

Comet Connection

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Volume 3, Issue 2

Nov.-Dec. 2011

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Greetings to the W. C. Britt Elementary Community,

Students and teachers at Britt Elementary School have successfully completed the first nine weeks grading period, and we have passed the midterm of the second nine weeks. What a year of learning! I want to thank each parent and guardian who took the time to schedule a conference with their child's teacher at some point this school year. It is our goal to work together with you to build a solid foundation for future learning. To celebrate the successes of our Britt Comets, I am thrilled to announce that our first Awards Night was an overwhelming success. I want to personally thank each family member who attended Awards Night to celebrate the successes of their child. This celebration is sure to motivate students to achieve even greater successes in the future. Look for invitations that will be sent to parents and guardians of students who will be receiving awards for all A's, all A's and B's, Perfect Attendance, Comets with Character, and winners of county and state awards such as Media Festival for the next two Awards Nights, January 12 and March 22, 2012. Awards Night ceremonies will begin at 6:30 p. m., but students need to arrive by 6:15 p.m. Please plan to stay and enjoy the Title I sponsored Parent Night events which will follow the Awards Night ceremonies.

During October, students in grades three and five completed ITBS testing. The ITBS test measures student academic achievement against national and world class standards. Also in October, parents and students participated in Title I funded Math Night following Awards Night. Beginning the first week of November, Britt students and families enjoyed the Book Fair. The Book Fair Family Night was followed by Literacy Night, a time of enjoyment and a time of learning for the entire family. In addition to all the special events planned for the Britt Elementary Community, the Britt Parent Center is always looking forward to your visit. Dr. Luann Hammami, Britt's Parent Center Coordinator, can hardly wait to assist you with materials and support that will help your child achieve even greater academic success.

I want to thank Britt PTA for their continued support of the Britt Elementary School program. The student agenda books, the outdoor classroom, the computer programs, Red Ribbon Week activities, the academic assemblies to support the AKS, and the special events planned for the Britt families to enjoy are just a few of the many ways Britt PTA supports children and the Britt Elementary Community. If you have not joined PTA, I hope you will soon.

It is my joy to work with you and the highly qualified, dedicated, and caring faculty and staff of Britt Elementary School. I want to thank you for your support of the Britt Elementary School program as we work together to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior.

Sincerely,
Doris Jones
Principal

Technology Tip:

Have you visited Britt's website at www.wcbritt.org? Click on the student tab and select "Learning Links" from the drop down menu. There you'll find websites to support your child's learning.

**Looking Ahead
in December
and January
2012**

December 1
6:30

Title I
Writing Workshop

December 8
5:00-8:00 PM
Zaxby's Family Night

December 13
Art Show
6:00-8:00 PM

December 19-
January 2, 2012
Winter Break

January 12
7:15 PM
2nd Semester AKS/
Curriculum Night

Britt Elementary: Where Comets Shine Brightly



**Writing Workshop
December 1, 2011
6:30 in the Britt Café**



Bring your child to view writing samples as you both learn strategies and techniques that will improve your child's writing.

BeThere@GCPS

BeThere@GCPS provides subscribing families with links to websites, videos, and other online resources tied to themes about parent involvement. **BeThere@GCPS** supports GCPS' **Be There** parent involvement campaign that encourages parents to be their child's favorite teacher and make the ordinary extraordinary. Each issue is themed and will include topics of interest to parents of elementary, middle, and high school students. The current issue focuses on how families can promote health and wellness for their child, with age-appropriate resources and tips on healthy habits, nutrition, fitness, mental health, and safety. BeThere is a national movement that inspires parents to become more involved in their children's education, and the BeThere@GCPS e-newsletter connects Gwinnett parents with online resources they can use to support their child's learning. To sign up for **BeThere@GCPS** go to Britt's website and click on the **BeThere@GCPS** link.



**Gwinnett Online Campus – “Goes on the Road”
Informational Meetings for Parents**

Gwinnett Online Campus is a charter school within the GCPS system. Families who are interested in learning more about the full-time online school for grades 6-12 are encouraged to visit the Gwinnett Online Campus website at <http://www.gwinnettonlinecampus.com/goc/> The registration window for all full-time students in grades 6 -12 is open from February 1 through February 29, 2012.



Christopher Ray, Ed.D.

Principal
770-326-8020 (Office)
770-326-8082 (Main office)
770-326-8064 (fax)

Come check out materials from the Parent Center!

Parent Center hours are:
Monday & Tuesday & Wednesday
9:00-3:20 PM
Thursday
11:00 AM-7:00 PM
Friday
11:00 AM-3:20 PM



Parent Perception Survey

Go2.gwinnett Parent Portal



Gwinnett County Public Schools invites parents to participate in the Parent Perception Survey. This survey is available in both English and Spanish versions via the go2.gwinnett Parent Portal. Please complete the survey during the regular survey administration time period which is Monday, October 31, through Friday, December 9.

If you have not yet completed the Parent Portal application, please stop by the school office Monday through Friday, 8:20 AM to 4:00 PM. Your picture identification and your email address are required to complete the go2.gwinnett Parent Portal application.

Britt Literacy Volunteers

We are recruiting parents, family members, and friends who are willing to volunteer one or two days a week starting in January. Students will have the chance to read to you during Britt Time on Tuesday or Thursday from 2:50 until 3:10pm.

Reading opens the door to children's world!



Art Room News

CONGRATULATIONS SYDNEY SADDLER!

Ms. Martinez's 4th grader won 2nd place in the Plains, Peanuts, and a President Mini-Poster Contest. Sydney's work will be enlarged and displayed at a museum in Plains, Georgia, Jimmy Carter's home town. Sydney was presented with a certificate of achievement! 2011 Mini Poster Art Contest winners have been posted at www.jimmycarter.info under "In the Spotlight".



WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR OLD CALENDARS FOR AN ART PROJECT! Please send them in!

Join Britt's PTA Today! Just \$5.00 gives your family membership in the PTA!

Support our school... Share your ideas and time...

Strengthen your child's experience...



Don't forget to save your box tops. Your child's teacher will soon be sending home information on how we will be collecting them this school year. Your sending in box tops pays for programs like Brain Pop!

Britt PTA website:
www.brittpta.com

2011-2012 Britt Teacher of the Year!

Congratulations Michelle Martinez!

Michelle teaches 4th grade at Britt.

She received her degrees in Early Education and Elementary Reading from Georgia Southern and Walden University. She believes that the classroom should be a learning experience for both students and teachers.

Ms. Martinez believes her classroom is a stepping stone in the children's educational journey which will help them to acquire the skills and motivation to prepare them for their future.



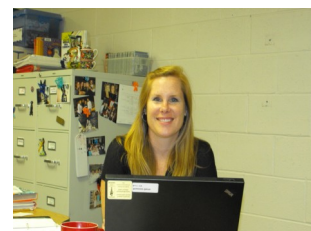
Congratulations Teacher of the Year Runners-up!

Shannon Davis

Shannon teaches Focus classes to K-5 students at Britt.

She received her degrees in Early Childhood Education and Psychology from University of Georgia and Lincoln Memorial College.

Ms. Davis believes in guiding students to find and strengthen their potential. She plans activities that focus on creativity, logic, and problem solving.

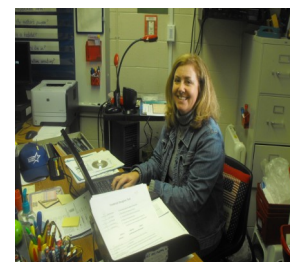


Pamela Zuber

Pamela Zuber is a 3rd grade teacher at Britt.

She received her degrees in Education from William Patterson College and Walden University.

One quote that Ms. Zuber believes in her classroom is that "all students can rise to the classroom expectation of their personal best!" She strives to communicate with her students, their parents, and co-workers to build vital relationships.



Kindergarten AKS

LA:Reading-retell the beginning, middle, & end of a story; sequence events in a story; identify opposites.

Writing:begin to use capitalization/punctuation; begin to write a story with one event.

MATH:describe passages of time; order daily events; compare and order objects according to length and height; label sets by writing numerals 0-20; identify the location of an object; identify coins by name and value.

SCIENCE:describe & compare objects in terms of number, shape, texture, size, weight, color, and motion; after an investigation, draw/write an explanation of the observation; observe the effect of gravity.

SOCIAL STUDIES:identify the purpose of Veteran's & Thanksgiving Day.

First Grade AKS

LA:follow three part directions, identify exclamation point and apostrophe, read compound words, identify verbs, write a narrative story with beginning/middle/end.

Writing:Write a clear beginning, middle, and end for a story; focus on narrative and informational writing.

MATH:place value, practicing addition and subtraction strategies; telling time.

SCIENCE:natural resources; animals and non living things.

SOCIAL STUDIES: goods and services; describe how Thomas Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, Sacagawea displayed positive character traits, commitment, and respect for others.

Second Grade AKS

LA:retell: plot, setting, & characters; summarize; identify character action, motives, emotions, traits, and feelings; identify silent letters, & alphabetize to the second letter in a word.

Writing:organize a writing piece with a clear beginning, middle, and end using transitional words and time cues; use linking verbs when writing; write a friendly letter.

MATH:tell time to five minutes; estimate and measure temperature; explore temperature using Celsius; collect data and organize it onto a graph.

SCIENCE:identify three state of matter (solid, liquid, gas) and sort materials according to their states; compare and contrast the different properties of matter.

SOCIAL STUDIES:read about and describe the lives of the Creek and Cherokee in Georgia history.

Third Grade AKS

LA:Reading-summarize and paraphrase stories and important ideas in informational text; locate titles in the table of contents; use guide words in the dictionary; identify purpose of the thesaurus and where glossaries are located in books.

Writing:use organizational structures to convey order, cause and effect, similarities & differences, questions & answers; learn how to take notes by summarizing.

MATH: classify triangles, identify polygons, identify and compare angles, identify diameter and radius.

SCIENCE:compare and contrast the texture, particle size, and color in top soils; classify rocks according to how they were formed.

SOCIAL STUDIES:discuss the life of Susan B. Anthony, Frederick Douglass, and Mary McLeod Bethune; describe their efforts to expand people's rights and freedoms.

Fourth Grade AKS

LA: Reading-present information through reports, demonstrations, & projects; use paragraphs, topic sentences, concluding sentences, glossary, headings, italics, & graphics to comprehend informational texts; distinguish cause from effect & fact from opinion; identify & use prefixes, root words, suffixes, & word parts to identify words in text.

Writing:write an informational piece in various content areas that is organized, uses appropriate facts and details, and reflects the intended audience.

MATH:identify & explain the commutative, associative, and distributive properties; explain the relationship between dividend, divisor, quotient, & remainder; multiply and divide.

SCIENCE:analyze the role of relative position & motion in determining the sequence of the phases of the moon; analyze the components of our solar system and their relationship to one another.

SOCIAL STUDIES:understand the development of the 13 original colonies; explain the development of the Declaration of Independence; describe major events of the Revolution; explain factors leading to American victory & British defeat; name key individuals in the American Revolution.

Fifth Grade AKS

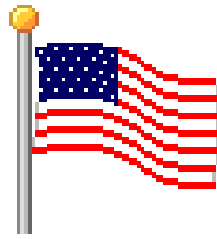
LA:Writing-organizational patterns of reading passages; compare & contrast, chronological order, cause and effect, classification, argument and support; imagery and figurative language; correctly using and identifying verb tenses; using correct punctuation marks, including commas, semicolons, apostrophes, & quotation marks; persuasive writing skills.

MATH:find equivalent fractions, compare and order fractions and mixed numbers, add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers.

SCIENCE:analyze how surface features of the earth are caused by constructive and destructive forces such as deposition, earthquakes, volcanoes, and faults.

SOCIAL STUDIES:analyze basic economic concepts, describe how consumers & businesses interact in the U.S. economy; describe how life changed in America at the turn of the 20th century.

News from the Media Center



Britt Elementary would like to thank the American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 232 in Snellville for their monetary donation to the media center to buy books related to Veterans and Americanism. Also, we want to say thank you for their extra donation this year for books related to our Drug Awareness program to help our students become aware of the dangers of drug use.

Counselor's Corner



Please contact Ms. Taylor-Crawford right away if you are interested in receiving community resources for holiday assistance. Please be advised that several programs required early registration in order to receive help. If you are also aware of programs throughout Gwinnett County providing assistance for families, please feel free to share this information with Ms. Taylor-Crawford.

ART SHOW December 13th!



Come one, come all to see your child's artwork on display at the Britt Art Show. Nearly 600 masterpieces on display to celebrate creativity and talent. Free face-painting too! All work will be framed and available for purchase at \$25 a piece. Copies can be made on request. Cash only. A portion of the proceeds goes to benefit the art program right here at your school. Be there on December 13th between 6:00-8:00 PM to browse or to buy. If you can't make it, contact Ms. Yurko for pre-sale information.

Spotlighting our Teachers

Congratulations September Technology Teacher!



2011-2012's first Technology Teacher of the Month came out of the gates running in August. In the last few months of last year, she committed to using technology for more engaging work and a more efficient practice. She carried that momentum right into the new school year. In the last few months, you may have caught her students practicing subject/verb agreement and taking an informal math assessment using Mimio Studio. They have also used Kidspiration to complete a social studies project, and created inspired writing projects on Power Point and KidPix.

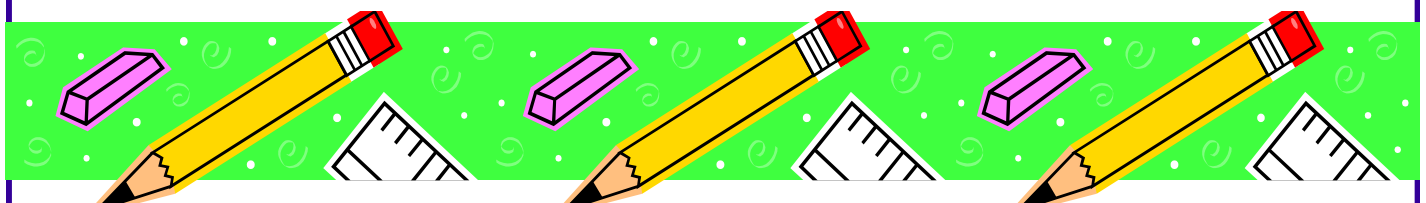
But, maybe even more impressive than her growth is the commitment and motivation she has shown in that time. She asks questions, searches for options, and attends workshops every chance she gets. She has run into problems, snags, and frustrations, and worked through them patiently. It is clear that she is making a point to grow in this direction not because of a county program or pressure from outside, but because she thinks it is the right thing for her students and will keep her on top of her career.

Geez, Louise, it's looking like a great year for many of our first graders, don't 'ya know, because you betcha, Ms. Andrea Wade is the new school year's first Technology Teacher of the Month.

Congratulations September Instructor of the Month!



This Instructor of the Month is brought to you by the letter B. Beans, blogs, and books have made this classroom more exciting. Her students are blogging book reviews, dissecting lima bean, and extracting vocabulary words among other things. Her classroom hums with the buzz of industry as students make predictions in science and reading. Our Instructor of the Month is Ms. Brenda Straus.



Spotlighting our Teachers

Congratulations October Technology Teacher of the Month!



When the average teacher sees a new technology tool or application, they usually react with one of these three attitudes: 1) I can't do that. 2) I can do that. 3) I'd like to do that so I am going to figure out how. Every once in a while, there are teachers who have a fourth attitude! 4) I am not just going to do that, I am going to make it even better.

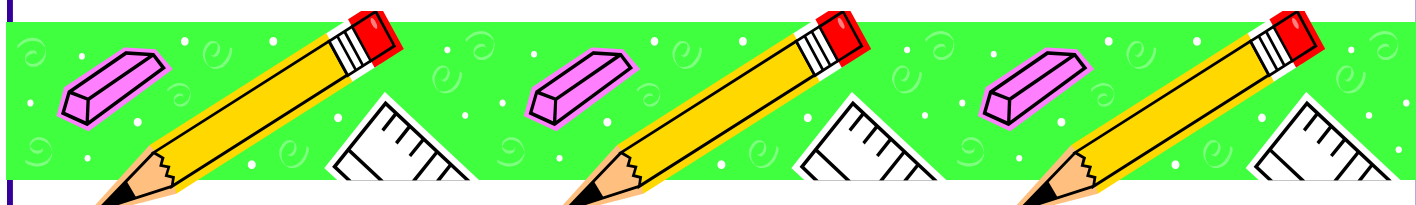
The October Technology Teacher of the Month is one of those teachers. Time after time you'll see her take something made for one kind of classroom setting and adapt it to another. She'll take something for one teacher's class and rework it so several others can use it. She makes things more interesting. She makes things more accessible. You get the impression that she can see a new technological tool in the morning- maybe one not even made for education- and come up with ten different ways to teach with it by the end of the day. It's a good thing she can, because we're pretty sure that Mary Lynn McCarthy has ten different jobs at Britt. She's found ways to use clickers in class with one student, Mimio in Reading Recovery, and children's books in staff development. She is never content just to using something as she's seen it. She is always pushing the envelope and making them even better.

Congratulations October Instructor of the Month!



Our Instructor of the month teaches in riddles, vegetables and pictures. If you are in her class, you might be applying your knowledge of fact families to determine the Vegetable Pick of the Day, writing math riddles to challenge your friends, or taking pictures of Snellville to remind troops of what home looks like.

Not only is this teacher teaching her students how to use model drawing to solve equations, but she is also teaching other teachers in our county. Our October Instructor of the Month is Shannon Davis.



Spotlighting our Teachers

Congratulations November Technology Teacher of the Month!

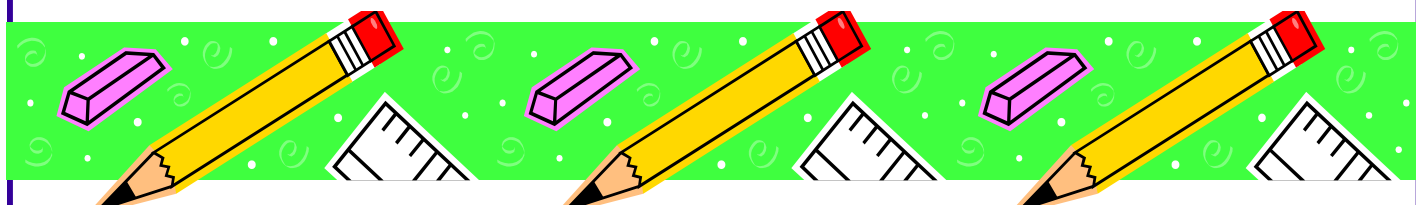


The last month has been a technological times, it was the worst of times. At the same time that many teachers excitedly unboxed their mimios for the first time and found great success with PebbleGo and several other great resources from the word study workshops, they also ran into one technology glitch, holdup, and frustration after another. But the November Technology Teacher of the Month was not about to let the bad get in the way of the good. Most of the time, technology tickets read something like “my ___ is not working.” We got one from her this month that said “my Mimio isn’t working and I REALLY need it as soon as possible because now that I’ve started using it, I don’t want to go back! Can you please get here this afternoon so it is ready for tomorrow morning?” And also concerning her Mimio, a quote from an email she sent: “I heard that the Mimio class will be offered tomorrow morning at 7:30 but.... I have a staff development class at that time... I am really excited and very eager to learn more about this really great resource that I have in my classroom (I’ve even cleared room for it, I hope it’s good enough for it now near my board area-) so do you think you will possibly be able to offer a make-up class again, sometime soon?” And out of her enthusiasm in that request, a 2nd Mimio staff development class in the afternoon was born! Her enthusiasm was matched only by the quality of her teaching. Cutting-edge tools don’t make a teacher great, but they sure can make a great teachers even better when put in the right hands. Overcoming all obstacles and seizing every opportunity, it was impossible not to see the huge strides made by the November Technology Teacher of the Month, Bea Bokina.

Congratulations November Instructor of the Month!



The November Instructor of the Month facilitates numerous small groups in Guided Math and Guided Reading. She also utilized technology for the math tutorials. She tutors students after school hours as needed, and she builds relationships with students encouraging them to achieve to their greatest potential. She serves on the literacy team, and she is a vital member of Britt’s fifth grade team. Britt Elementary School’s November Instructor of the Month is Dolores Garcia.



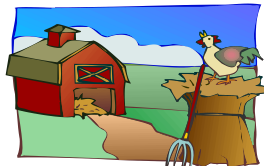
2011-2012 Teacher of the Year Donations

Special thanks...

The following companies donated very special things to our Britt Elementary School Teacher of the year and the runners-up. Stone Mountain Park and Evergreen Marriott, Van Adams Jewelers, Renewed Vision, Gwinnett Braves, Office Depot, Chick-fil-A Hwy. 124, Mulberry Moon, Bouquets Unlimited, The Avenue Webb Ginn, BIC, Dog Tags Unlimited, and the Britt Administration.

Happy Holidays from the Cafeteria!

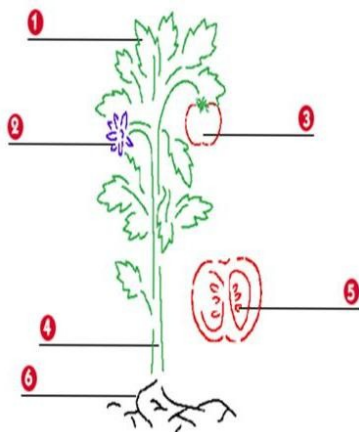
December is Healthy Lifestyles Month



There are lots of farms with chickens in Georgia. In fact, Georgia is the number one producer of chicken in the United States. Gainesville, Georgia is even called the "Poultry Capital of the World". Poultry, in this case, means chicken! Georgia is also one of the top producers of eggs. Cattle are also raised in Georgia and used to produce beef and milk. Pigs or hogs are raised in Georgia too. Choosing animal products from Georgia farms or local farms helps support the farmers and also may mean that we get fresher food.

Edible Parts of Plants

Almost all parts of plants are edible, although not every part of every plant is edible. The main parts of plants are the roots, the stems, the seeds. The leaves, the fruits, and the flowers. We get so used to buying fruits and vegetables at the grocery store that it can be easy to forget what the whole plant looks like!



Roots (6) The roots are the parts of the plant that are usually below the ground and carry nutrients to the rest of the plant. Beets, carrots, turnips, potatoes, onions, radishes, rutabagas, and parsnips are roots.

Seeds (5) A seed is an embryonic plant with a seed coat. Peas, beans, wheat, sunflower seeds, and pumpkin seeds are examples of seeds.

Leaves (1) The leaves are usually the parts of plants where the majority of photosynthesis occurs. Lettuce, spinach, turnip greens, collard greens, mustard greens, and cabbage are leaves.

Fruit (3) Fruits are the parts of plants where the seeds are usually contained. Peppers, tomatoes, squash, apples and pears are fruits.

Flowers (2) Flowers are the reproductive structure of plants. Broccoli, cauliflower, and artichokes are flowers.

Stem (4) Stems hold plants up, store food, and transport water and nutrients. Celery, rhubarb, bamboo shoots, broccoli stems, and asparagus are stems.



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The Comet Connection Newsletter

The Comet Connection is a publication of W. C.

Britt Elementary School for Britt families. Please e-mail questions or comments to the

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