



# Gehlen Gazette



## What's Happening

January 8, 2010

**Forest Hills  
Lutheran  
School**

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a wonderful vacation with a chance to relax, refresh, and rejoice!

This month we are celebrating the work of one of my favorite authors. Your children will tell you that almost every time I read a book I start by saying, "This is by one of my favorite authors." It's always true when I say that, however, Jan Brett is a favorite of favorites and it is her work that we are studying in depth this month. We started with the well known folk tale, *The Mitten* and focused on the wonderful descriptive words she uses. We are learning about Jan Brett's approach to writing and illustrating, as well as the techniques she uses. After reading, *The Mitten*, we read *The Hat* and compared the two stories using a Venn Diagram. Next week we will embark upon the task of creating our own retelling of *The Mitten*. Through many of Jan Brett's books we are learning about folk tales and the special elements of this type of story. During this author study we will also be visiting Jan Brett's website to learn more about her work. This week she taught us how to draw a hedgehog! It's full of many wonderful things to do and see so if you want to check it out at home go to [www.janbrett.com](http://www.janbrett.com). I hope to have a link to her site on the first grade web page.



Math this week was focused on measuring. We added tape measures to our tool kits and practiced using them to

measure things. We also "measured" time with an introduction to telling time by the quarter hour. At this point we refer to the quarter hours as "quarter past" and "quarter to" rather than using digital terminology. We also had fun with timelines, creating them for a 24-hour period, a week, and several months.

On Thursday we had time with our Artist in Residence, Mrs. Bockelman, who taught us how to make bells using clay. In two weeks, once the pots have dried, we will add glaze and fire them for a beautiful finish!

With January comes wishes for snow. We saw a little of it before we came back to school, but there is still hope for more! Our classroom library is full of winter-themed books. After reading *Snow Family* we created our own first grade family of "snow people."

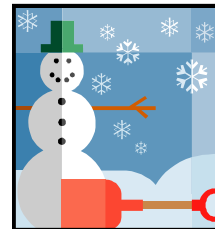
In Religion we started the book, *Listen*, where we are learning about Jesus' ministry and how we need to "listen" to his teachings. We also talked about the sacrament of baptism.

Our quarter comes to a close at the end of next week. I can hardly believe our year is almost half over. How did that happen? There is no school next Friday so that teachers can meet and then prepare report cards. It is fun for me to see how much your children have learned and exciting to look ahead at what we will continue to accomplish in the second half of the year!

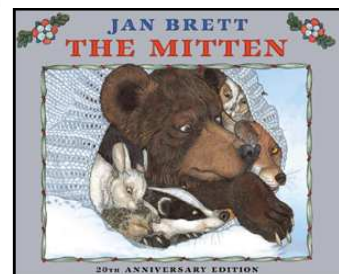
Have a wonderful weekend!

—Mrs. Gehlen

**Sharing Assignment:**  
Next week your child may bring to school a special Christmas gift he/she received. Along with showing the gift, your child needs to talk about why it is special and who it was from. If your child's sharing day is Friday, he/she will need to share on Thursday since there is no school on Friday.



January Scholastic book orders are coming home today and are due by next Thurs., Jan. 14th if you choose to order.



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