Chers Parents (Dear Parents)

Our first French Club meeting was a big success, and I mean BIG. We had enough students this semester to have two groups – an advanced group that has been in French Club before and a beginning group. We are also happy to have 4 students in the Club that speak French. We have two new teachers helping us out this year – Marcia Gaunt, retired French teacher from West Lafayette High School, and also Lenaïck Trebouet, a native of the region of Morbihan in Brittany, France. For those of you that don’t know me, I lived 6 years in the south of France with my husband who is French (also from Brittany), and where I ran a playgroup where we learned games and songs in French and English. We will learn some of those songs and games as we go along this semester.

So that you have an idea what we do in French club, we have a healthy snack (Yes we support the new wellness program put in place in the school district), then we will be using the BBC Muzzy Language Program and work along learning grammar as we watch the video story of the extra-terrestrial monster Muzzy who visits the royal family in the country of Gondolie. We usually apply the grammatical concepts in some sort of dialog or activity that follows the theme that we have chosen. This semester the theme is Pirates and French-speaking Islands in the Caribbean. We sing songs and play games related to this theme. This semester we will have a visitor from the island of Haiti come speak about the history and culture of that Caribbean island. We will also spend a little time learning about some big sporting events for the French this past summer: the Tour de France and La Coupe du Monde (World Cup). And of course we will learn a little bit about the French contribution to Indiana history at the Feast of the Hunter’s Moon.

Each student will get a French Club notebook next week. I pass out many handouts during the class, with songs and homework and information. All these handouts should be glued into the notebook during our meeting time, so that they can refer back to songs and vocabulary in future meetings. Please be sure that your child always brings this notebook with him/her each week, and brings a pencil or pen to write with.

Homework is optional for French Club. The students all have quite a bit of regular homework and the purpose of the Club is to have fun and get a taste of what life is like for children in other countries. However, the students will get a lot more out of the meetings if they do make an effort to complete the activities I send home. I strongly encourage the students to do the homework, and we also have achievement sheets where they fill in a box for each homework assignment they do and win a prize when they fill up the sheet. There will be a homework assignment each week. Please discuss with your son/daughter what your expectations are concerning the homework, and follow up with them at home each week.

The web site for the French Club is http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~jhaase/frenchclub. I try to put information and handouts on the web site when I have time after (real!) work, but I cannot guarantee that I will have time to maintain the web regularly. Check the site once in a while, or email me when your child misses a class to request an update to the web site with the new homework and information you missed.