

By Stacy Huggins,  
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# Dragon Tales Jr.

Olney Elementary School; Olney, Maryland

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April 2011, Volume 36

## “Earth Day”

By Lexi Matthews, Student Editor

April 22, 2011 is Earth Day! So, let’s all do the world a favor by helping to “Go Green”. Three of the easiest ways to remember to do this are the 3 “R’s”: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. Here are some examples-

Reduce means to use less of something. Some of the things you can reduce in your home or at school are paper, electricity, and water. You can use both sides of the paper to save a tree, switch off the lights to save electricity, and turn off the faucet while you are brushing your teeth to save water.

Another way you can help the Earth is to Reuse. Reuse means to use things again and again. You can reuse a water bottle to keep it out of landfills. Or reuse your grocery bags during your next grocery store trip. You can donate any unwanted household items such as blankets, books, and toys to charities and shelters for others to use.

Finally, you can help our Earth by Recycling. Instead of throwing bottles, cans, plastics, aluminum foil, or paper products into the trash, toss them into your blue recycling bin to be sent to a Recycling Center. Did you know that 4.85 billion tons of trash are thrown away every day in the world? By recycling we can get rid of over half of this so that they can be made into new items instead of being thrown away.

Now that you have learned about “Going Green” I hope that you will reduce, reuse, and recycle more. Remember, every day is Earth Day!

## A Toad Story

by Riley Westman, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Mrs. Baker

It was a sunny, sunny day and I was in my backyard with my dad and my brother. My dad was taking down the fence and he saw two toads. The toads were small and brown. My dad caught one toad. My dad was wearing gloves and he carefully carried the toad over to me and let me see it. Dad handed me the toad and the toad hopped out of my hands. After trying to catch the toad I finally got it. But here’s the bad part; the toad went to the bathroom on me! My brother had a real laugh about that. It started to hop away. My brother got a bucket and I put the toad in the bucket. My brother went inside to get a smaller bucket from his room. I made sure that the toad did not get out. My brother and I put rocks and grass in the bucket. We cut holes in the top of the bucket. There was water on our basketball hoop so we took the toad there. WE tried to make it drink the water, but it didn’t. It was time to let the toad go. We let it go and went to get out friends. I told my friend where the toad was. We came back to where it was but it was not there. That is the story of when I caught a toad.

## Warm Weather

By Amanda Shapiro,  
3<sup>rd</sup> grade, Mrs. Kang

Spring is here,  
summer’s near.  
Girls wear shorts,  
boys play sports.  
Jump in the pool,  
splash, splash, splash!  
Boys play football,  
crash, crash, crash!  
We all go to sleep.  
Then our alarm clocks go  
beep, beep, beep.



## The Man Who Loved His Boots

By Sophia Kluska, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Mrs. Mills

Once upon a time, there was a man who always wore boots. He was very old. One day his heart stopped working. He suddenly died. Everyone went to his funeral. He was put in a grave with a headstone. The headstone said “Rest in Peace”. The next day the man came back as a ghost, but his boots were not ghost boots, they were human boots. So his boots slipped off when he left his grave to go above ground. He tried to get his boots out of his grave, but they were stuck! Now people say the man’s ghost is still trying to pullout his boots. The End.



By Olivia Roth, Kindergarten, Mrs. Preller  
Spring is coming soon.  
I love Spring!

### CALLING ALL WRITERS

Dragon Tales Jr. needs all kinds of non-fiction and creative writing for our next edition. But you only have until **April 29th** to send us your articles, book reviews, stories, and poems! Email your submission to [dragontaleskids@gmail.com](mailto:dragontaleskids@gmail.com) or bring it to the front office. Make sure to include your **first and last name and your teacher**. And remember: the class in each grade with the most published submissions between now and the end of May will win a special treat! So start writing! (Please note: we only have room for 1 or 2 drawings per issue, so your best chance to get published is by WRITING!!)

## The Blue Whale

By Elizabeth Mao, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, Mrs. Buckingham

What is the largest mammal in the world, eats fish, and lives in the ocean? A blue whale! A blue whale is an amazing animal to watch and learn about.

First, you should know that blue whales live for about 80 to 90 years. The oldest living blue whale found lived 110 years. When a blue whale is born, it weighs about 3 tons. That baby drinks its mother's milk for about a year and gains about 200 pounds a day. The baby is usually 25 feet long.

A regular sized blue whale is about 100 feet long and weighs 200 tons. It's tongue weighs as much as an elephant and his heart weighs as much as an automobile. A blue whale eats about 4 tons of krill each day. You think that the blue whale would burn off that fat by swimming all the time but no! Blue whales usually only swim 5 miles an hour. Some may swim up to 30 miles an hour.

A blue whale with baleen takes a huge gulp of krill and seawater. Baleen is like a large layer of hair in a whale's mouth that hangs down from the gum. The water rushes out, but the krill gets stuck in the hairs! The blue whale gets to eat all that krill. Yum!

Also, blue whales have tails. Those tails are called flukes. Flukes help push water so the whales can swim. Additionally, blue whales have flippers to help them turn left and right. Blue whales often swim in small groups but they sometimes swim in pairs to the polar to feed.

Blue whales have very few predators such as sharks and orca/ killer whales. Most blue whales have died of being hit by large ships. Additionally, blue whales were hunted in the 1900 for their oil and blubber. It is now illegal to hunt a blue whale.

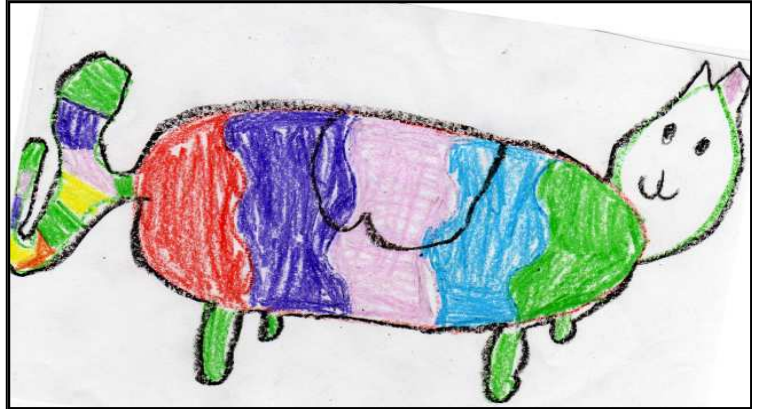
Blue whales can hold their breath for a long time. When it is time to breath, the blue whale swims up to the surface of the water and blows, Ahh, a breath of fresh air. Blue whales have 2 blowholes. When they blow, the spray can be about 30 feet high!

As you can see, the blue whale is a cool animal to learn about!

## April Fools!

By Elyssa Rowell, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Ms. Bunns

It was the first day of April. Eric was in the school hallway. You know what April 1<sup>st</sup> means – April Fools day! Eric did not like April Fools day, especially if he got fooled. Suddenly, he felt tape on his back. "April Fools!" said Hannah, giggling. There was a paper fish stuck to Eric's back! Hannah had been playing "April fish" tricks. Eric felt very embarrassed. This was why Eric didn't like April Fools day. Reading class wasn't any better. Sammy handed Eric a book. "Here is something for you to read," he said. When Eric opened the book, out popped an icky-looking paper! Eric screamed. He ran out of the room. He was caught by the principal who had a talk with Eric. Then, she let him go. Just then Eric saw Bess, a girl who was very smart. "Bess," said Eric. Bess stopped and looked at him. "What is April Fools day all about?" he asked. "It's about fooling friends and having fun," Bess answered. The next day, Eric carried a paper fish with him and a few pieces of tape. When Hannah walked by, he taped the paper fish to her back. Hannah felt it and tried to grab the paper fish. "April Fools!" Eric said. "Good one," she said, tearing it off.



By Elizabeth Boulay, 1st grade, Mrs. Mills  
Once upon a time there was a dragon  
who lived in the castle.  
He flew around it every day.

## The American Flag

By Brendan Hughes, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, Ms. Wallenstein

One of my jobs as a front door patrol is to put the flags up and down each morning and afternoon. I have learned a lot about the United States Flag since starting this job. Did you know that nobody really knows who designed the first United States Flag? It is believed that a Congressman named Francis Hopkinson designed it, and that Betsy Ross, a seamstress from Philadelphia, made the first flag. Congress adopted the American flag on June 14, 1777, with thirteen stripes alternating red and white, and thirteen white stars in a blue field. The colors of the flag stand for certain things. The white represents purity and innocence. The red means hardiness and valor. Blue signifies vigilance, perseverance, and justice. The U.S. Flag Code contains rules regarding the American Flag. Here are some of the rules:

- No flag should fly above or to the right of the American flag.
- When flown at half staff, the flag should be raised to the top for a moment and then lowered to the half staff position. The flag should then again be raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon, and then raised to the top of the staff. Only the President and state Governors can decide when and the flag should be flown at half-staff. The flag is flown at half-staff for 30 days following the death of a President or former President.
- The US flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as ground, floor or water.
- It is custom for the flag to be displayed from sunrise to sunset. The flag may be flown 24hrs a day only if it is properly lit during the night. Unless the flag is an all-weather flag, it should not be displayed on days with bad weather.
- The flag should be at the center and at the highest point when a number of flags are grouped.
- When the flag is in a condition that is no longer fit to be displayed, it should be destroyed in a dignified way, such as burning. American Legion Posts often perform this burning ceremony on June 14<sup>th</sup>, Flag Day.

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