

### December 13, 2013 - Staunton City Schools Tip Sheet

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#### **WARE STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN HOUR OF CODE**

This week, Ware students are participating in the “Hour of Code.” This national project is designed to teach computer science skills to students and to peak their interest in the subject. Computer teacher at Ware, Mrs. Aistrop-Vanhook is introducing each student in grades 1 - 5 to computer programming. The 1<sup>st</sup> graders played Angry Birds in a very unconventional way as they used the program "Blockly" (a visual programming language where you drag and drop blocks to create code) to program their bird to capture the angry pig. It's an unconventional manner to play in that students just don't move a mouse or click on buttons; the students had to actually write the code to move their characters in a manner that would allow them to win the game. Each block represented a movement like 'move forward', 'turn right', 'turn left', etc. First graders, Gavin and Dale, really enjoyed figuring out which blocks they needed to use to have their birds win at each of the 20 levels. Another student, Derryan, especially enjoyed writing the code that let him play, but he has since gotten stuck on a level that he is trying to work through...he is showing no signs of giving up!

To create animated winter cards, the 5<sup>th</sup> graders are using “Scratch,” which allows student to code their own interactive games, stories, and more. The students had a blast programming their characters to move, dance, and "talk" on their cards. The ability to program animation is what really made this activity fun for them.



Derryan Cowherd smiles as he works on code for a game.

**LEARNING FROM PETS AT BESSIE WELLER**

What do we learn from having pets in our classrooms? Logan Carbajal, a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade student in Mrs. Jen Sams' class at Bessie Weller Elementary School says, "I think it is a good experience. I also had a pet in my kindergarten class and I have pets at home." By taking care of an animal the students learn to use gentle hands and to provide the necessities of life: food, water and shelter for the classroom pet. Another student, Leyla Brown said, "We can trade in our Bee Bucks (Bessie Weller's classroom rewards) to have special time with Bella the Guinea Pig. Mrs. Sams tells us when we can feed Bella and we learn about taking care of animals so they can live." Bella the Guinea Pig was photographed on school picture day and will appear alongside her human classmates in the school's yearbook.



Logan Carbajal and Leyla Brown take care of Bella the Guinea Pig in their second grade classroom at Bessie Weller Elementary School.



School photos of Bella and Oreo (the classroom pet of Mrs. Liskey's second grade class) are proudly displayed on the Principal's desk.

**LEE STUDENTS VISIT LOCAL INDUSTRIES**

Visitors to the School Counseling Department at Robert E. Lee High School will notice a new banner on display. The banner represents many of the more than fifty industries in the local area offering careers that are in demand. Some of the companies whose logos are shown on the banner include: The Hershey Company, Little Debbie, Hollister, Merck, PGI, Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport, and NIBCO, just to name a few. Every month, Lee's Career Coach, Brett Peters, and the School Counselors take a group of approximately twenty students to visit some of these companies. These visits help the students to become more aware of the education requirements and skills needed to work in these fields. During their visit, the students tour the site and have the opportunity to observe workers in various jobs with differing skill and education requirements. Students are able to see first-hand the kinds of tasks these workers are doing. Mr. Brett Peters states, "It is good for the students to be aware of all of the options they have available to them out in the workforce."



Brett Peters, Career Coach and Val Payne, School Counselor show the new banner on display at Lee.

### CELLIST VISITS SHELBURNE

Shelburne was recently visited by a professional Russian cellist, Dmitry Volkov. He played beautiful music for Shelburne’s band and choral students and engaged the students musically. Mr. Volkov facilitated detailed discussions about how music ties into life and the other arts and about pitch and the nature of sound by asking students to “imagine the season, color, and title” of various pieces. Students were able to share their interpretations of the music and to ask Mr. Volkov about various aspects of his career.

Dmitry Volkov, the winner of the 2009 Carlos Prieto International Cello Competition, regularly performs solo concerts across the globe. He won First Prize in the Midland-Odessa Symphony National Young Artist Competition (2011), the Heifetz Institute of Music Concerto Competition (2009), and the Togliatti International Competition for Strings, (2002), as well as Second Prize in the Teacher and Student International Competition (2003). Having graduated from the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory in the studio of Natalia Shakhovskaya in 2011, he is pursuing an Artist Diploma at the Peabody Institute in the studio of Amit Peled.

Robert Craft, Sheburne Middle School Principal said, “It was such a pleasure to have Mr. Volkov visit. The students were in awe of his talent and experience as they listened to him play and engaged in conversation with him. Our band teachers, Mr. Nesmith and Mr. Wadsworth enjoyed a special treat as they were invited to play along with him on a song.” The visit was made possible by the Heifetz Institute and was coordinated by Mrs. Dori Walk, Executive Director of Instruction for Staunton City Schools.



Dmitry Volkov visits Shelburne Middle School.