

Oquenock

News

A PUBLICATION OF THE OQUENOCK PTA

*Protecting our children. Empowering our parents.
Working with our teachers.*

From the PTA President

To all of the families and staff of Oquenock I'd like to thank everyone for their generous participation in our "Month of Giving". It is such a wonderful thing to see what can be accomplished when we all work together. Seventeen food baskets were sent to families within our school system, toys will bring smiles to many little faces, our soldier will know how much we care, and in January the

gloves, mittens, hats and scarves that are collected will warm many hearts.

I'd like to convey wishes to the entire Oquenock family for a Happy Holiday Season. I hope the New Year brings peace, health and joy to all.

Sincerely,
Donna Moran
Oquenock PTA President

Principal's Note

Dear Parents:

As I walk throughout the hallways and classrooms of Oquenock on a daily basis, I am proud to see students actively engaged in meaningful, curriculum-based instruction. Intellectual growth from the start of the school year is apparent in classroom discussions, enthusiastic student responses to teachers' questions and probes, and displays of prior learning activities that are evident throughout the hallways and classrooms of Oquenock Elementary School. Teachers, staff and students are to be congratulated for working so hard throughout the past four months. They are certainly well-deserving of the upcoming December break!

If you shop at **Stop & Shop**, please remember to register your card for the *A+ Bonus Bucks Program*. With **Stop and Shop A+ Bonus Bucks**, points accrue for our school every time you make a purchase with your **Stop & Shop** card. At the end of each month, the points for Oquenock Elementary School will be determined, and the school's account will be credited. The proceeds from the program will be utilized

to make purchases that benefit our school. Oquenock is registered and ready to go. All you need to do to start earning *A+ Bonus Bucks* for our school is to go to www.stopandshop.com/aplus and register. Information is also available in the main office. In order to register, you'll need to have a **Stop & Shop** card.

For safety reasons, all parents are reminded to please let students out "curbside" (and not into the parking lot) when dropping off in the morning. In addition, any parent that wishes to get out of their car for any reason during morning drop-off, is reminded to please park their car in a designated parking spot. Not doing so backs up traffic and causes potentially dangerous situations for our students.

I would like to extend a special **THANK YOU** to the Connolly family for donating the two beautiful oak trees that were recently planted on the west side of the gym. I look forward to seeing them flourish in the years to come!

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Class Chatter

Kindergarten has had a wonderful December! Our month began with the 3rd annual reading of the Polar Express by Mrs. Morrison. The k-kids were thrilled to see that the “special reader” on December 1st was their principal and even more excited to receive sleigh bell necklaces to take home as a souvenir! Thanks, Mrs. Morrison!

We were also busy this month preparing for our performance at the PTA meeting. We have spent many afternoons together practicing holiday songs and we have a lot of talented singers this year! The K-kids are very excited to perform for their parents and we know that they are going to do a great job!

This month concludes our formal study of letters. Mrs. Horton-McGinley has been working very hard with the k-kids on their letter and sound recognition skills and we are so proud of how far the K-kids have come since September. Keep up the great job!

Compassion was our Character Education trait for the month of December and we were lucky to have a special opportunity to help us showcase this trait with our trip to see *The Princess and the Frog*. The k-kids had a great time at the movies and it served as the perfect way to tie up our study of *compassion* for the month. It also helped us to reinforce what the children have been learning in literacy about plots, character traits, settings, and story sequencing. We have also been spending time using Venn diagrams to compare various versions of literature (Gingerbread Man vs. Gingerbread Baby, etc.). In this instance, the K-kids studied the original Grimm’s *Frog Prince* to Disney’s *Princess and the Frog*. It was a wonderful and fun learning experience for all!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Howard, Mrs. Hudson, and Mrs. Lutz

1st Grade continues to be amazing! The children have been working hard and are making a lot of progress. They have adjusted nicely to centers and guided reading groups. We are amazed at how far the children’s skills have progressed.

In December we took part in many holiday activities. We read the story [The Gingerbread Man](#) and the children took part in many lessons that correlated with the story.

Also, we read the story from our Rigby series titled [The Runaway Pizza](#). The children really enjoyed this silly story. As a culminating activity was had a pizza party.

In January we will begin a science unit on motion and energy. Further, we will continue to work hard on all of our reading, writing and math skills. We are looking forward to seeing the children progress even more within the next few months. Keep up the good work first graders!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Dragelin, Mrs. Bonkov, and Mrs. Gallo

2nd Graders are full of holiday spirit!

They are busy building and measuring gingerbread houses in the MST Lab. This is a wonderful way to incorporate math and science, and the hallway smells like a sweet shop! The students also demonstrated their creativity by decorating their own gingerbread men. We have quite a variety of boys, girls, elves, military men, and a few Santas too! The students are now writing descriptive paragraphs about those gingerbread men.

Our Flat Stanleys have returned and we are eagerly sharing their adventures. Stanleys traveled throughout the United States, and few even visited Europe! This helps make our “Earth, Our Home” social studies unit come alive for the children, and builds a nice rapport with family and friends.

As always, thank you for your continued support. We wish you a happy, healthy holiday and 2010!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Cosentino, Mrs. Greene, and Mrs. Villez

3rd Graders began their enrichment program with Mrs. Hollinger. We will be taking several trips to the MST Lab over the next two months to examine owl pellets. Students will attend a field trip to Sweetbriar Nature Center at the end of the program to pull everything together. Please visit the District’s e-Board and view Mrs. Hollinger’s e-Board to understand in depth the wonderful experiences your children are having!

Sincerely,
Mr. Pekurney, Mrs. Schmidt, and Mrs. Carlson

4th Graders have been immersed in a unit on Native Americans. Students studied the Algonquian and Iroquois tribes that lived in New York State. The boys and girls culminated the unit by creating an Iroquois project that gave them a choice of building a longhouse, making a tool, writing a legend, making Native American jewelry, making a Native American doll or writing a report. The boys and girls invited the 3rd grade classes to see their projects and teach them a little about each one.

Science has the fourth graders focused on animals. Each student has picked a vertebrate they would like to learn more about. Utilizing the computer lab, we researched about our animals and are creating a PowerPoint Slide Show which will include its habitat, appearance, diet, life cycle, scientific name and any special characteristic it may have. The students will be taught how to create a slide show incorporating sound and pictures from the internet. This is always a fun activity.

We continue to be READERS! Each day we spend a large portion of our day reading and writing. The students continue to write letters to their teachers about the books they are reading independently. They look forward each week to getting a response from their teacher.

The fourth grade and their teachers would like to wish everyone a happy, healthy, holiday season!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Macchione and Mrs. Parson

5th Grade Fun

December is an exciting month for 5th graders. Students are very busy getting into the season. They're working on their literacy skills by writing holiday stories. They're also studying the classic "A Christmas Carol," so they'll be a very appreciative audience when they see the play on December 18th. In addition, all the students are looking forward to their parties, so they can celebrate and share their holiday spirit with one another!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Heaton, Mr. Haas, and Mr. Osburn

CHORUS NOTES

Mrs. Cirasole



Congratulations and thank you to all the students who were involved in the winter concert which was held on December 15th, 2009. The musicians at Oquenock Elementary worked for many months to prepare for this special event. The chorus was very lucky to have our student teacher Mr. Dellosso helping us out this year. He added some "spice" to our selections with various percussion instruments! Thank you to all the friends and family who came to hear us and show their support for the Oquenock music program. We hope you had as much fun listening as we did performing!

Chorus members please refer to your 2010 chorus calendar for our rehearsal schedule. In January of 2010 we will begin to prepare for our spring concert. If there are any fourth or fifth grade students who wish to join the chorus for the second half of the school year please come speak to me and I will gladly give you a permission slip. I am always looking to have more voices join us!

Mrs. Cirasole

Volunteers Needed

"UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."

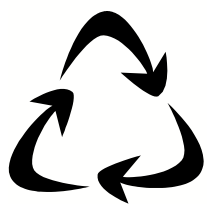
This is my favorite quote from Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax*. I would like to share this quote with you in that the Oquenock PTA really needs your help. For those of you who don't know me, I am the Vice President and as such, am in charge of all the various committees and events that the PTA runs at Oquenock. We are in danger of losing many events due to lack of volunteers.

Please consider helping out the PTA in any way you can. If time away from family and work is not your thing, consider baking for Baker's Dozen or stuffing envelopes for Bingo. There is plenty to do, and we are asking for your help. Please contact me at 631-893-4205 or nicknzach@optonline.net if you have any time to spare and would like to become active or more active in the Oquenock PTA.

Wishing you and your families have a safe and joyous Holiday Season. See you all in 2010.

Julie Siano
Vice President

Greener Efforts



In our continued efforts to save money and reduce paper use we are pleased to announce a new program that will help put an end to the multiple copies of paper notices sent home.

Beginning in January, families that have more than one child attending Oquenock will receive general school-wide notices in the folders/backpacks of the eldest child only.

Any permission slips or information specific to a child's class will continue to come home in individual folders, but all general school-wide announcements and requests will be sent home with the eldest child only.

Connect and Share with Oquenock PTA on Yahoo! Groups

Join the group at groups.yahoo.com/group/oquenockpta/ and receive email reminders for PTA and school events right in your inbox.

Character Education Program

January's Character Trait is **Responsibility**. Encourage your child to support Oquenock's Character Education Program by wearing **White on January 8, 2010**.



Stop & Shop A+ Bonus Bucks Program

Stop & Shop offers a program designed to help our community schools. The A+ Bonus Bucks program lets parents and other supporters earn great awards for schools to use as they choose! With A+ BonusBucks, points accrue with each purchase where the Stop & Shop Card is used. It even works with purchases made online with Peapod by Stop & Shop. At the end of each month, these points determine Oquenock's cash total which is automatically credited to our account and school totals updated each month. Register your card with Oquenock today at the Stop & Shop website at stopandshop.com/our_stores/bonus_bucks/index.htm.



Principal's Note

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As the chilly months of winter approach, we have many exciting things to look forward to: The winter music concerts, a character education drama production, a Geography Bee, a field trip to a live performance of *A Christmas Carol* for students in grades 3-5, a field trip to Disney's *A Princess and The Frog* with *curriculum based extension activities taking place prior to and following the trip for students in K-2, a school-wide holiday Sing-A-Long, and so much more.*

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

Sincerely,
Mrs. Morrison
Principal

NY Islanders Teamwork Assembly



More photos of this School Event are available on Oquenock's eBoard located at OquenockElementary.wi.site.eboard.com

PTA Committee News & Events

Blood Drive



After the holidays, give one more gift! West Islip Council of PTA is sponsoring a blood drive.

Monday, January 25, 2010
3:30PM—8:45PM
Beach Street Middle School Cafeteria

Babysitting will be available. Contact your building representative, Mary Caputo at 631-422-6996 or at hesdorfer@aol.com, for appointments and questions.

Mary Caputo
Blood Drive Committee

Winter Webkinz Box Tops Contest

Our second Box Tops contest is in full swing and will run through the end of the year until **January 11, 2010**. Continue sending in your box tops in an envelope or Ziploc bag with your child's name and teacher. One class will win a certificate of achievement for "most box tops" and each student in the winning class will get a special prize! The student at Oquenock who brings in the most box tops will win a plush winter Webkinz!



For more information on the box tops program, to get coupons, or to see our school's progress, please visit btfe.com.

Maureen Mancini and Ellen Conner
Box Tops Committee

Wanted: Yearbook Photos

Please send in all photos of events that happened at Oquenock thus far. Place them in an envelope marked Yearbook pictures. Please note, we can not guarantee that you will get the photos back, so be sure to make extra copies.

All photos can be sent home through Mark Cairo or Ian Farrell in Mrs. Heaton's class. Please contact Mary Louise Cairo at 631-422-9044 or Suzanne Farrell at 631-666-6610 with any questions.

Mary Louise Cairo and Suzanne Farrell
Yearbook Committee

Entertainment Books Fundraiser Complete

Thank you for supporting our fundraising efforts by ordering your Entertainment Books. It is your continued support that keeps the programs coming for your children.

Mary Louise Cairo
Entertainment Books Committee

Bottle Return Collection January 8th!

Hello Oquenock Community! There will be a Bottle Return held at Oquenock on **January 8, 2010 from 3:30PM - 5:30PM**. Please donate your \$.05 returnable's.



We are now collecting water bottles in addition to soda and other deposit refundable cans and bottles.

If you are interested in volunteering please contact Jenn Delaney at 631-539-6252 or jcmxdel@optonline.net.

Jenn Delaney
Environmental Committee

Membership Round-Up

This year the Oquenock PTA Membership Committee has been running a 'Focus on FATHERS' Campaign. Our goal is to have **25%** of the total membership be men (dads, step-dads, grand-dads). We should have no problem exceeding that goal as we currently boast **84** male PTA members out of **280!** We are still actively recruiting members and encourage you to join the PTA. Research shows that children do better when their parents are involved both at home and at school. Grades and test scores climb. Self-esteem grows. Schools improve. **Join today by completing the form below!**



Member Information	Member 1 Name	Member 2 Name
Name of Person Joining PTA		
Relationship to Child (Please check one.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Friend/Neighbor	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Friend/Neighbor
Street Address		
City, State, Zip		
Phone Number		
Email Address		

Child's Name:	Teacher	Grade
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Item	Amount
_____ member(s) x \$7.00 per member	\$
Total Enclosed (Please make checks payable to Oquenock PTA)	\$

SADDLE UP DADS! Support our "Focus on Father's" Campaign by joining Oquenock Elementary PTA!

2009-2010 Officers

President	Donna Moran	587-7264
Vice President	Julie Siano	893 4205
Recording Secretary	Michelle Edgley	587-1943
Corresponding Secretary	Gloria Monaco	893-2864
Treasurer	Jennifer Delaney	539-6252
Historian	Kristina Delaney	235-7804
Council Delegate	Lesley Keane	422-8417

The PTA Parent Newsletter

Did you know? National PTA publishes a free online newsletter offering expert advice and practical ideas for raising kids and becoming a vital part of their education.

Visit pta.org/ptaparent to check out this great parenting resource!



Editor: Allison Reichel