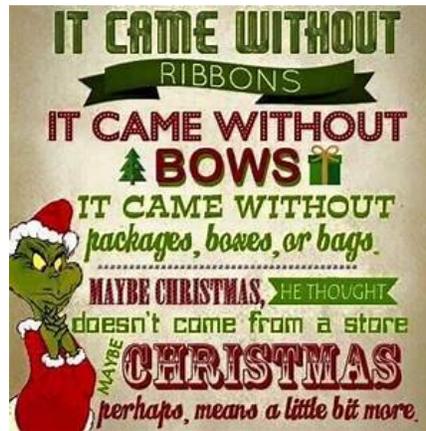


**From the Principal's Pen**

**December 2021**

Submitted by: Jennifer McGee



I watched **60 Minutes** last night and saw 164 cargo ships with thousands and thousands of cargo containers stacked like cordwood on the shores of the west coast. The reporters and the port workers expressed there was very little hope of getting the vast majority unpacked prior to the holiday season. As shelves start to appear more and more barren, maybe this is a wake up call for all of us.

Kind of like the covid19 shut-downs and closings forced us to simplify and spend more time together with our families and closest circles, maybe this shipping crisis will force us to realign our priorities and simplify life in yet another way.

My very favorite *Little House on the Prairie* episode was the holiday special. Has anyone seen it? A friend of Ma and Pa's...Mr. Edwards...trudges through the blinding snowstorm to bring gifts for the children. The treasured gifts were a shiny penny and peppermint candy. I would blink back tears watching the grateful children receive their gifts.

Symbolically, each year, my parents would place an orange in the foot of my holiday stocking. It was a reminder of how lucky we were to receive fresh fruit....even in the wintertime. We lose sight of the fact that we are blessed to have grocery stores filled with fruits and vegetables, not native to our geographic region. It was not so long ago that root cellars held the only vegetables Mainers could access in the cold, winter months. Root cellars held locally grown potatoes, turnips, carrots and beets...and native fruits were canned or dried so they could be enjoyed throughout the winter. We are lucky to walk into markets filled with colorful, healthy fruits and veggies to nourish us year round. The orange in my stocking always made me remember that.

Joy.

In spite of "it all" our Atwood mission remains to create a joyful beginning to each child's educational journey. This December we will invite every child to participate in our Fa-la-la-la

Fridays! These days are created to foster a community feeling in our peaceful village. Here's what this year's Fa-la-la-la Fridays will look like:

Friday, December 3: Grinch Day! Wear all green.

Friday, December 10: Winter Wonderland WHITE OUT! Hoping for snow....dress in ALL WHITE OR ALL BLUE

Friday, December 17: Twas the night before Christmas....wear pajamas or onsies

This is all for fun and to bring joy to the season!

Our December together will end on **Wednesday, December 22**, with one final activity that has become an Atwood favorite. It's (drum roll please).....**Dress Like an Elf, Bring Food for the Shelf**. Dress your little Atwood-ian up like an elf (in red or green or red and green...however you like!) and send your child to school with non-perishable food (canned goods or boxed foods) for our local Oakland Food Pantry!

During Socktober, our spin on Halloween, we, together with WES, collected over 2000 pairs of stockings for the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter, and we look forward to collecting a truck load of food for our food pantry! Teamwork makes the DREAM work! Children are never too young to feel the power of making a positive difference in our world!

I wish you and your families a beautiful, simple holiday season. Savor the sounds and sights of the season. Get cozy. Bite into a juicy winter orange. We so appreciate you and your beautiful children here in our Peaceful Village of Atwood Awesome Superheroes! Thank you for all you do to keep the wheels on the bus this year.

Holiday Blessings,

Jenny McGee, Principal of Atwood Primary School

Dates to Note:

Wednesday, November 24 to Friday, November 26: Thanksgiving Break....gobble, gobble

Tuesday, November 30: Early Release Day/ Noon Release for Teacher In-service

Thursday, December 23 – Sunday, January 2: Holiday Break...falalala

Re-cap of Fa-la-la-la Fridays:

**Friday, December 3: Grinch Day! Wear all green.**

**Friday, December 10: Winter Wonderland WHITE OUT! Hoping for snow....dress in ALL WHITE OR ALL BLUE**

**Friday, December 17: Twas the night before Christmas....wear pajamas or onesies**

**Wednesday, December 22: Dress Like an Elf, Bring Food for the Shelf Day!**

