



BENCH ELEMENTARY

MARCH 2024 NEWSLETTER

Dear Bench Families,

On behalf of the staff of Bench, we would like to wish all of you a relaxing and refreshing Spring Break. We will be back to welcome all of your children to school on March 25th.

This past month has had some exceptional events here at the school. These include the volleyball season, Robotics District Competition, Gravity Cars District Competition, a visit from Rise Flag Football, Chess Tournament , Knitting Club, Art and Reading in the Library, Nature Club, Spirit Squad and many more. All of these activities are made possible through the volunteered time of our dedicated staff.

The calendar is posted outside the office and announcements happen daily. Sometimes the dates shift but please encourage your child to listen to the daily announcements as there are lots of things to join and do here at Bench.

We will be starting Track and Field, Girls Soccer, Co-Ed Rugby and other activities in the spring and we are always impressed by how many students join us.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or Mrs. Bridge or myself if you have any questions for us.

Happy Spring Break.

Sincerely,

Huy ch q'u!

Scott Jackson
Kyla Bridge

Bench Elementary School
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Dates to remember

- March 8, Friday - Last day of school before the Spring Break
- March 11, Monday - 22, Friday - Spring Break (School Closed)
- March 29, Friday - Good Friday (School Closed)
- April 1, Monday - Easter Monday (School Closed)
- April 4, Thursday - 1 hr. Early Dismissal
- April 15, Monday - Non-Instructional Day (School Closed)
- April 24, Wednesday - 2 hr. Early Dismissal

Playground Supervision and Crossing Guards

Noon hour supervision. We have 4 Noon-Hour Supervisors plus Mr. Jackson and Mrs. Bridge supervise whenever possible. Some parents are curious about what the playground looks like from 11:00 - 11:45. I am happy if any parent wants to join me and walk around the grounds with me to see what types of play the children engage in. Further, some parents have expressed an interest in volunteering to help out on the playground. Please contact me if you are interested in either joining me for a walk-around and/or to discuss the possibility of volunteering at lunch with specific types of activities.

Parking Lot

Some parents have expressed an interest in helping ensure students cross the crosswalks in the parking lot before school. If you are interested in this volunteer job, please contact Mr. Jackson (sjackson@sd79.bc.ca) to inquire. We have supervision in the morning starting as soon as the bus drops off the first students of the day, but we don't have enough personnel to have crossing guard level supervision.



Earth Day Bottle Cap Mural Project



To mark Earth Day on April 22, Bench Elementary will be creating a bottle cap mural as a collaborative eco-art project. Please collect all your plastic bottle caps and plastic lids over spring break and send them back to school when we return from break. Please no metal lids, all plastic lids and caps are welcome.

Frances Kelsey Grade 7 Parent Night



Parents of next year's Grade 8 students at Frances Kelsey are invited to a parent information evening at 6:30 PM on April 10th to learn about the school and meet some of the staff.

Bottle Drive

March 28, Thursday, 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM.



If you have returnable items at home and cannot bring them to our bottle drive, you could still make a donation to Bench Grade 7's account at the Fisher Road bottle depot. Your help is much appreciated, thank you!



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Bench Students News

☆ Congratulations to the Bench choir for being awarded a bursary after their performance at the Cowichan Music Festival on February 13th!

☆ Congratulation to Evencio Jimenez and his Judo team for winning Bronze at the BC Winter Games this spring! Good luck at the upcoming International Judo Tournament in Edmonton over spring break!



☆ Congratulations to the Robotics Team and Mr. Dodd for their awards at the District Event. The participants were the following: Aiden, Ashtyn, Atwood, Christian, Connor, Evencio, Everett, Hans, Kipton, Nolan and Thea.

SumoBot Competition: Gold (Christian, Thea, Ashtyn) – Silver (Hans) – Bronze (TBD)

Gearbots: Silver (Christopher, Everett)



☆ Mrs. Ingram's Grade 4/5 class has been loom knitting hats for themselves and they also made lovely, soft baby hats to donate to Healthiest Babies Possible. Their kindness and skill will be appreciated by many families with new babies in the Valley!



Homestays Needed

BE MY
HOME
AWAY FROM
HOME



Homestays Needed for September 2024

The Cowichan Valley School District is seeking families to host international students (13-18 years old) from around the world for three-month, five-month and full school year programs.

High demand for:

- pet free homes
- homes accommodating special diets

Why host?

- Create lifelong relationships for yourself and your children
- Experience another culture
- Receive a monthly honorarium

What do we ask you to provide?

- Be willing to provide emotional and academic support
- Be open to new cultural experiences and willing to share your own
- Include your student into your family life and share activities together
- Have transportation and the ability to pick up/drop off students at sports practices/games, extra-curricular activities, and school-organized field trips.
- Have the ability to pick up and drop off your student at the airport at the time of arrival/departure.
- A private bedroom with a desk, dresser, closet, and window.
- Healthy meals and snacks

If you would like to join our program, please contact Brenda Langlois, Homestay Manager, at blanglois@sd79.bc.ca



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Ready, Set, Learn Fairs

AREN'T KIDS AGED 2-5 DINO-MITE?

Tuesday April 2, 2024
Chemainus Elementary School

Tuesday April 9, 2024
Palsson Elementary School

Tuesday April 16, 2024
Discovery Elementary School

Tuesday April 23, 2024
Heritage Hall at Cowichan Community Centre

Join us for
Ready, Set, Learn
a Free, Drop-In
Play-Date
12:30 pm - 4:00 pm
(locations above)



LOST AND FOUND

If you notice you are missing any items for your child/ren, please take a moment to check our lost and found area, near the library.



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Community Information



International Women's Day
Friday, Mar 8, 2024



Earth Hour

Saturday, Mar 23, 2024, 8:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Spring Forward
Sunday, Mar 10, 2024



UA Rise Flag Football - 2024 Spring Season

Kicking off with two weeks of Skills & Drills on April 8th and 15th, and followed by an official Flag Football season running from April 22nd - June 17th is the Spring Season! This league is a ton of fun for athletes of all ages and abilities. The league is open to athletes from Kindergarten to Grade 12! Practices take place immediately before games to allow for just a once/week commitment - Monday evenings at the Cowichan Sportsplex.

All the information you need to register can be found at <https://uariseflag.ca/find-a-league/duncan/>.

Victoria • WestShore • Duncan • Nanaimo



PROUD MEMBER OF
SPORTS CANADA

**SPRING 2024
NOW OPEN**



RISE
FLAG FOOTBALL

UARISEFLAG.CA



RISE
FLAG FOOTBALL
POWERED BY UNDER ARMOUR



Spring Break Camp!
March 11th-15th • 9:00am-12:30pm • McAdam Park

**NOW OPEN
FOR REGISTRATION**

Use code SchoolDistrict79 for \$20 off registration!

uariseflag.ca



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Community Information

FORED BC Society – Art Contest for Indigenous Youth

To celebrate the rich cultural and heritage traditions of the Indigenous people of Canada, FORED is sponsoring its annual artwork, photography and video contest with \$150 cash prizes for Indigenous youth, aged 5-18. This year's theme is Traditional Knowledge & Medicine. Visit <https://www.foredbc.org/> for more details. Deadline is May 19, 2024.



Beyond the Win – Hall of Famers on Tour Program

The Hall of Famers on Tour program connects sport heroes with students in real-time (via live stream on YouTube) to share their stories of how they've reached the pinnacle of their careers and are going "beyond their wins" to champion good in the community. Website

Gareth Rees – March 14: Hall of Famer and 25-time Canadian Rugby Team Captain

Vicki Keith – March 21: Hall of Famer, marathon swimmer, first person to swim across all 5 Great Lakes

Dr. Sandra Kirby – April 11: Hall of Famer, Olympian, author and advocate



Vancouver Island Regional Library

The Vancouver Island Regional Library has several programs and workshops for you to choose from (some of them below). More information available on their website: <https://virl.bc.ca/>

ISLANDS SHORT FICTION REVIEW

Submissions Are Now Open!

The Islands Short Fiction Review invites authors to submit new works of fiction up to 2,000 words for the 2024 event.

Winners will share \$2,000 in prizes and publication by the Nanaimo Arts Council. This contest is open to Junior (ages 12 and under) Youth (ages 13-18) and Adult (19 and over) writers.

Submissions are due March 15, 2024

The Review is funded by the Government of British Columbia and the City of Nanaimo and supported by Vancouver Island Regional Library and the department of Creative Writing and Journalism, Vancouver Island University.
Visit nanaimoartscouncil.ca/isfr for the 2024 Entry Rules and Entry Form.

Making Paper Beads & Jewellery

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Monday, April 8, 2024
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
Branch: South Cowichan (Mill Bay)
Venue:
Audience: Adults, Seniors, Teens, Teens & Tweens

Learn how to create beads out of paper! Stop by the branch to see examples of jewellery created from the paper beads you make. Learn techniques to seal beads, dip in colour, and more.

Teen and Tween Macramé



Friday, March 22, 2024
2:00 pm - 4:30 pm
Branch: Cowichan (Duncan)
Venue:
Audience: Teens, Teens & Tweens, Tweens

Make your own plant holder & start building your own houseplant jungle! For teens and tweens age 11+ Limited space, call 250-746-7661 to register

Vancouver Island Regional Library + Fans

Hey kids!

Get ready to shell-ebrate Spring Break with us from March 11 - April 2.

Head to your local Vancouver Island Regional Library branch for a Hul'q'umi'num' Scavenger Hunt based on the book Otter Doesn't Know by Andrea Fritz and other fin-tastic fun surprises!

More info and events at:
<https://virl.bc.ca/read.../audience/kids/spring-break-kids/>



Community Information

The Annual RCMP Name the Puppy Contest

We aim to foster creativity, enthusiasm and a sense of belonging among our community members, especially the younger generation. PDSTC cannot wait to see all the terrific name ideas!



How to take part

- 🐾 All contest entries must be submitted using the online form, starting Thursday, February 22, 2024.
- 🐾 Only kids between the ages of 4 to 14 years old may enter.
- 🐾 Contestants can suggest only 1 name (1 entry per person).
- 🐾 Only individual entries are accepted, so each child's entry needs to be submitted separately.
- 🐾 The name must start with the letter "T".
- 🐾 The name must be 1 or 2 syllables.
- 🐾 The name must have no more than 9 letters.
- 🐾 Contestants must live in Canada.
- 🐾 Entries must be received by **Monday, March 25, 2024**.
- 🐾 Contest winners and the winning names will be announced on **Thursday, April 25, 2024**, on the RCMP website and social media platforms.

Prizes



Winners, one from each province and territory, will receive a laminated 8×10-inch photo of the pup they name, a plush dog named Justice and an RCMP water bottle.

Artwork



We love receiving drawings and paintings! After entering the contest online, entrants will be invited to submit artwork. It will be shared with the RCMP PDSTC and may be showcased on Depot's social media with your first name and province or territory.

Connect



For more information, contest rules or official contest launch, visit us online at www.rcmp.ca/puppy.



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Personal Electronics – iPhones/iPads

Please note that personal electronic devices are **NOT** permitted during school hours unless supervised by a teacher. If your child does bring an electronic device to school, it **MUST** be kept in their backpack or with the teacher during school hours. Please remember that we cannot guarantee the security of these items. If an item is confiscated by an adult during school hours or is turned in at the office for any reason, it will generally be held until the end of the day and, sometimes, will only be returned to an adult (depending on the circumstances).

Visitors

A reminder that all adults visiting the school must enter through the main doors only and sign in. Thank you for your cooperation.

Student Clothing

Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather each morning. Unless there are extreme weather conditions, Students will be outside every day during the 45-minute lunch break as well as an additional short break with their teachers at some point through the day.

Water Bottles

Our school has a limited supply of glasses for students to use, especially disposable ones. Families are encouraged to please send their child with a water bottle that they can refill from the fountain.

School Schedule

Supervision begins at 8:00 a.m.

8:30 a.m. Classes begin

11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Outside play

11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Eating time

2:13 p.m. Dismissal

Supervision ends at 2:40 p.m.



Happy Easter!!