

# Garden School News

September 19, 2008

Volume 8 Issue 1

## Headmaster's Column

School year 2008-2009 has gotten off to a wonderful start. As we approach the end of the second week of school, I thought that we might look at some of the plans and changes that we hope will move us toward our vision of a twenty-first century Garden School. When we graduate the class of 2009 this June, we will be graduating our 80th class! And so much has changed since three graduates were given their diplomas in 1929.

This year we have begun working on another of new projects. We are about the file Part A of the application for the International Baccalaureate; we have established a communications committee to both put out information and to gather ideas; we have begun our own transportation company for busing our students to and from school; we have re-vamped the Dining Room menu; we have renovated part of the upper division; we have upgraded our salary scale; we have embarked on an ambitious program of faculty development; and we are moving Garden School much closer to a green environment.

These changes all represent our developing vision of the Garden School of the future. Some of this was made possible by our new tuition scale, some from donations—all of these changes, however, emerged from an environment in which the exchange of ideas generates the excitement and the enthusiasm to move from the thinking stage to the implementing stage. Parents, teachers, students, trustees, and administrators have together moved Garden School toward its future.

## On Stage

### *Shakespeare in the Garden*

October 2nd is Theatre Night at Garden School for our 7th and 8th graders. They have bought out the house to see *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with their families and friends. In preparation for the event, students are reading the play in English classes to familiarize themselves with the plot and develop an ear for Elizabethan English. A workshop with our own Garden School parent, Josette Murray, will bring movement into the mix and enhance the Shakespeare experience. We are also anticipating a visit from a teacher/actor affiliated with Queens Garden Stage, the ensemble performing the play. Enthusiasm is running high as students read their lines with gusto and throw themselves into the roles of nobles, workers and fairies. Men in tights? "I wouldn't go that far," said one student, "but, it's a cool play. I never thought I'd like Shakespeare so much!"

### *Queens Garden Stage*

There's a new non-profit performing arts organization in Jackson Heights called Queens Garden Stage and they are housed right here at Garden School. Their first production—*A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare—will have 17 performances in September and October. The production will take place on our stage. Queens Garden Stage offers educational programs and hires professional directors, designers and actors to bring quality entertainment to the community.

*(See related article page 4)*



*William Shakespeare*

## Upper Division

Back to school is a busy time in the upper division. With classes well underway and clubs having held their first meetings, Garden life is back in motion and good things are happening throughout the school.

Did you buy your yearbook yet? Members of the editorial staff were out in force at curriculum night taking orders for books and encouraging families to purchase ads. They shared a table with volunteers for the Blood Drive who asked everyone to sign up to give blood at Garden School on October 28th. Last year more than 30 pints of blood were donated by the Garden community – this year they hope to exceed that number.

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## Lower Division Highlights

### *Early Childhood*

Students in the early childhood cluster have been very busy since the first day of school. Those in the nursery have been working on their sharing skills. Manners such as please and thank you are being practiced as well. Children are beginning to recognize circle shapes. Everyone had a turn painting with water colors.

Pre-Kindergarten has been fostering independence. Each student has been working on name recognition and tracing or writing names. Following directions has been a challenge for some, while self expression of needs and wants is an even greater challenge for others. Routine is the key that helps all to feel secure and confident. They have been busy decorating their classroom with finger paintings, sponge paintings, and self portraits painted at the easel.

The Kindergarten students have been adjusting to their daily routines which include skills sheets, dictionary usage and new Math workbooks. They have enjoyed painting at the easels and having their work displayed in the classroom. The class has begun phonic instruction and discussions on the changing seasons. They are all excited to tell of their observations.

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# Merit Scholarship Exam Merit Scholarship Exam

# "The Fleet is in!!!" "The Fleet is in!!!"

On Saturday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, more than 100 students will converge on Garden School in Jackson Heights for the school's annual Merit Scholarship examination. Begun 16 years ago through Garden School's board of trustees, the Merit Scholars program provides up to four full scholarships to top candidates who take the exam and *can be worth as much as \$100,000 in Garden School tuition fees over a seven-year period.*

Founded in 1923, Garden School was the result of efforts by parents, teachers, and community leaders who wanted to create a school that places the academic and social interests of children at center. To this day, decisions about curriculum and academic achievement are made with students, not politics, in mind.

Garden School is an independent, co-ed, secular, college preparatory school that spans Nursery through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Ninety-nine percent of Garden School's students go on to college immediately after graduation. And all of this takes place within a diverse, international environment in which there is no single majority.

The Merit Scholars program provides full and partial scholarships to students who will attend Garden School the following year, in grades 6 through 10. *This means that students who are currently in grades 5 through 9 are eligible to take the exam.* Thus, a student winner entering Garden School as a 6<sup>th</sup> grader can expect to receive their scholarship award for seven years covered by the program. Current Garden School students, as well as students who attend other schools, are welcome to register for the exam.

Winning students need to maintain a B average, be good citizens of the school, and participate in the school's community service program to ensure that the scholarship continues over the years. Recent winners of the scholarship at Garden School have gone on to such universities and colleges as Harvard, Dartmouth, NYU, MIT, and Cornell.

For those who are interested, here are the details:

**When:** Saturday, November 22, 2008, at 9 a.m.

**Where:** Garden School  
33-16 79<sup>th</sup> Street  
Jackson Heights, NY 11372

**How:** Go to [www.gardenschool.org](http://www.gardenschool.org) to download a Merit Scholarship Exam application or call 718-335-6363 to request an application by mail. Testing Fee is \$40

Yes, we know that we are closer to Labor Day than Memorial Day, but the fleet we are talking about is our brand new fleet of three GMAC 19 passenger, fully heated and air conditioned yellow school buses that took to the road on September 8th transporting Gardenites to and from school.

There is limited space available so if there is still interest in signing on, please contact the Business Office as soon as possible for rates and pick-up times. The school, along with our team of drivers, Jeisson, Walter, and Mrs. Rashid are excited about this new venture and committed to making your child's ride a safe and pleasant experience.



## Upper Division Continued...

Garden continues to excel in athletics. Both the varsity soccer and volleyball teams started their seasons with victories. The teams' schedules are posted near the gym office and on the website. Come to a game and show your support of our athletes!

The Student Council held elections for class representatives for grades 7-12. Garden students are also interested in the presidential elections and the Student Council will sponsor mock presidential and vice presidential debates prior to Election Day.

**There's still time to enter our  
Tuition Raffle  
(download form from "Back to School" package on our website)  
Drawing October 6, 2008**

# Lower Division Highlights Cont'd...

## Grades 1,2,3

Our Citizenship theme this year has been discussed in First, Second and Third Grades. First Graders have been conferring on the importance of using rules. Students worked cooperatively to establish a set of class rules. Important rules agreed upon included listening to others when they speak, following directions, respecting others and their belongings, and trying your best.

Second Grade divided into teams to identify a way to make our school a better place. Each group then gave a presentation to the rest of the class. Some ideas included making sure each class was recycling, having more plants in the building, and treating others nicely.

Third Grade is focusing on how an individual's actions affect the classroom community. When one student is unfocused the rest of the class and the teacher are affected. The class is reminded of the importance of being responsible for one's own actions and thinking how others will be affected by their actions.

In conjunction with the theme of citizenship, science classes have been focusing on responsibility as it pertains to our environment. Conservation International and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums have named 2008 as the Year of the Frog because of the danger the amphibian population faces world wide. In addition to our science curriculum, students will be learning about the far reaching effects of pollution and global warming on our little green friends.

## Grades 4,5,6

Fourth, fifth, and sixth graders have been writing reflective paragraphs about the meaning of being an effective citizen. This was linked to the ideas of citizenship and community which were topics of the summer readings. In those books major characters volunteered in their communities. Current class readings such as *Hope Was Here*, *The Cay*, and *Class President* center on this year's lower division theme of citizenship and community.

# After School Foundations

On the heels of the successful launch of our first year of "Foundations" courses, the Fall '08 line up promises not to disappoint you. Classes are scheduled to begin the week of October 6th and we're happy to report that they are quickly filling up.

This year's array of specialty classes are geared toward the varied interests of our students, they are exciting, and will broaden a student's awareness in a multitude of areas. Registration is now open to "Friends of Garden School" so contact Ms. Flanagan to see which courses are still available. For details on specific Foundation courses, go to our website [www.gardenschool.org](http://www.gardenschool.org) and click on the "programs" button.

New this year to our after school calendar is an instrumental music band program through Paul Effman Music, the largest most successful music program in the Northeast for children in grades 3-12. Teachers from Paul Effman held an assembly this week introducing students to the various instruments available in the band program. Students were amazed at the recognizable tunes emanating from instruments such as the glockenspiel, trombone and clarinet. We all can't wait to hear the first band concert—so if you are interested in your child participating in our Band, please complete the official registration form sent home with your child this week.

### Can You Help????

Perhaps you are an engineer, work for an engineering company or just have an interest in the field ... if so, you may be interested in providing funds for our new ***Lego Mindstorms Robotics Foundations Course***. Every pair of children will get to use (for the semester) a Legos Mindstorm RCX Robotics kit. Basically, the kit includes the programming "brick" or mini-computer, two motors, various gears, and a number of wheels and other parts. The course is being given by Peter Glus (parent of 2 Garden School children). Mr. Glus, who has donated his time to instruct this course, is an environmental engineer at Malcolm Pirnie Corp.

To underwrite this program or if there are any questions, please contact Ms. Maisano in the Business Office.

## Dates to Remember

- Monday, September 22 Lower Division Clubs Begin
- Monday, September 22 PTA Innisbrook/Greenraising Fund Raiser begins
- Tuesday, September 23 Band Registration Forms Due
- Wednesday, September 24 PTA Welcome Breakfast for parents and staff (7:45am)
- Thursday, September 25 Paradigm Research with PreK & K classes
- Friday, September 26 Drivers Education Begins
- Tuesday, September 30 School Closed
- Monday, October 1 School Closed
- Tuesday, October 2 Grades 7 & 8 to Midsummer Night's Dream
- Monday, October 7 Tuition Raffle Drawing
- Monday, October 7 Foundations Courses and Music Conservatory Begin



# Queens Garden Stage

## Bringing the Performing Arts to Jackson Heights

Producing Artistic Director, Alison Ostergaard, is a four year resident of Jackson Heights. She has worked with The Shakespeare Theater of New Jersey, Red Bull Theater, Syracuse Stage, The Ohio Light Opera and The College Light Opera. Her collaboration with The Garden School makes possible a vital contribution to the community at large and an exceptionally supportive environment for emerging professional artists. Future plans include developing a performing arts education program, an aggressive audience development program and producing plays, musicals and dance events.

**COME SEE THE SHOW!** Great for adults and students 10yrs +.

### A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM - by William Shakespeare

Shakespeare EVERYONE can enjoy!

This **90 MINUTE** version of **A Midsummer Night's Dream** stops for no one and leaves no one behind. Director Kristin Skye Hoffmann's exceptional talent for physical and clear storytelling makes this production a must see for all audiences. Set in Central Park with **Hip Hop fairies** and a **Multi Media design** that will wow; this modern day version of Shakespeare's most commonly produced play is by no means typical.

In the deepest darkest parts of Central Park, two sets of lovers pursue their desires; but find them selves running amuck. Helena loves Demetrius and Hermia loves Lysander - but Hermia's father insists she marry Demetrius. The lovers flee the **tyranny** and take refuge in the woods where they are unknowingly surrounded by feuding fairies and a bumbling group of **Park workers** moonlighting as actors rehearsing a play. Add the mischievous nymph, **Puck**, armed with a **love potion** capable of making anyone fall for the first person they see - no matter how unsuitable - and you might just have the perfect mix of **fun, chaos and fantasy!**

**QUEENS GARDEN STAGE - INSIDE THE GARDEN SCHOOL - Entrance on 79th Street**  
33-16 79<sup>th</sup> Street | Cross Street, Northern Blvd | Jackson Heights, Queens

#### **September 6 - October 4, 2008**

17 Performances (1 hour 30 minutes)  
Thursdays | Fridays | Saturdays - 8pm  
Saturday Matinees - 3pm

**\$12 Adults**

**\$10 Seniors 65 yrs old or disabled**

**\$5 Students under 18**

**Purchase Tickets** - In Advance at the counter of

**Espresso 77 7 35-57**

77th Street or [www.SmartTix.com](http://www.SmartTix.com) 212.868.4444 | or at the door if not sold-out.

Get more info, make a tax deductible donation, volunteer or join the mailing list.

Visit [www.QueensGardenStage.org](http://www.QueensGardenStage.org) |

| 718-874-9431 | [info@QueensGardenStage.org](mailto:info@QueensGardenStage.org)

