us on Facebook –  
[www.Facebook.com/pembroke.kids](http://www.Facebook.com/pembroke.kids)

## Did you know? – Some fun facts about groundhogs!

- The average groundhog is 20" long and weighs from 12-15 lbs. (Punxsutawney Phil weighs about 20 lbs. and is 22" long.)
- Groundhogs are covered with coarse grayish hairs (fur) tipped with brown or sometimes dull red. They have short ears, a short tail, short legs, and are surprisingly quick. Their jaws are exceptionally strong.
- A groundhog's diet consists of lots of greens, fruits, and vegetables, but very little water. Most of their liquid comes from dew on leaves.
- A groundhog can whistle when it is alarmed. Groundhogs whistle in the spring when they begin courting.
- Insects do not bother groundhogs and germs pretty much leave them alone. They are resistant to the plagues that periodically wipe out large numbers of wild animals. One reason for this is their cleanliness.
- Groundhogs are one of the few animals that really hibernate. Hibernation is not just a deep sleep. It is actually a deep coma where the body temperature drops to a few degrees above freezing, the heart barely beats, the blood scarcely flows, and the breathing nearly stops.
- Young groundhogs are usually born in mid-April or May, and by July they are able to go out on their own. The size of the litter is four to nine. A baby groundhog is called a kit or a cub.
- A groundhog's life span is normally 6-8 yrs. "Phil" receives a drink of a magical punch every summer during the annual Groundhog Picnic, which is said to give him seven more years of life!

## Happy Valentine's Day!

