

May the New Year bring
good health, good fortune,
and good grades!



What's fine - in '09?

Pardon our "poetry", but have you decided this will be the year to do it? Do what? Only you know. Losing weight is the most popular thing people want to do in the new year, but what about that special interest you always wanted to develop? What is it you wanted to do for quite a while, and you could start doing in the new year?

Join a club, take a trip, get into photography, learn to knit, or remodel your den? For kids, improve your spelling, handwriting, study habits, or write timely thank you notes (see www.buzzingkidsworld.com for the blog: *Thanks Yous Are Appreciated*).

What'll you do in '09?

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Auld Lang Syne!

The song "Auld Lang Syne" is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world to bring in the new year. At least partially written by Robert Burns in the 1700s, it was first published in 1796 after Burns' death.

Early variations of the song had been sung prior to 1700, and they inspired Burns to produce the modern rendition. The old Scotch tune, "Auld Lang Syne" literally means "old long ago," or "the good old days."

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Celebrating the New Year

Confetti has come a long way in 100 years

When the first confetti was made is still a mystery, but we know it was already a big deal in 1905. Police ordered its sale stopped and bars closed when Coney Island's Mardi Gras got too rowdy.

New Year's Eve gives confetti its biggest sales bounce of the year, when revelers want to celebrate with festive paper showers. But confetti is not just tiny pieces of paper anymore.

Options include:

Photo confetti: Double-sided one-inch confetti with the photo on each side, by Photofetti. It's great for fancy birthday parties.

Glitzy confetti: It's mixed with a lot of pixie dust to make it sparkle.

Dissolvable confetti: Made of rice paper that dissolves. Aids cleanup after an outdoor wedding.

Many shapes: They'll make it into shamrocks, baseball bats, butterflies and other shapes, by Artistry in Motion.

Metallic confetti: Made of Mylar, by Kbuki.



Butterfly Confetti

CHALK TALK

End of year review and new year beginnings!

Update your records. Are there any changes that need to be recorded?

At home - tax information, beneficiaries on life insurances

At school - emergency numbers, allergies, medications

At work - adding or removing dependents to affect withholding amounts

Find ways to involve working parents at school activities

Parent-teacher meetings, school plays, bake sales, and choir concerts are held during the day. In many cases, that leaves working parents out.

In a change that can have big benefits for children, schools are making an effort to bring working parents into the picture, such as:

- * Holding two rounds of meetings, conferences, and events, one during the day and one during the evening.

- * Creating "family fun" evenings to welcome all parents.

- * Offering volunteer activities that require just a brief commitment of time.

- * Giving parents more freedom to carry out their program ideas.

- * Reviewing all meeting/program schedules yearly in order to draw maximum attendance.

- * Holding meetings where the kids are, like during warm-ups before soccer games. Change can be good!



An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves. ~ Bill Vaughan

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Children's Proverbs

A first grade teacher collected well known proverbs. She gave each child in her class the first half of a proverb and asked them to complete the proverb. What fun it is to get some insight into a child's world of thinking these days!

Children should be seen and not **spanked or grounded.**
It's better to be safe than **punch a 5th grader.**
Never underestimate the power of **termites.**
You can lead a horse to water but **how?**
A miss is as good as a **Mr.**
You can't teach an old dog new **math.**
When the blind leadeth the blind **get out of the way.**
If at first you don't succeed **get new batteries.**



ON THE FLY!

Where do birds go in the winter?

Arkansas, White River National Wildlife Refuge: Largest gathering of *ducks*

California, Monterey Bay: *Cormorant, etrel, murre, and albatross*

Connecticut River: *Bald eagles*

Florida: *Songbird flocks with warblers, vireos, and woodpeckers*

On the coast: *Hérons, ibises, egrets, and pelicans*

Illinois: *Short-eared owls and northern harriers* winter on the prairie

Minnesota: *Snowy owls, boreal owls, and great owls* from Canada

New Mexico, Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge:
Sandhill cranes

New York, Brooklyn's Prospect Park Audubon Center: *Ducks and hooded mergansers*

Ohio, Magee Marsh and Sandusky Bay: *Black, ruddy, pintail ducks*

Texas, Santa Anna Wildlife Refuge: *Hummingbirds and greenjays*



~ U.S. Agricultural Dept's Forest Service

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Helpful Hint:

Time to put the newly polished holiday silver away and you don't want to polish it again anytime soon? Put a camphor block in the drawer (or a few on the shelves in your china cabinet). Slit the cellophane wrapper to let the vapor escape.

So far the editor has gone 5 years without having to polish silver.

Get camphor gum blocks at www.store.humco.com or through your druggist. Buy it by the box! You'll be replacing the little blocks as they evaporate very slowly.

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**Check out our blog on the
Beloit College, WI,
Mindset List of 2008 Freshmen?
www.buzzingkidsworld.com**

January Project

A moving sculpture made from paper



This little paper sculpture is known as a Kaleidocycle, or Flexahedron. It changes colors as you keep turning it inside-out, first yellow, then blue, then red, then green, and then yellow again. It becomes the perfect fidgeting toy as you continue cycling the colors

The toy was invented years ago by a bored mathematics student. It's free, easy to make and can be found at www.scitoys.com (look for it in the left column under mathematics). For other crafty ideas go to: www.craftyartworld.com.

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New Year's admonitions

Most homilies contain a grain of truth, but maybe this New Year's advice should be taken with a grain of salt:

- ◆ Kiss your partner at midnight or your relationship will cool in the coming year.
- ◆ Your cupboards should be full and you should have cash in the house so it will be that way throughout the year.
- ◆ Never leave the house before someone else comes in. The first footer should be warmly welcomed.
- ◆ Don't wash any clothes on this day. It's bad luck.
- ◆ Mind the direction of the wind at sunrise:

The south wind brings good weather and good fortune. Wind from the north predicts rain, snow, and storms. The east wind brings famine and natural calamities. Wind from the west foretells of a year of plenty, but of the death of a great person. No wind at all will bring both joy and prosperity in the next 12 months.

Swinging From the Lights

We're swinging from the lights.
We're standing on our chairs.
We're bouncing off the walls.
We're sliding down the stairs.

We're running in the halls.
We're slamming all the doors.
We're jumping off our desks.
We're skidding on the floors.

We'd rather use the swings.
We'd rather use the slide.
Except today it's raining
and recess is inside.

~ Kenn Nesbitt

