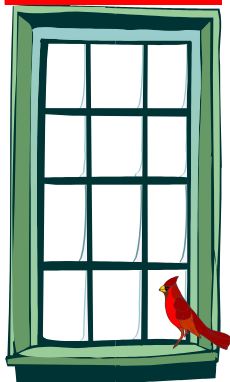


April  
2011



MATOAKA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

# Bird's Eye View

## From Our PTA President, Leanne Conrad

Spring is officially here! Every Spring the PTA starts the planning process for next year. Nominations for next year's PTA officers were announced at the PTA Meeting in March. The nominees are:

Erin Otis - President  
Christian Dunn - VP of Fundraising  
Leanne Conrad - VP of Programs  
Karen Quinlan - Treasurer  
Diane Lee - Recording Secretary  
Loralee Clark - Corresponding Secretary

We will have a PTA General Membership Meeting at Matoaka's Fine Arts Night on April 19th at 6:20 pm to vote in the new officers. We are currently looking for PTA members that would be interested in serving as a committee chair for next year. The list of available positions with descriptions is included in this newsletter. The PTA is only as strong as it's leaders, so please take a look at the positions and see if there is anything that peaks your interest.

The PTA is sponsoring a couple of fun family programs coming up this

Spring, including the last Family Fun Night of the year on Friday, April 29th. The Family Fun Night Committee is planning a fantastic evening that includes a sing along with Mr. Spence and a magic show. It will be free for all Matoaka families. Also, coming up is the 4th Annual Parent/Teacher Volleyball Game on Thursday, May 26th. We are looking for parents to play against the teachers. Send an email to Christian Dunn at [dunncleigh@yahoo.com](mailto:dunncleigh@yahoo.com) if you would like to play. The teachers won the game last year and we want to redeem ourselves!

Finally, Teacher Appreciation Week is May 2nd - 6th this year. The PTA Hospitality Committee has been working with the Matoaka Room Moms to coordinate a wonderful week for our teachers. We appreciate all the help that the Room Moms are giving us to make the week really special. Enjoy your Spring Break!

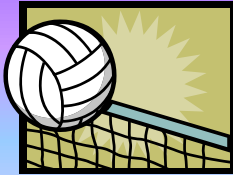
Sincerely,  
Leanne Conrad,  
PTA President

## Calendar of Events

April	19:	Matoaka Fine Arts Night
	19:	PTA General Membership Meeting (PTA Officer Elections)
	22:	Deadline for May Bird's Eye View Newsletter
	29:	Family Fun Night
May	2 - 6 :	Teacher Appreciation Week
	19:	PTA Meeting, 7 pm
	22:	Deadline for June Bird's Eye View Newsletter
	26:	Annual Parent/Teacher Volleyball Game

**4th Annual Matoaka Parent/Teacher  
Volleyball Game  
Thursday, May 26th, 6:30 PM**

We are looking for parents to  
play in the volleyball game and  
referee. If you can play,  
contact Christian at  
dunncleigh@yahoo.com.



**Character Trait of the Month:  
Compassion**

Compassion means being kind and thoughtful toward others. By helping others in need, I show compassion. I show compassion when I do kind things for others.



**Attention Matoaka Families**

Do you have "gently" used Matoaka Spirit Wear T-shirts that your kids have outgrown and you just don't know what to do with? You can donate them back to the PTA so we can sell them at a reasonable price. A drop-off box will be located in the front office. We greatly appreciate your donations in support of our PTA programs!



Do you like to be creative on the computer? Do you want to work on your own time schedule?



You can be the one who gets the latest news from Matoaka first in your email box!

We are looking for a new **Web Designer** for our Matoaka PTA webpage. Check it out: [www.matoaka-pta.org](http://www.matoaka-pta.org)

For more questions please contact  
Melanie Felbinger,  
[webmaster@matoaka-pta.org](mailto:webmaster@matoaka-pta.org)

**Lost and Found...**

Has your child lost a lunchbox, jacket or some other personal item this year at school? You are not alone! The Lost and Found is overflowing with personal items that have been left behind. Please check with the main office or Matt Lawrence, Head Custodian to find your lost items.

Newsletter submissions can be made via email at [loralee13@verizon.net](mailto:loralee13@verizon.net).

The deadline for the monthly newsletter is the 22nd of each month. Don't miss the opportunity to spread the word to family, school, staff and PTA members about what's going on in and around our school.

# Walk-a-Thon

Our 4th annual Spring Walk-a-Thon was a huge success! With the generous support of our parents, students and teachers **we were able to raise over \$13,000!** Our top two fund raising classes were Mrs. Moore's class and Ms. Eaton's class, which both raised over \$800! Our top five fund raising students were



1. Rhyan Granger
2. Sophia Liu
3. Justin Melton
4. (tie) Kendall Jones and Alexis Quillman



Congratulations! Thanks to all of our walkers who showed their Cardinal Pride!



Matoaka classes have been planting seeds in the school garden this Spring. Last month they put down compost and planted peas, turnips, broccoli and pansies.

SHIP (School Health Initiative Project) donated four beautiful large red pots and soil, so that more herbs can be planted in the garden. Thank you SHIP for the fabulous donation to our garden!

## Matoaka PTA Board Positions

The following positions are open on the Matoaka PTA Board next year. Please consider volunteering! Contact Leanne Conrad at [elconrads@aol.com](mailto:elconrads@aol.com) if you are interested.

- **Walkathon Coordinator** – Coordinates the spring walkathon (could be 2 co-chairs). *Timeframe: Spring.*
- **Harvest Festival co-chair** – 3 co-chairs are needed to coordinate the Harvest Festival next October. *Timeframe: August - October.*
- **Family Fun Nights co-chair** – 2 co-chairs are needed to coordinate the family fun nights, such as family movie night, W&M basketball game and family game night. *Timeframe: three times a year.*
- **Healthy Lifestyles Coordinator** – Works with the PTA on providing healthy options at PTA programs. *Timeframe: year round.*
- **PTA Membership co-chair** – 2 people are needed to coordinate the membership drive table at back to school night and the open house. Also maintains the membership list throughout the year. *Timeframe: Fall.*
- **Web-site Manager** – Maintains the PTA website. *Timeframe: Year round.*
- **Coin Drive Chair** - Sets up a coin drive (in the past it has been for one week). *Timeframe: Two week period.*
- **Fine Arts Night Chair** – Coordinates the snack & punch for fine arts night. Could possibly also be in charge of a PTA sponsored art contest leading up to Fine Arts Night. *Timeframe: April.*
- **Merchandise Chair** – Maintains a stock of merchandise and orders new merchandise when necessary from vendors. Fills the Matoaka merchandise (t-shirts, hoodies, shoelaces, etc.) orders. Coordinates a table at Open House, Back to School Night, Science Fair, Fine Arts Night. *Timeframe: Year round.*
- **Publicity** – Takes pictures of PTA programs and events for inclusion on the website and in the newsletter. May also be asked to advertise community events in the local newspapers and around Williamsburg. *Timeframe: Year round.*
- **Volunteer Coordinator** – Maintains a list of volunteers and distributes Matoaka Elementary School as they come in to the appropriate committee chair. *Timeframe: Fall.*



# Matoaka Family Fun Night

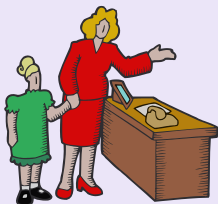
Our next Matoaka Family Fun Night will be held at the school on Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6:30 pm. We are planning a great night of entertainment and games. Our very own, Mr. Spence, will lead off the evening with a group sing-a-long, followed by a show from Trey Bo the Magician. We also have some fun, large group games planned. Come on out and join the fun!



## Counselor's Corner



SAVE THE DATE:  
NATIONAL TAKE OUR  
DAUGHTERS AND SONS TO WORK DAY



Thursday, April 28, 2011



# Arbor Day

Arbor Day is a nationally-celebrated observance that encourages tree planting and care. Founded by J. Sterling Morton in 1872, it's celebrated on the last Friday in April. That means this year it is April 30th! Other than planting a tree, you can also do these activities with your child(ren):

- Make sandwiches and use leaf cookie cutters to create leaf-shaped sandwiches
- Use evergreen branches as paintbrushes
- Use crayons to make leaf rubbings on paper












Screen-Free Week is a national celebration where children, families, schools & communities spend seven days turning off entertainment screen media and turning on life. It's a time to unplug and play, read, daydream, create, explore and spend more time with family and friends.

As parents you have influence over the amount of TV your children are able to watch. Watching TV takes time away from the physical activity that kids need every day to be healthy and happy. Children who are physically active are less likely to be overweight, are sick less often, do better in school, sleep better, and are less likely to feel sad, depressed, or stressed. Adults experience many of these same benefits. Watching too much TV can not only keeps kids sedentary, but kids also see about 40,000 ads on TV each year, most of which are for candy, cereal and fast food. These ads pressure kids to choose unhealthy foods to eat. To learn more, go to [www.commercialfreechildhood.org/screenfreeweek/index.html](http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/screenfreeweek/index.html)

COMMERCIAL  
FREE  
WEEK

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<p>Cook s'mores using the BBQ to roast the marshmallows.</p> 	<p>Brainstorm some ideas &amp; gather recipes &amp; ingredients to cook a meal together.</p> 	<p>Write a story together.</p> 
<p>Have a family slumber party in the living room or den.</p> 	<p>Let your kids pick a picnic spot &amp; play Frisbee afterwards.</p> 	<p>If your child is reading a book, read it yourself &amp; discuss it during family meals.</p> 
<p>Get out the family photo album.</p> 	<p>Put a sleeping bag out in the back yard &amp; watch the night sky through binoculars.</p> 	<p>Listen to classical music with the lights out &amp; discuss what the music sounds like.</p> 

## GREAT ONLINE RESOURCES FOR HOMEWORK

**WebMath.com:** This site is a lifesaver when your child gets stumped on a math problem. Refresh your math memory quickly by typing in the problem. WebMath shows you step-by-step how to solve it.

**merriam-webster.com:** The Merriam-Webster Online Student Dictionary. Put this link where your child can get to it instantly so that this tool becomes a habit during word processing. What an easy way to increase vocabulary and learn to write well!

**Awesomelibrary.org:** Awesome Library - K-12 Education Directory. School librarians know the web, so you will find excellent results when you search the Awesome Library.

**www.ipl.org/div/kidspage/:** Kidspage at Internet Public Library. The ever-useful Internet Public Library will now be maintained and updated by a consortium of fourteen universities. Should be good!

(article excerpt from  
childparenting.about.com)



## Children & Sleep: Is Your Child Getting Enough Shut-Eye?

By Katherine Lee, About.com Guide

For many active school-aged children, sleep can be as hard to come by as it is for busy adults. After-school activities, homework, and playtime with family and friends can all lead to a packed schedule. Add to that the lure of electronics such as TV, computers and videogames, and you have the makings of chronic sleep deficit in kids.

Since school-aged children need between 10 to 12 hours of sleep, parents must be vigilant about enforcing bedtimes, setting up good sleep routines, and watching for signs of fatigue in their children. It's especially important for school-aged kids to get enough rest. For one thing, one of the factors that can reduce one's immune system's ability to fight off infections is not getting enough sleep, and as we know, kids in school are constantly exposed to transmittable illnesses such as colds from classmates. Lack of sleep in children has also been associated with health problems ranging from obesity to mood swings, as well as cognitive problems that can have an impact on a child's ability to concentrate, pay attention, and learn in school.

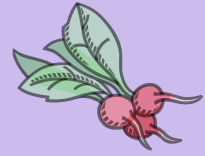
If you think your child might not be getting enough sleep, look for these signs that she is not getting the amount of sleep she needs.

- Has trouble waking up in the morning
- Exhibits irritable behavior
- Seems overly emotional and moody
- Is hyperactive
- Has difficulty concentrating in school
- Has trouble staying awake during the day

So what can you do to make sure your child sleeps enough to function at his best? Try these tips:

1. Stick to a routine
2. Don't let your child use the computer or watch TV at least an hour before bedtime
3. Keep her room comfortable for sleeping. Bedrooms that are quiet, dark and cool are optimal for a good night's rest.
4. If your grade-schooler has younger or older siblings, be sure you give each child individual time
5. Curb the sneaky caffeine
6. Watch your child instead of the clock. How much your child needs to sleep can vary depending on his individual needs. Some kids may do just fine on 8 hours of sleep where others may need a solid 10 hours or more.

# Feeding Ourselves, Feeding the Earth



When asked what a mother loved about eating local, in-season foods, she answered: “I love that . . .

- My children know when food is fresh by the season, the taste and the smell.
- I’ve learned to cook foods I thought I hated.
- My kitchen is decorated for the season, just by going shopping.
- I can name the source of everything on our dinner table.
- The consciousness of food production leads to consciousness in all production.
- Shopping has ritual and tradition.
- Eating seasonally brings spontaneity and creativity to our diet.
- I can trust in the earth to bring nutrition to my family.
- I find community in the farmers and other market goers.
- I’ve learned to preserve, giving me security and comfort in the cold of winter.
- I recognize the power I have to shape my life.
- My family knows I practice, and cherish, my beliefs.”

That quote from Sherene Cauley was an excerpt from “Eating Seasonal” on the website Rhythm of the Home. Another example of what can happen when children understand food and where it comes from is from the same website, but from a different mom:

Last night, while the garden snoozed under blankets of snow, I placed a jar of our home-canned pickles on the dinner table. “Pickles,” mused my six year old son thoughtfully, “aren’t like food you grow. They come from another food.”

It could have been an answer from Jeopardy! The Kindergarten Round, as in: “I’ll take Food Preservation for \$100, Mama.”

I could see Col flipping through his mental files, perhaps conjuring up the hot September day we plucked cucumbers from scratchy vines, or the corresponding night when cucumbers, garlic and dill seeds marched through the pickling assembly line of our kitchen.

“They’re from cucumbers!” Col remembered, and a chorus of angels blew trumpets in my garden-loving heart. —Rachel Turiel

Even if we don’t plant gardens, even if we don’t preserve the foods we eat, we can still teach our children about the seasonality of food, the importance of eating fresh, local fruits and vegetables, and we can aid in their discovery and exploration of plants which sustain us! If you want to begin small, plant a sweet potato in a jar. place it so half the potato is above the water. Watch how the leaves sprout and the roots spread out. It doesn’t need sun, but it does need a lot of water—so make sure it doesn’t dry out.

Here’s to learning from the Earth and understanding the value in what it gives to us. And the value in what we can give back...which we will explore more in next month’s article!

—Loralee Clark

# Earth Day Every Day



AIR  
ANIMALS  
CARE  
CLEAN  
CONSERVATION  
EARTH  
ECOSYSTEM  
ENERGY  
EXTINCT  
FUEL  
HABITAT  
HOME  
LANDFILLS  
LITTER  
OCEANS  
OXYGEN  
OZONE  
PEOPLE  
PLANTS  
POLLUTION  
PRESERVE  
RAINFOREST  
RECYCLE  
RESOURCE  
REUSE  
SOIL  
VOLUNTEER  
WATER  
WETLANDS  
WORLD

V O X K R Z C T S F T P F Y  
P Z X O C E A N S U S P A S C  
T O P Y M E C R Y S C G A S C  
P N K O G L E T D N N R L Q E S  
E E H G L E L N U E T E R O R V  
X N O S L L A U N T E E M C E A  
T A K P I A U N T E E M C E A  
I E V O L U N T E E M C E A  
N L I T T E R A I N F O R E S T  
C C E W R A E S L A H L L P N  
T T A T I B A K S T N A L U  
C E C E K R O W Y B Q R E  
G D L R O W Y B Q R E

## Breathing with Trees



Lie on the ground under a tree.  
Look up at the leaves.

Breathe in deep breaths.  
Slowly breathe out.  
Look up at the tree,  
and think about this:

The air you breathe in  
is breathed out by the tree.

The air you breathe out  
is breathed in by the tree.

From the tree to you,  
From you to the tree.

You and the leaves...  
the leaves and you.

Back and forth...  
Forth and back...

Over and over...

*the Breath of Life.*



"Breathing with  
Trees" makes a  
great bookmark!



Earth Corner: 4/22 is Earth Day!



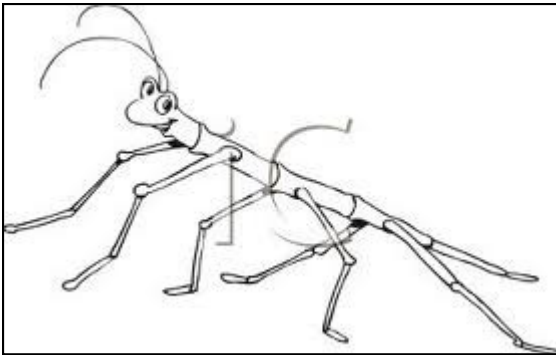
With kind permission from  
*The Kids Book of Awesome Stuff*  
by Charlotte Breman

© Disney  
Kubrick.com



# Crafty Kids!

Preschool Activities!



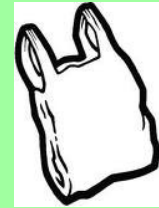
Go buggy! Paint them on paper and rocks; draw them on cards; make them from egg cartons & pipe cleaners; learn a new bug and draw it over and over; make models of them from clay—whole armies of insects!

Crawling, flying, gliding on water, coming out only at night, pollinating flowers and fruit, building homes and caring for their colonies.

Those plastic grocery bags can really pile up. Keep them from ending up in the land fill by reusing them & keeping them organized. (crafts.preschoolrock.com)

- Empty Oatmeal Container
- Paints – colors to match your kitchen & green and blue
- Paint Brushes
- Knife – adult use only!
- Plastic Grocery Bags

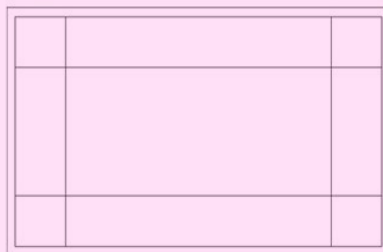
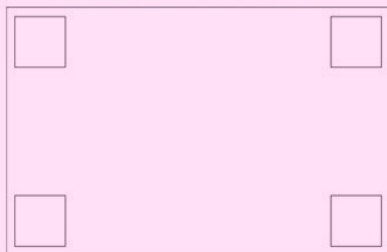
Toward the lower end of the oatmeal box the adult will cut a hole about 3 inches in diameter; this is where you will be pulling out the bags. Let your child paint the container. On the top of the oatmeal box lid, have your child paint it to look like the earth with the green and blue paints. When dry, fill it with all your plastic bags.



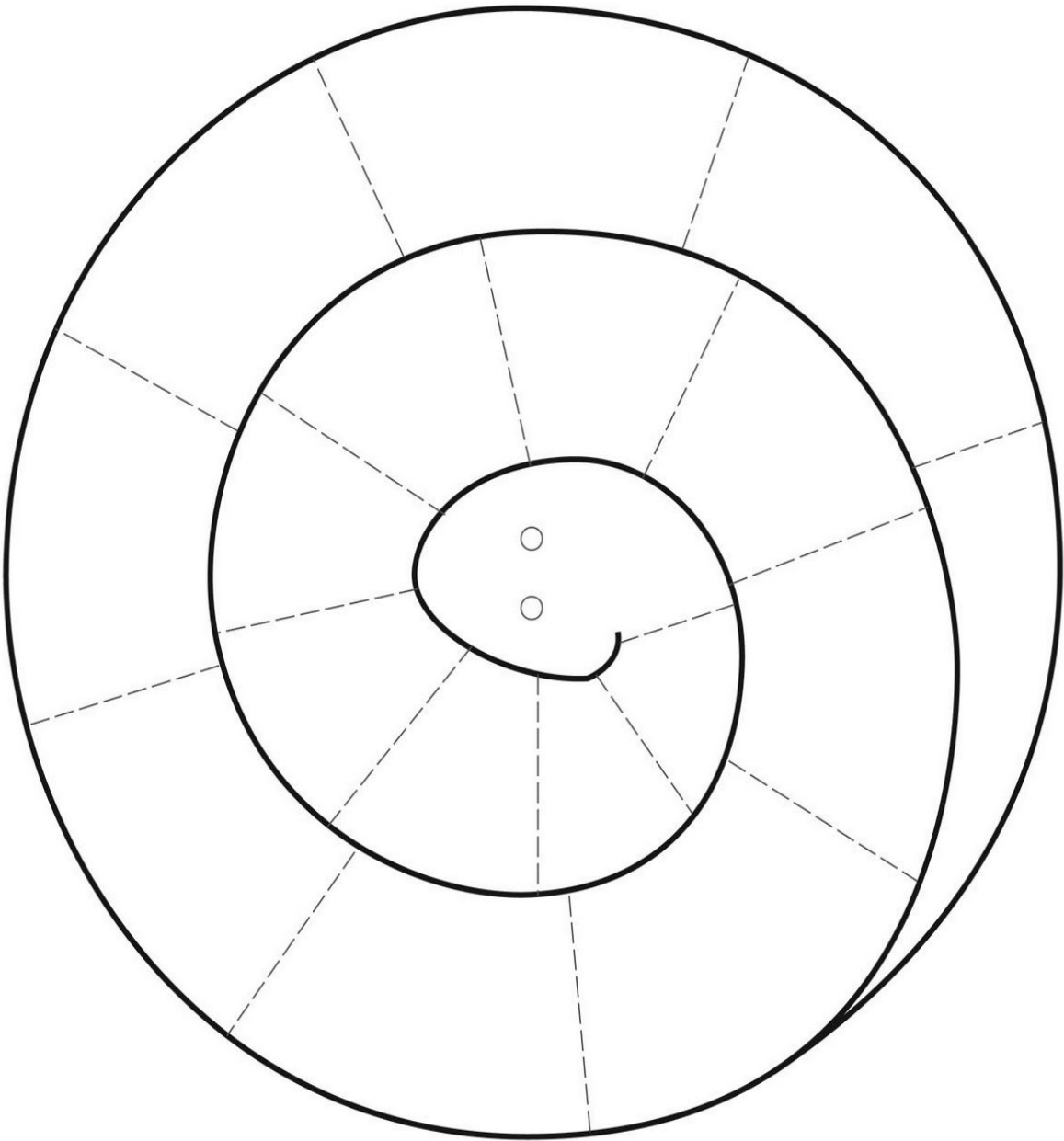
## Here's an idea for an Easter or Spring Card: Use a grid format.

- Start by folding a piece of 8.5" x 11" watercolor paper in half. To make a quick grid without a lot of measuring, use a 1" square of thin cardboard. Place the square in each corner, and trace around it as shown in the first diagram.
- With a ruler, connect the lines to complete the border as shown. Spring and Easter details may be added.
- After the drawing is complete with a pencil, trace the lines with a black ballpoint pen and color the shapes with watercolor.

—www.artprojectsforkids.org



## Pattern Snake



### Directions

1. Starting at the tail, students use markers to color in the consecutive snake sections. For example, A-B-A-B could be red, blue, red, blue. A-B-C-A-B-C could be red, blue, yellow, red, blue, yellow and so on.
2. Using a thin black marker, students could choose a line pattern for each of their colored sections. For example, all red sections could have hearts drawn in them, all blue could have diamonds, and so on.
3. Students cut out the snake with scissors, following the thick black line that ends on the head. A string is attached to the head and the snake is ready to hang for display.

[www.artprojectsforkids.org](http://www.artprojectsforkids.org)