

Oquenock's Roaring Times

A Publication of the PTA



425 Spruce Avenue, West Islip, New York 11795



Phone: (631) 504-5663

Fax: (631) 893 - 3367

Nurse: (631) 893 - 3360 x 5676

School Hours: 8:50 am - 3:05 pm

November 2008
Volume 1, Issue 1

Dawn Morrison, Principal
Mary Louise Cairo, President PTA
Gloria Monaco Editor

Dates to Remember

11/27 – Happy

Thanksgiving! - School Closed

11/28 - School Closed

12/03 - Photo Make-Up Day and all club, chorus, band, and orchestra photos

12/08-Winter Concert (7:00pm)

12/12 - Holiday Eve & Holiday Fair (7:00PM)

12/18 - PTA Holiday Breakfast Meeting (9:15AM)

How to Contact Our PTA

Phone: 631-893-3360

Web Site:

www.geocities.com/oquenockpta

Email:

OquenockPTA@yahoo.com

Yahoo! Groups: Join [Oquenock PTA on Yahoo! Groups](#) for the latest information and email reminders.

A Letter from the President

The PTA started off the school year welcoming the children for the first few days of school. We were welcomed with smiles and excitement on their faces. It made us feel good to be able to see all the children eager for the beginning of a new school year.

The new school year began with a new Character Education Program. The PTA was able to buy posters for each classroom teacher so the program can be reinforced in the classroom on a daily basis.

The PTA welcomed our new parents into the Oquenock family with a New Parent Tea. Many questions and concerns were answered during this tea. The new parents were able to talk and form a friendship. It was a delightful morning.

(continue on page 3)

Principal's Note

Welcome Back!

The first three months of school have been filled with enhancements to our curriculum, memorable field trips, and informative in-school assemblies. Our fifth grade students have responsibly assumed the role as the student leaders of the building, and our Kindergarten students have mastered the hallways, formed friendships with their classmates, and settled into their daily classroom routines. (continue on page 4)

Simple Ways to Raise Responsible Children

Teaching responsibility to your children might not be as familiar as teaching math or reading. However, parents can help children understand what it means to be responsible. Terri Khonsari, a speaker and author of ***Raising A Superstar: Simple Strategies to Bring Out the Brilliance in Every Child***, provides four steps for raising a child who understands responsibility.

1. Start giving your children small tasks and chores when they are young. Add to their responsibilities, as they get older. Children have a natural desire to help, and you can take advantage of their willingness when they are little. Ask them to take care of certain duties and hold them accountable. Teach them to do things because it helps them and those around them, and not because they get something material from you. Chores can start with very simple things like having them empty trash cans or put their own plate away, and later on they can graduate to washing the dishes or making the salad for dinner.
2. Model the responsible behavior you want your child to emulate. Children can see right through hypocrisy. If there is a discrepancy between your behavior and your teachings, they will copy your actions rather than follow your words. Be responsible in your own life; show care and dedication toward your job, your family, and the commitments that you make to your children and their school. Do you take care of your responsibilities with passion and show enthusiasm for doing what you need to do? Take care of your responsibilities and show your kids you can have fun at the same time.
3. Communicate with your children about responsible behavior. Let them know when you see them being responsible. Point to specific behaviors that you notice them excelling in. Children don't know what it looks like to be responsible until you tell them and show them. Help them understand what you expect and make them feel they are being rewarded for doing the right thing, even if it is just a pat on the back. This will encourage them to continue being responsible and even strive to improve in other areas. Make responsibility a strong value for your whole family and announce it during your family quality times.
4. Believe in your children and show them that you believe they can be responsible. They will pick up on your belief and tend to fulfill expectations. Encourage your kids to do new things for themselves and for the family, and help them achieve their goals in the right way. Not only you will help them become responsible, you will boost their confidence as well.

It doesn't hurt to have a chart to help remind everyone what his or her responsibilities are. That way there is no excuse to forget to do homework, feed the cat or take out the trash. As good habits are formed, you will be laying the foundation for your children to grow into dependable, responsible adults.

Terri Khonsari is the bestselling author of *Raising A Superstar: Simple Strategies to Bring Out the Brilliance in Every Child*. To learn more about Terri's work visit <http://www.raisingasuperstar.com/> and sign up for more free tips on raising happy, healthy and successful children.

A Letter from the President

(continued from page 1)

Our committees have been busy gathering information and ideas in order to make our events as successful as they can be. The first three months events were as follows: **Membership**- Lisa Rudolph and Jeannie Rocchio, **Beautification** –Maureen Mancini, **Rocket Readers**- Jeannie Cullen, **Arts in Education**-Lena Montes, **Reflections**- Lee Moellendorf, **Bulb Fundraiser**-Michelle Edgley, **Class Parent Repres.** Liz Minicozzi and Claire Weber, **Scholarship**-Suzanne Farrell and Maureen Mancini, **Class Pictures**- Kathleen Gagliardi, **Fall Festival**- Karen DiStefano and Kristina Delaney, **Health and Wellness**-Sharon Cannarella, **Pumpkin Sale**- Lesley Keane and Suzanne Farrell, **Spirit Wear**- Nicole Brickman and Lesley Keane, **Shop till you drop**- Susan Elberti, **Blood Drive**- Mary Caputo and Allison Reichel, **Book Fair**- Anna Vaughan and Helene Ferguson, **Food Drive**- Ellen Moruzzi, **Entertainment Books** –Michelle Paduano and Allison Reichel, **Bedtime Stories/ Book Fair**- Julie Siano and Kristina Delaney and **Movie Night**- Mary Louise Cairo.

I would like to thank all who were involved in helping to make the first three months of school a smooth transition. Our theme this year for PTA is “We’re all in this together”. I see our PTA members trying to follow this theme.

There are some committees that continue all year long. They are **Box Tops**- Gina Shaw and Laura Davidson, **Board Of Education**-Rich Hujik, **Campbell Soup Labels** –Diane Schlosser, **Education/ Legislation**- Sharon Cannarella, **Environment**- Nicole Cassagnau, **Hospitality**- Marie Celano, **Oquenock Nights**- Donna Moran, **Newsletter**- Gloria Monaco, **Publicity**- Rich Hujik, and **SEPTA** –Jeannie Rocchio. Once again, I would like to thank all those committee chairs and their team for keeping it going throughout the year.

We have done a lot and in doing so we were able to have an assembly on November 17, 2008 in regards to Bullying –titled **No Bullies Allowed**. It was a very informative and captivating program for the children. The PTA is looking into sponsoring more assemblies towards the springtime.

Please look for the upcoming events in December that the PTA has planned for your children. Your continued support and cooperation by attending the PTA meetings are much appreciated. Mark your calendars for the **December Holiday PTA meeting on 12/18/08**. We will be entertained by our delightful kindergartens. All refreshments for this event will be a “bring and share”. You truly do not want to miss this one.

Wishing you all a Blessed and Peaceful Thanksgiving!

Fondly,
Mary Louise Cairo
President

Principal's Note

(continued from page 1)

Oquenock's Character Education Program is receiving positive feedback from students, parents, and teachers. When you visit the building, please stop by to view our "Tree-mendous Character" tree, which contains the names of students (written on leaves) that have received the Character Education Award since September. We look forward to filling up the tree with those special leaves throughout the year!

Arrival and dismissal procedures at the north walker door are improving. For safety reasons, all parents are reminded to please let students out "curbside" (and not into the parking lot) their car for any reason during morning drop-off. In addition, any parent that wishes to get out is reminded to please park the car in a designated parking spot. Courtesy is contagious, and we are looking to keep the flow of traffic moving for everyone.

As the chilly months of winter approach, we have many exciting things to look forward to: The winter music concert, a school-wide drama production, various field trips to enrich our students, a Geography Bee, a school-wide holiday Sing-A-Long, and so much more.



On behalf of the faculty and staff at Oquenock, I wish everyone a healthy, happy, and relaxing holiday season. Thank you for your continued support of our wonderful school.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Morrison
Principal

Bingo!



November 16 - 22, 2008
<http://mywonderfulworld.org/gaw.html>

A Future Family Event
Our Family Bingo will take place on **Friday, January 16th**. More information will follow as the date approaches.

Gloria Monaco

An interactive kid friendly site!



Celebrating Learning

Greetings from kindergarten! The k kids have done beautifully adjusting to their new surroundings and are really “at home” here at Oquenock. They have had so much fun working on gross motor skills in gym, exchanging books and reading in library, singing in music, and creating and expressing themselves in art.

Phonemic Awareness is a big part of their day as Mrs. Horton McGinley works on letters and sounds through new and exciting games, stories and activities. The children have been so busy learning letters and sounds, working on handwriting, building math skills, creating beautifully projects, and making new friends.

We look forward to watching and assisting the children learn and grow!

Mrs. Lutz
Mrs. Hudson
Mrs. Howard

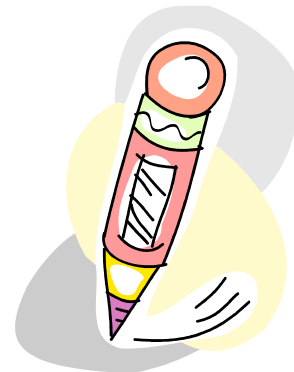


First Grade Feats

The first fifty days in first grade have been fabulous. In September we learned the structure of the grade and had our first spelling and math tests. We wrote our first story about visiting a farm and read many stories.

In October we continued learning many things including but not limited to: contractions, plurals, and telling and asking sentences. We also took a few field trips.

(continue on page 6)



First Grade Feats

(continued from page 5)

We visited the high school planetarium, the West Islip Fire House and went pumpkin picking at Schmitt's farm.

In November we began centers and guided reading groups. We learned about the election process and also Veteran's Day.

Each day presents us with new learning adventures and we are thankful for the opportunities to grow and learn. First grade is amazing!

Mrs. Bonkov
Mrs. Dragelin
Mrs. Gallo



Second grade is very busy! We just completed our matter unit. Our in-school field trip was terrific, because each child made a crystal garden, flubber, and ice cream.

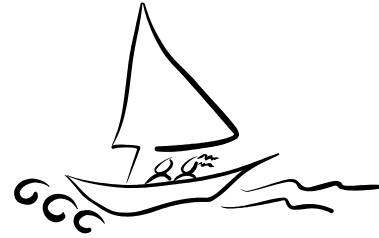
This month we have been focused on being thankful. The students brainstormed, and then wrote poems about what they are each thankful for. They each invited a guest to our Thankful Breakfast, and are writing touching paragraphs explaining why that person is so special to them. The students are responsible for presenting the paragraph to their guest, and for planning the breakfast. We hope our guests won't mind a breakfast menu that's a little out of the ordinary!

We have also begun our measurement unit, which incorporates math and science as we build and measure gingerbread houses. The MST lab smells like a candy store, which adds to the festivities! Special thanks to our parents for the candy, and to Mrs. LoPresti for all of her help in preparing for this enjoyable unit.

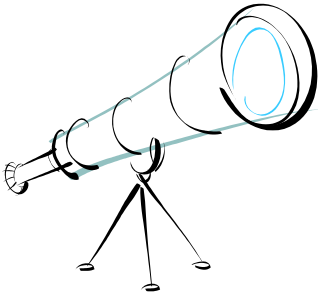
We wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and a healthy, joyful holiday season!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Cosentino
Mrs. Greene
Mrs. Villez

The **Third grade** has been very busy this last quarter in science. We began the year in the MST lab learning all about buoyancy. We did experiments to discover why boats float and we explored Archimedes theories about water displacement. We also found out why ships can carry more cargo when sailing on salt water than on fresh water.



After that it was off into space. The third grade went to the West Islip Planetarium at the high school where planetarium teacher, Mr. Purdy, created a human solar system in the hall, before entering the planetarium. We then learned about the fall constellations, the phases of the moon, how planets formed, and the inner planets of Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars. We will continue our exploration of space at another visit in early December, with follow - up lessons in the classroom.



Mr. Haas's class also has been studying the crayfish. His class will explore natural habitats compared to man made habitats, inherited traits compared to acquired traits, and how crayfish sensory systems work. We will finish the unit with our annual crayfish races governed by the rules of the NCAA - National Crayfish Athletic Association.

On a separate note, the Oquenock **CORP Club** has been busy this first quarter also. We decided to spend the year working for the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund. We began with a raffle of a Halloween themed basket that was won by Challenge teacher, Mrs. Robertson. We then teamed up with the offices of Tichler and Abraham, a local orthodontics office in West Islip. They offered to buy back all the Halloween candy we did not want. They paid us \$1.00/pound, up to \$200.00. We collected 210 pounds of candy so we received a check for \$200.00. Dr. Tichler will then send all the candy he collects to a distributor that boxes and ships the candy to our armed service people in Iraq and Afghanistan. We then joined the money from the Halloween candy with our raffle money and sent \$350.00 to the American Red Cross. We are currently working with the PTA to create food baskets for Thanksgiving.

FOURTH GRADE NEWS

Our fourth graders have been busy, busy, busy. We have just completed a unit on electricity in science. The children worked cooperatively in groups in the MST lab creating electrical circuits, and later, posters in our classrooms. We will soon begin our study of animals. As a culminating activity, the children will research an animal and create a power point presentation for their classmates.

Character education at Oquenock continues to be an important part of learning. Since school began we have discussed the traits of respect and responsibility. Bullying of others has been discussed at great lengths. Our classes have had two anti-bullying assemblies in addition to teacher-directed activities.

Finally, our classes have begun the study of Long Island and New York State Native Americans. We will continue in our study of New York as we learn about our state's first European explorers.



Fourth Grade Teachers

5th Grade

Last Year of Elementary School Off to a Fast Start

During the first quarter, the 5th graders were busy preparing for the New York State Social Studies Test, which was held on November 12th and 13th. As a culminating activity to their preparations, both classes combined to participate in our 1st Annual Social Studies Jeopardy Game on November 10th. For their hard work and efforts in Social Studies, all 5th graders were treated to an ice cream party.

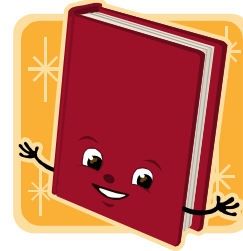


(continue on page 9)

5th Grade
Last Year of Elementary School Off to a Fast Start
(continued from page 8)

Now that it's December we are looking forward to the holidays. On December 11th, we will go to Islip Town Hall to see "A Christmas Carol."

Even though it is a busy time of year, we would like to remind all parents to make sure the students are reading at least 15 minutes every night.



Mrs. Heaton
Mr. Osburn



Music Notes by Mrs. Cirasole

Please be sure to come join us for an evening of music when Oquenock Elementary School musicians perform in the Winter Concert on Monday, December 8th, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. The program features the fourth grade chorus, fifth grade chorus and the band under the direction of Mrs. Cirasole and Mrs. Peskanov respectively. There will be an in-school assembly held at 9:30 a.m., which will also include the orchestra under the direction of Ms. Grasso. Participating musicians, please remember to wear concert dress to school on December 8th. Many months of hard work and effort have gone into preparing for this special event. Please come and show your support for the music department and your fellow students!



Bedtime Stories with Dr. Seuss was held at Oquenock on Friday, November 21, 2008. While the children were read to in their respective classrooms, the parents were listening to a lecture given by Detective Mike Connolly of the SCPD, Computer Crimes Unit. Over 120 students and 10 readers participated.

The front corridor was renamed Mulberry Street for the night and the Cafeteria turned into Who-ville. After the kids were read to they all paraded to the cafeteria for some Dr. Seuss snacks and "pink ink". The kids ate Green eggs and ham cookies and cake, One Fish Two Fish cookies, Cat in the Hat cupcakes, Thing 1 and Thing 2 cupcakes, Yertle the turtle cookies and Horton's flowers. While the kids ate, the lights were dimmed and they watched "**How the Grinch Stole Christmas**".

Many kids came in wearing Cat in the Hat attire. Even Mrs. Morrison joined the fun by wearing a very cool Cat in the Hat costume. Sam I Am, Thing 1 and Thing 2 also joined the kids. There was even a special appearance of Thing 3! Who knows perhaps if Dr. Seuss were still alive, maybe Thing 3 would have made it into his next adventure.



At the end of the night, the kids left with a folder full of Dr. Seuss goodies. Indeed, the evening was a grand success!

Julie Siano- PTA Chair of Bedtime Stories

An Editor's Moment

An earnest appreciation is extended to our dedicated learning community professionals for taking the time to prepare some of the passages located within the pages of our first edition. I must admit I was somewhat concerned since an extremely short deadline was presented during such a busy time of year, but our incredibly talented staff not only met but also exceeded any expectations. Thank you for your thoughtful pieces and for giving your audience an opportunity to celebrate some of the amazing moments that are occurring within your learning environments. Therefore, I would like to dedicate our first issue to you!

