

# CONNECTION

Sharing the day-to-day learning experience  
at

Community Homes & Services

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[www.communityhomesandservices.com](http://www.communityhomesandservices.com)

## March is Disability Awareness Month

This month, we honor the late disabilities rights activist and comedian, Stella Young. Check out her Ted Talk here:

**<https://youtu.be/8K9Gg164Bsw>**

Stella talks about what she calls “inspiration porn.” You’ve seen it—images of people with disabilities taking on various challenges that others look at when they’re telling themselves not to give up.

“I use the term ‘porn’ deliberately,” she explains, “because they objectify one group of people for the benefit of another group of people. In this case, we’re objectifying disabled people for the benefit of non-disabled people [...] The purpose of these images is to inspire you, to motivate you, so that we can look at them and think, well, no matter how bad my life is, it could be worse—I could be that person.” Then she asks, “but what if you are that person?”

Stella states in no uncertain terms, “I am not here to be your inspiration, thank you!”

Disability Awareness is not about admiring, paying tribute, or feeling sorry for anybody. It is more about seeing—seeing real people as real people, complete with qualities, opportunities, faults, problems, joys, insights, and unique personalities.

Stella points out that widely held societal misperceptions have an insidious way of becoming self-perceptions, and then, of course, perception becomes reality.

Disability Awareness is about challenging prohibitive, one-dimensional stereotypes, such as the “inspiration porn” narrative, and seizing instead upon that civil and human right of genuine and multi-dimensional personhood.

A little awareness can go a long way!



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# World Down Syndrome Day - March 21

World Down Syndrome Day is an international day of awareness and advocacy for individuals with Down syndrome. The theme is With Us, Not For Us. This theme highlights the importance of inclusion and equal opportunities for people with Down syndrome, promoting the message that they are valued members of society who should be given the same opportunities and rights as anyone else. The goal is to raise awareness and understanding of Down syndrome, and to celebrate the contributions and achievements of individuals with Down syndrome in all areas of life.

According to the World Down Syndrome Day webpage "Down syndrome (or Trisomy 21) is a condition in which a person has an extra chromosome.

Chromosomes are “packages” of genes in the body. They determine how a baby's body forms and functions as it grows. Around 1 in every 800 babies will be born with Down syndrome.

Down syndrome occurs naturally – there is no known cause.

Down syndrome is a genetic condition caused by the presence of an extra copy of chromosome 21. There are three main types of Down syndrome:

1. Trisomy 21: This is the most common type of Down syndrome and occurs when a person has three copies of chromosome 21 instead of the normal two.
2. Mosaicism: This type of Down syndrome occurs when some cells have the normal two copies of chromosome 21, while other cells have three copies.
3. Translocation: This type of Down syndrome occurs when part of chromosome 21 breaks off and attaches to another chromosome, resulting in the presence of an extra copy of the chromosome.

Some great videos from Canadian Down Syndrome Society's [Down Syndrome Answers](#) webpage.

## **Down Syndrome Answers: Are people with Down syndrome always happy?**

<https://youtu.be/dXoAMtSeYa0>

## **Why is Down syndrome called Down syndrome?**

[https://youtu.be/AWhTWGj\\_70w](https://youtu.be/AWhTWGj_70w)

## **Answers: How does Down syndrome affect the body?**

<https://youtu.be/7JNS8yUzB5U>



# Project Possibilities and Action Plans

**An Update from Chas**



ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

We get up each morning and, in one way or another, we all deal with a certain, basic, burning question: What is there to live for? ... or to put it a little less dramatically... What am I going to do today... and why?

The common automatic response among our students and staff is simply to say... I'll go to the Day Program... and why? because I have to, or (better yet) because I want to, or (the #1 answer) I'm not exactly sure.

It is perfectly fine and wonderful to have functional comfort zones and routines that are predictable and engaging, but it also seems like mindfulness and meaningfulness would be nice directions to lean when looking for reasons to live as we go through our daily motions.

So, at CH&S, we want to orchestrate personalized opportunities for students to brainstorm about possible projects and pursuits they might choose to sink their teeth and put their hearts into, and then further collaborate to customize action plans accordingly.

General categories for project possibilities and action plans may include Community Connections, Activism, Professionalism / Job Readiness, Entrepreneurship, Skill-Building, Research, Scholarship, Fitness, Creative Expression, Student Teaching, Production, Self-Actualization, and, of course, Whatever.

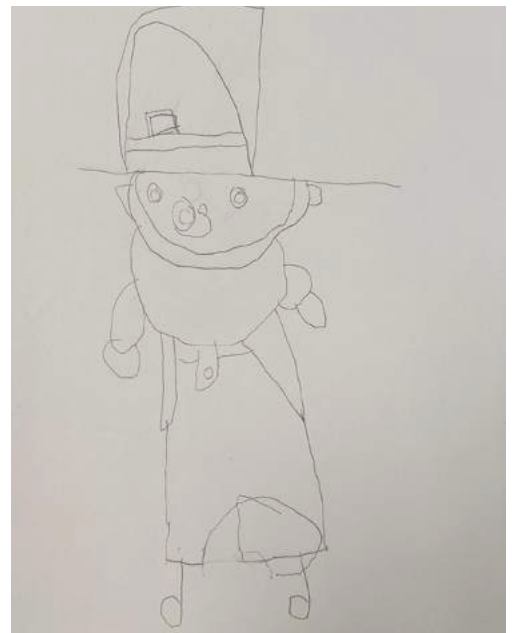
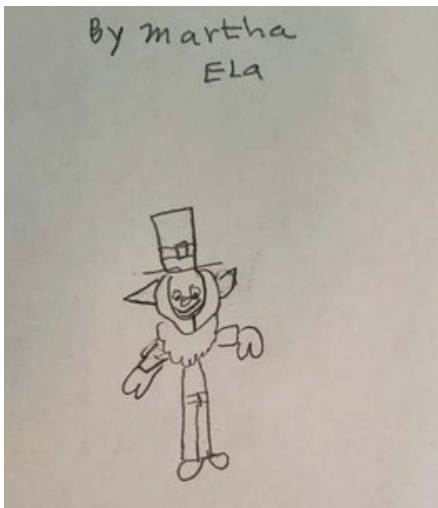
Next month (April 2023), we are opening an actual Project Center at 866 Grant Avenue, Suite # 3, in Novato (right next door to our business office). This will serve (among other things) as an additional meeting place, office space, laboratory, and studio for students and advisors undertaking projects in progress.

So, at bedtime, when that next question rolls along: What did I do today? ... or to put it a little more dramatically... Why should I get up tomorrow?... we want our students to be able to say a little bit more than just I behaved. I complied. I had chips. I had a soda. We want to hear things like... I'm writing a book! I'm learning a language. I'm going after that job. I'm helping a cause. I'm out there making the world a better and more beautiful place!

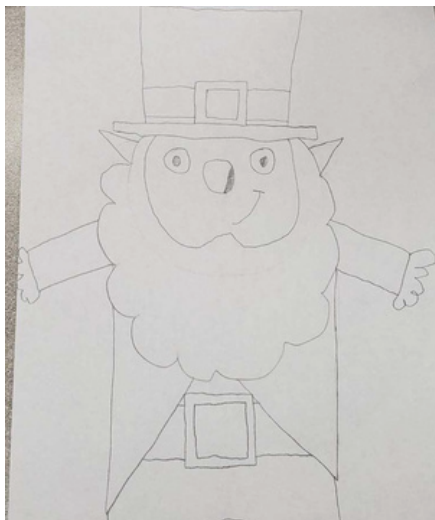
# Leprechaun Art with Chris



Check out these drawings of leprechauns from one of the Thursday art classes on Zoom. Leprechauns are commonly described as small bearded men from Irish mythology. They are trouble-makers, as evidenced by the pinching and the hoarding of gold. Many people believe leprechauns cannot see green, so wearing green on St. Patrick's day means they can't pinch you because they can't see you.



Leprechauns are skilled at making shoes; they can make a perfect pair of shoes in one night. They are also known for their love of gold, and it is said that if you catch a leprechaun he will grant you three wishes in exchange for his release. But be careful, because leprechauns may try to trick you! Leprechauns are beloved for their magical powers and their ability to bring a little bit of joy and wonder into our lives.





# Andrew's Corner

## Wallace and Gromit Facts

Wallace and Gromit is a claymation series created for Aardman Animations by Nick Park. The series consists of 4 short films and 1 feature film. The short films were called *A Grand Day Out*, *The Wrong Trousers*, *A Close Shave* and *A Matter of Loaf and Death* while the feature film was called *Wallace And Gromit: The Curse of The Were-Rabbit*.

Wallace and Gromit also has a spin off series called *Shaun The Sheep* which is based on the titular sheep character from the short *A Close Shave*. The *Shaun The Sheep* series has had 2 movies instead of 1.

The creator, Nick Park, has also created the films *Chicken Run* and *Early Man*. Nick Park has also created a short film called *Stage Fright* and a short film series called *Creature Comforts*.

Wallace and Gromit has also had three video games called "Wallace and Gromit in Project Zoo," "Wallace and Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit," and "Wallace and Gromit's Grand Adventures."

The species of dog Gromit belongs to is called a Beagle. While the location of the series has not been named, Nick Park says the location was inspired by 1950s Wigan, England. The address of Wallace and Gromit's house 62 West Wallaby Street, Wigan.

Wallace was based on Nick Park's father. Wallace's job varies in every short and film, in *A Close Shave* he was a window cleaner, in *The Curse Of The Were-Rabbit* he runs a humane pest-control service.

I liked how the series is animated because it seems easy to animate a clay figure. I also liked how funny the series is. My dad first showed me the series when I was a little kid.



User:Martin451, CC BY-SA 3.0  
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Bio: Andrew Newson is a student at Life College and is 25 years old. He likes comic books, video games, hiking, exploring new places with his mom.... and babies. He is an authority in all things Star Wars, Star Trek and great places to go in the Bay Area. He is currently learning Mandarin and loves to research and learn new things.



Young Andrew





# CH&S March Birthdays

3/10 - Cathryn

3/18 - Gina

3/20 - Aiden



## CRAYONS *by Jennifer*



Ahh, the smell of a freshly opened box of crayons... There's nothing like it! In honor of National Crayon Day, we rounded up some of the most interesting Crayola Crayon color names. Here are some of the coolest: (see if you can guess what color they might be!)

Manatee

Macaroni and Cheese

Inch Worm

Outer Space

Eggplant

Fuzzy Wuzzy

Asparagus

Wild Blue Yonder

Banana Mania

Chestnut

Pink Flamingo

Granny Smith Apple



Denim

Tropical Rain Forest

Timberwolf

Cotton Candy

Shadow

Desert Sand

Neon Carrot

Fern Green

Tumbleweed

Beaver

Bittersweet

Unmellow Yellow



Laser Lemon

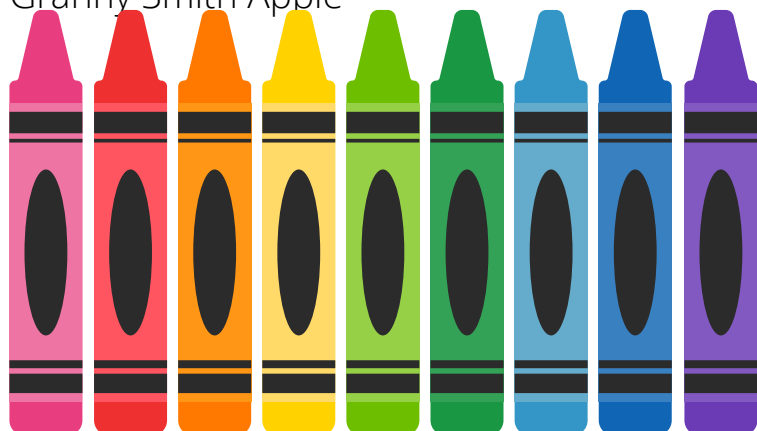
Razzmatazz

Jazzberry Jam

Dandelion

Magic Mint

Mauvelous





# A Spring Equinox Class

with Darnell

Hi folks! Today we are going to answer these three questions:

**1: What is an equinox?**

**2: What do we mean by spring equinox?**

**3: What is the difference between an equinox and a solstice?**

## 1) What is an equinox?

An equinox happens twice a year when day and night are almost the same lengths all around the world. The word equinox comes from the Latin words *aequus* (equal) and *nox* (night). During an equinox, the sun is directly above the Earth's equator, which is an imaginary line that circles the Earth halfway between the North and South poles. This happens because the Earth is tilted on its axis.

The equinox happens in March and September, and it marks the beginning of spring or autumn, depending on where you live. In the Northern Hemisphere (where we live), the spring equinox happens in March, and it's when the weather starts to get warmer, and flowers start to bloom. In the Southern Hemisphere, it's the autumnal equinox, and the weather starts to get cooler, and leaves start to fall from trees.

## 2) What is the spring equinox?

The vernal equinox, also known as the spring equinox, will occur on March 20-21 this year. "Vernal" means "appropriate to spring," and it marks the beginning of the season in the Northern Hemisphere when the weather starts to warm up.

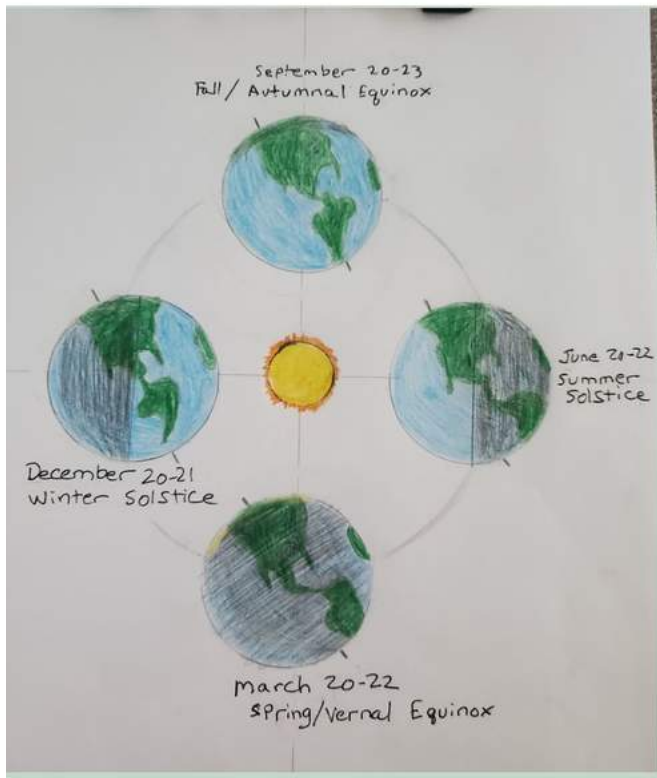
The autumnal equinox occurs on September 22-23 this year. "Autumnal" means "of, in, or appropriate to autumn," and it marks the beginning of the season in the Northern Hemisphere when the weather starts to cool down, and leaves begin to fall from trees.

## 3) What is the difference between an Equinox and a Solstice?

An equinox happens twice a year when day and night are almost the same lengths all around the world. A solstice happens twice a year, too, but it's when one of the Earth's poles is tilted towards or away from the sun, making the day much longer or shorter than the night. The summer solstice happens in June, and it's the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere, while the winter solstice happens in December, and it's the shortest day of the year.

# Equinoxes and Aliens

by Darnell

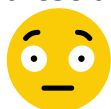


In summary, an equinox is when the length of the day and the night are almost equal, while a solstice is when the length of the day and the night are at their most extreme. These events have been observed and celebrated by different cultures throughout history and are important astronomical milestones in our calendar. Many places in the world were built with the idea of lining up with the solstices or equinoxes.

For example, you may remember in the movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, there was a staff with a crystal, that the sunlight would hit just right only one day of the year at a specific time. It is the same idea with the pyramids of Giza, Stonehenge in England, Göbekli Tepe in Turkey, and many more. These places were built to line up with the sun perfectly at these times. How they figured that all out back then is kind of a mystery. We are still not certain HOW these monoliths were made.

These techniques were highly advanced for their time. For example, the construction of the pyramids of Giza involved the precise cutting and positioning of huge stone blocks, a feat that required an incredible amount of skill and organization. So while the construction of these ancient structures remains a mystery, it is not necessary to resort to extraordinary explanations like aliens to explain them. Instead, we can appreciate the incredible ingenuity and knowledge of the people who built them and continue to study and learn from these ancient marvels.

Or maybe they really were built by aliens!





# Where is the furthest you've traveled?



Cindy and Jonas asked staff members, "where is the furthest that you've traveled?"

- Zayde: The furthest I've traveled was to Washington DC
- Jehann: I flew from the Philippines to the US and back
- Russell: The farthest I've traveled is India
- Joe: Atlanta, Georgia,
- Melissa: Prague
- Harold: Las Vegas
- Rikina: I travel to New Orleans, Louisiana, in a van!
- Rebecca: Mexico
- Chris: I drove from here to Puerto Vallarta
- Bruce: Germany
- Darnell: Puerto Rico
- Jennifer: Scotland
- Thea: Copenhagen
- Chas: East Coast of the U.S.



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# St. Patrick's Day Facts

St. Patrick's Day is a popular holiday celebrated around the world, particularly in Ireland and the United States. Here are some interesting facts about St. Patrick's Day:



1. St. Patrick's Day was originally a religious holiday. It commemorated the death of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, who died on March 17th in the year 461.
2. The first St. Patrick's Day parade was not held in Ireland, but in New York City in 1762.
3. The color originally associated with St. Patrick was blue, not green. However, green has become the predominant color associated with the holiday, particularly in the United States.
4. St. Patrick is said to have used the shamrock, a three-leaved plant, to explain the Holy Trinity to the Irish people.
5. Corned beef and cabbage, a traditional St. Patrick's Day dish, is not actually an Irish dish, but an Irish-American one.
6. Chicago dyes its river green every St. Patrick's Day. The tradition started in 1962.
7. The largest St. Patrick's Day parade in the world takes place in New York City and attracts over two million spectators.
8. St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in more countries than any other national festival.
9. St. Patrick's Day is a public holiday in Ireland, but it is also a holiday in Montserrat, a Caribbean island nation, and in the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador.
10. In Ireland, it is customary to wear a small bunch of shamrocks on your clothing on St. Patrick's Day. This is called the "wearing of the green."





# Ch-ch-ch-CHIA!

by Jennifer



Chia seeds are tiny little nutritional powerhouses that have gone from obscure health food to mainstream “superfood” status in recent years. Chia seeds are high in omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants, and fiber. The most remarkable trait of chia seeds is that they are hydrophilic, meaning they absorb about 12 times their weight in liquid when soaked, and

they form a gel-like consistency. The gelatinous quality makes them somewhat of an acquired taste (one recipe I found said, and I’m quoting here, “It’s not that bad!”) but lends itself to being added to things like smoothies, yogurt, and granola bars. After learning all about the health benefits of chia seeds, Life College made and taste-tested chocolate oat milk chia pudding, topped with crunchy little cacao nibs to break up the “squishiness”. Most spoons were licked clean enough to put back into the cupboard (kidding, of course, because germs.)

But chances are when you think of chia seeds, the first thing that comes to mind is a commercial jingle. Chia is best known for novelty terracotta planters popularized in the 1970’s, with a catchy commercial jingle– “Ch-ch-ch-CHIA!”.

Chia Pets are a grooved terracotta figurine, and you cover them in moistened chia seeds to watch them sprout green “hair”. Half a million Chia Pets are sold every year, including famous celebrities, politicians, and licensed characters.

After we had our fill of chia pudding, we planted chia Yoda, chia Weird Al Yankovic, and a chia zombie hand. (Safety tip: We found out that while the seeds that come with Chia Pets are technically edible, they aren’t washed or approved by the FDA for human consumption, so don’t snack while you Chia Pet!)





# PHOTOGRAPHY WITH JOE

Photography is simply the art of snapping photos. You've probably taken a photo before - be it on a phone, with a digital camera, with a disposable camera, or with a film/35mm camera. Phones and digital cameras have the awesome benefit of showing you the photo you've taken immediately, so you know if you need to retake it. Disposable and 35mm cameras require the roll of film to be developed before we can see how the photos came out. Whatever your method may be, photography is a easy, cheap hobby that we've been having a lot of fun with at CH&S. Before we check out the photos, let's quickly rundown the process. There are four main types of photography:

1. **Lifestyle** - in which we snap a photo to capture a moment from our day. Nothing fancy, necessarily, but real.
2. **Documentary** - in which an event or person is documented in a way that tells a story. A true story.
3. **Posed** - in which we fire up the flash and the backdrop to capture a specific moment in a specific way. I always think about JC Penny in the 80s when posed photography comes up. Remember the laser backdrop??
4. **Artistic** - in which the purpose of the photo is to create art. This is the photographic realm that offers the most freedom and room for creativity. Sometimes photographers and their subjects go to great lengths to carry out their vision. An artistic photo might require a lot of setup, costumes, props, and editing. Sometimes photos are so heavily edited they no longer resemble the real world.

There are also the elements of lighting, depth of field, and composition to consider, but since this was our first time out with the camera we decided to aim for a loose blend of lifestyle and documentary photos.

## The Subjects

The town of Sebastopol has a ton of metal sculptures! We thought this would be a fun subject to document. The sculptures are hidden around town, and after a bit of hunting we were able to take some great photos. Check them out!



This giant quail was captured by Tyrone

## MORE PHOTOGRAPHY WITH JOE



Phoebe took this photo of  
"The Computer Man"



Even the fire department has its own mascot. Check out the rule of thirds.



This is one of our favorites. The statue's design makes it look like it's moving even though it's standing still.



Mike took this picture of a tiger on a stick. Love the whiskers!





# CLASS HIGHLIGHTS

by Jennifer

Grammar Geekiness: To celebrate National Grammar Day this month, we learned about words that don't translate into English. Here are some of our favorites:

For Nino's Sweden Project–*Fika*: A traditional coffee break with friends to enjoy coffee and sweet treats. If you need a second refill of coffee, that's called Tretar: A 2nd refill (or "threefill") of coffee.

We Are Well-Versed in this Inuit Word–*Iktsuarpok*: The feeling of anticipation that leads you to keep looking outside to see if anyone is coming. (Whistlestop, we're lookin' at/for you!)

A Chia Article Crossover from German–*Schnapsidee*: An ingenious plan one hatches while drunk. (Chia Pet-lore says the catchy "Ch-ch-CHIA" jingle was thought up in a bar when someone had a few too many drinks and stumbled over the name.)

## Professionalism Job Spotlight: **Wildlife Photographer**

For an animal lover, being a wildlife photographer could be a dream job. We watched a viral video of a wildlife photographer with meerkats on his head, and agreed that blending in with the environment was probably the goal, so good job! From BBC's Planet Earth, one of the all time best nature documentaries, we watched behind the scenes footage of nature photographers capturing snow leopards and the mating dances of birds of paradise for the very first time on film. The snow leopard's camouflage was incredible, and the birds had some seriously sweet dance moves! Everyone shared the animal they would most and least like to photograph in the wild.

## Most/Least

Andrew: Meerkats/Insects

Martha: Wild Dogs/Lions

Nino: Lions/Snakes

Justin: Elephants/Tigers

Zachary: Tigers/Sharks

Cat: Giraffes/Elephants

Connor: Owls/Insects

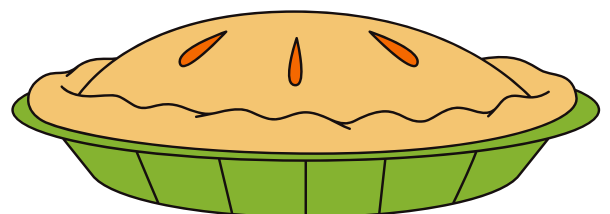
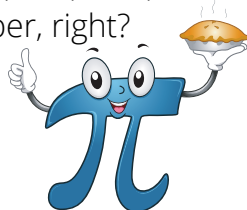
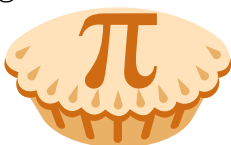
Darnell: Snow Leopards/Angler Fish

Jennifer: Leaf Cutter Ants/Sharks (or anything underwater TBH)



## Pi Day Project:

Check out our felt pie garland (above)! We each picked out our favorite flavor of pie, and made cherry, apple, lemon meringue, pumpkin, pecan, and cheesecake slices. They looked almost good enough to eat... felt is high in fiber, right?





# CEREAL

by Jennifer



What did you have for breakfast today? If you're like 50% of the country, you had cereal!

Weird facts: Froot Loops are not individually flavored. All of the six different colors share the exact same flavor, which, admittedly, is a combination of ALL the flavors: orange, lemon, lime, apple, cherry, raspberry, and blueberry! A woman once sued PepsiCo for the berries in Cap'n Crunch Berries NOT being actual berries. The judge dismissed the case, saying it was "common sense". We are a little suspicious about a soda company being in charge of our breakfast, and perhaps rightfully so. A bowl of Honey Smacks contains as much sugar as a Dunkin Donut!

Science! Cereal-IN SPACE! Kellogg's Cornflakes were eaten by astronauts aboard Apollo 11 on the first moon landing mission. Many cereals are magnetic because of their high iron content. You can conduct an at-home experiment of your own with a bowl of cereal and a magnet—slightly messy, but fun. Look for a cereal with a high daily value percentage of iron (Total is a good candidate) and see if you can move floating cereal around in your bowl.

Mascot Madness! We were reminded about our mascot knowledge class when researching cereal—so many cereals have well-known mascots on the box and in commercials. It's no coincidence that those cute faces on cereal boxes are staring at you—cereal mascots are meant to literally catch kids' eyes from grocery store shelves. Did you know that Tony the Tiger ("They're GRRRRR-ATE!") from Frosted Flakes is voiced by the same person who sings the songs in *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*? Some cereal mascots have a seasonal gig, like Count Chocula, who is only around at Halloween.

Employee Innovators: Some of your favorite cereals may have been thought up by creative employees. Honey Bunches of Oats was created by an employee and his teenage daughter who mixed up their own combination of granola, frosted corn flakes, and Grape Nuts. Lucky Charms and its lucky mashup of cereal and marshmallows came from an employee's concoction of Cheerios and circus peanut candies. Have you ever mixed up two different types of cereal? (In general, no one here is down for that sort of thing!)



# National Pig Day – March 1

National Pig Day is a holiday celebrated annually on March 1st in the United States, to recognize and appreciate the domesticated pig. In some cultures, pigs are a symbol of good luck. Here are some interesting pig facts:

1. Pigs are highly intelligent animals, with cognitive abilities similar to dogs and primates.
2. Pigs are social animals and form strong bonds with other pigs and even with humans.
3. Pigs have an excellent sense of smell and are often used in search and rescue operations as well as in truffle hunting.
4. Pigs have a unique way of communicating with each other, using a variety of vocalizations and body language to convey emotions and intentions.
5. Pigs are omnivores and will eat a wide range of foods, including fruits, vegetables, and even small animals.
6. Pigs are also known for their ability to cool off in hot weather by rolling in mud, which helps to regulate their body temperature.
7. In Chinese astrology, the pig is one of the twelve animals in the zodiac, symbolizing wealth, good fortune, and honesty.



## Porcine Jokes

*Q: What do you call a laundromat for pigs?*

A: Hogwash.

*Q: Why did the pig go to the casino?*

A: To play the slop machine!

*Q: Why did the pig break up with her boyfriend?*

A: Because he was a boar.

*Q: What kind of ice cream do pigs like best?*

D: Hoggin Daz!



# What A Great Way to End the Day!

by Russell

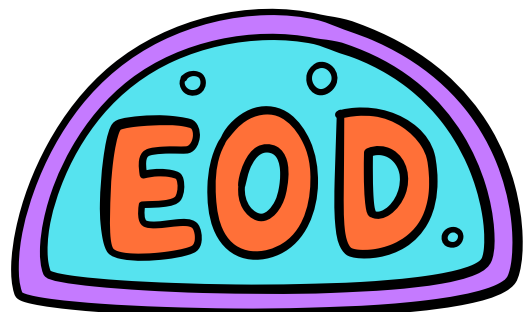


Our meeting at the end of the day is supposed to be lots of things, useful, productive, professional, therapeutic, positive, and definitely fun! Lately though, it has become increasingly impossible to ignore the vibrations of giddiness emanating from Russell's homeroom every afternoon. While covering the usual P.M. Meeting agenda items, these students have taken being positive and fun to a whole new and somewhat suspiciously euphoric level.

Meredith always gets the party started by decreeing that "we had a great day!" (no matter what). And then, right on cue, Jake never fails to chime in with "hanging out with my buds was the best part." Tess, Suzie, and Dave take it from there and everyone leaves smiling happy, and aglow with team spirit.

What a great way to end a day!

What a great way to end a Magazine!



EOD = End of Day



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# March 2023 Connection Magazine

