

BLAST, Crafts, and the Year to Come

I am moving my monthly message to the front page this month because it is an especially important one!

Finances are always a challenge—at home, at work, all over! So, it is with great sadness that I must announce that the finances of the BLAST Program have taken a turn for the worse. The School District applied for a continuation grant that would support the program for 3 more years. Due to cuts that the federal government made to the state's 21st Century Community Learning Centers budget, our grant could not be funded.

BUT DON'T GIVE UP ON BLAST!!! Last month, I wrote about "flexibility, creativity, and a 'can do' attitude." We are working creatively within the boundaries of already

tight budgets to maintain a quality after school program over the coming year. We are looking at grants, partnerships, and other funding sources to fill in the gaps. In the meantime, we need your help!

A BLAST fundraiser, which we had already started planning before we got the news about the grant, is scheduled for May 12. With a commitment from the parents and students of BLAST, we can raise a great deal of money to help support this after school program.

If you value the homework help, skills practice, and activities BLAST provides your student(s), please see page 4 to find out more about how you can help.

Thank you,
Monica Lobenstein
Program Coordinator

Volunteer Corner

Many thanks to the following volunteers for their help in March:

- Margaret Boisen**
- Karen Byrns**
- Jan Eckles**
- Connie Gates**
- Denise Gearing**
- Char Hargis**
- Ian Libert**
- Shirley Lunde**
- Joel M.**
- Caroline Olson**
- Matt O.**
- Marge Paulin**
- Arthur Schulz**
- Josh T.**
- Tyler T.**

BLAST Cancellations

Parents who have students in the BLAST Program should be aware of the following cancellation on April.

BLAST will be **canceled on April 4-5** for the holiday weekend and on **April 26** for Gebhardt's Fine Arts Night.

Other arrangements should be made for BLAST students' after school on these days.

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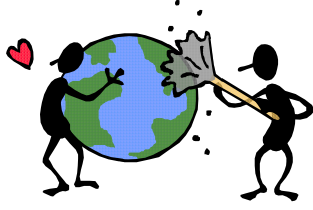
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Special points of interest:

- Celebrate the earth with a special Earth Day Celebration at the School Forest or simply by purchasing energy efficient light bulbs.
- Don't miss the fun in The Great Outdoors!
- Parents and students are asked to help support BLAST at the May 12 Craft & Gift Fair.

School Forest Earth Day Celebration

Your family is invited to join us for the School Forest Earth Day Celebration. Earth Day (April 22) is an opportunity for people to take part in activities that show appreciation for the environment and help protect that environment that we depend on.



chance to earn prizes. Best of all, families will get to know the school forest where students in the school district will be spending more time next year.

A free lunch will also be provided from 11:00-12:00 at Castle Mound Park. The lunch is being provided in partnership between the Black River Falls School Forest and the Black River State Forest. Additional activities will follow at Castle Mound.

Please join us on April 21 for the School Forest Earth Day Celebration!!



The Great Outdoors Family Fun Night

Celebrate spring with Family Fun Night! Join us at Forrest Street Early Learning Center on April 17, 2007 at 5:30 PM! Enjoy loads of outdoors, campout-type activities. Families will have a good time and won't have to worry about any bears in these "woods"!

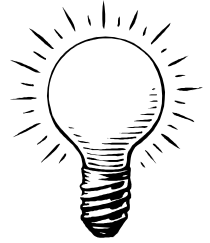
Everyday Exploration events include a free pizza meal and fun for all families that choose to

participate. Please RSVP by calling an elementary school secretary before April 10. Hope to see you at Forrest Street Early Learning Center on April 17!

Everyday Exploration events are sponsored by the The BLAST Program, Learn & Play Day Care and Preschool, Western Dairyland Head Start, and Forrest Street Early Learning Center.

Light Bulbs for Sale

The Black River Falls School Forest Advisory Committee is selling compact fluorescent light bulbs. What does this mean for you? It means BIG savings:



- The bulbs only cost \$3 each.
- If you are a Jackson Electric Cooperative customer, you earn a \$2 rebate per bulb.
- Each bulb lasts about 10 times longer than regular light bulbs, so you'll buy fewer bulbs.
- Each bulb can save \$28-\$51 in electrical costs for the household over the life of the bulb.

That's big savings for the environment too!! And, for each bulb you purchase, the schools receive \$1.25 for educational field trips to the school forest. This is possible thanks to the partnership of and generous discounts on the bulbs from Scholze Ace Home Center.

If you would like to purchase compact fluorescent light bulbs, contact Monica Lobenstein at Gebhardt School, 284-4357x5113, or at lobenmon@yahoo.com. Tell her what kind of bulbs you want (60, 75, or 100 watts), and how many of each.

Students of the Month

Mia R. is a 1st grade student at Forrest Street Early Learning Center. Mia knows her "job" at BLAST and gets right to her work without reminders. She does so with a ready smile and a positive attitude. Congratulations to our 1st-2nd grade Student of the Month.



Anthony K. is a 4th grade student from Gebhardt School. Anthony has shown a lot of growth this year in his schoolwork and in making good choices. He has also been a true leader in his 4-H club, which is made up mostly of younger students. Congratulations to our 3rd-5th grade Student of the Month.

Bluebird Houses Become a Community Project

Students in the BLAST/4-H Birds Project Club recently donated 7 bluebird houses to the Jackson County Bird Club. Based on a pattern the Club leaders – Chelsea Bahhub, Nicole Mlsna, and Virginia McArthur – had



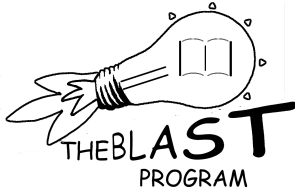
chosen, men in the Jackson Correctional Institution cut the wood and put together “kits” for the students to put together. With the help of the club leaders, the students in the Bird Club assembled the bluebird houses and decorated them.

When the bluebird houses were complete, the group chose to donate the houses. Delores Iliff and Marie Thompson accepted the bluebird houses on behalf of the Jackson County Bird Club. The houses will be added to one of Club’s bluebird routes in the community, one of which Iliff and Thompson monitor themselves.

Pictured at the left from left to right are (front) Paige L., Cole N., Brock D., (second row) Mia R., Mya M., Ryan H., Isaiah G., Sabrina K., Inez R., (back) Nicole M., Virginia M., Marie Thompson, Delores Iliff, and Chelsea B..

April Events Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4 NO BLAST	5 NO BLAST	6 NO SCHOOL	7
8	9 NO SCHOOL	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 EVERYDAY EXPLORATION— THE GREAT OUTDOORS	18	19	20	21 SCHOOL FOREST EARTH DAY CELEBRATION
22	23	24 E-MISSIONS 3:30-5:30 PM @ MIDDLE SCHOOL	25	26 NO BLAST—FINE ARTS NIGHT @ GEBHARDT	27	28
29	30					



THE BLAST PROGRAM

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Cell: 715-896-2065
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Having a BLAST learning after school

We're on the web!

<http://www.brf.org/partnership/programs/blast/index.htm>

Program Goals

The BLAST Program is an academic enrichment program being offered to 1st-5th Grade students in the School District of Black River Falls. Students from each of the three elementary schools participate at Gebhardt School, the BLAST site. BLAST has five main goals:

-  To provide one-on-one, small group, and classroom reinforcement of the ideas and skills that students are learning during the school day.
-  To offer different learning situations for students who might benefit from looking at an idea or skill in a different way.
-  To provide positive role models for students.
-  To encourage students to set goals and work toward reaching their potential.
-  To assist educators and counselors in meeting the needs of individual students.

Volunteers Needed for the BLAST Craft and Gift Show on May 12th, 2007

The Blast Program needs **YOU** to help out at the Mother's Day Craft and Gift Show on Saturday, May 12th at Gebhardt Elementary School. The proceeds from the registration fees and the food sale will go to buying supplies and materials for the BLAST Program. The show will start at 9am and end at 3pm.

We are looking for volunteers to help with a variety of tasks. Some of the tasks are to: set-up tables, sell food (brats, hotdogs, and bake goods), bring in baked goods, and/or clean-up. We realize that everyone is busy but would greatly appreciate any help that you can give that day.

If you are able to help, please complete the volunteer form to the right and return it to BLAST. Or register by contacting Danielle Wainwright at <wainwdan@brf.org> or at 284-5125 ext 5113.

Register to Help!

Name(s) _____

Phone _____

Please put a check next to any areas you would like to help:

- Set-up (8:00 – 9:00 am)
- Sell Food – 9:00 - 11:00 am
- Sell Food – 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
- Sell Food – 1:00 – 3:00 pm
- Clean-up
- I will provide a baked good (Baked goods can be dropped off anytime Friday until 5pm or Saturday before 8:30am)

Thank you so much for taking the time to help out, we greatly appreciate it. If there are any questions please contact Danielle Wainwright at <wainwdan@brf.org> or 284-5125 ext 5113.