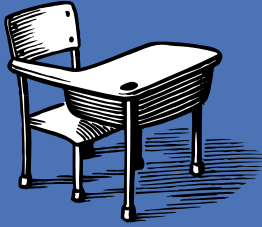


March 6, 2009

Volume 5, Issue 15

Garden School News

CIVILITY • RESPECT • HONESTY • KINDNESS



33-16 79th Street
Jackson Heights, NY 11372
Tel 718-335-6363
Fax 718-565-1169
info@gardenschool.org

Headmaster
Dr. Richard Marotta

Lower Division Head
William Vogel

Director of Finance
Mary Maisano

Director of College
Counseling
Lisa Sohmer

Garden School PTA Officers

PTA President
Martha Palacio
Co-Vice Presidents
Ivette Mayo
Lisa Thompson
Secretary
Rosemary Dineen
Treasurer
Nilda Chu
Corresponding Secretary
Cynthia DeMonte

Committee Chairpersons

Outreach
Richard Langberg
Ivette Mayo
Technology
Ed Ermler
Kim Cummings

Foundations
Orlaith Staunton
Kim Cummings

Headmaster's Column



In view of some discussions that have taken place within our athletic league, I thought it appropriate to explore our sports philosophy in this column.

Garden has always maintained an open-team policy for our students. We have done this for a number of reasons: first is that we want all students to have the opportunity to engage in team sports and develop a sense of how an individual becomes a member of a group while still maintaining a sense of individuality; second, we have always thought of team first and foremost as a learning experience and then as a competitive experience.

Our philosophy insists that the gymnasium, the field and the court are *first and most importantly* classrooms. The field in Central Park is not a battleground but a teaching classroom. The basketball court is not a war zone but a classroom, despite the public media's use of the language of combat and violence to describe sporting events. Words such as 'crushed,' 'destroyed,' 'defeated,' 'smashed,'

'annihilated,' etc. are frequently used to describe one team's winning game.

Unfortunately, we have seen some of this behavior in our league, not necessarily during our games but at other games. Our message to our fellow schools and always to ourselves is that coaches and athletic directors always perform the role of TEACHER. That lies at the heart of our mission. If one of our students goes on to college on an athletic scholarship—wonderful! However, our mission is to teach ideas, skills and values.

Whether we win or lose, we want our students and our coaches to follow the path of learning. Of course there will be disappointment if a team loses; however, that disappointment should never be allowed or encouraged to overtake our philosophy of teaching and learning in the sports classroom. Our mission is to teach so that our students learn that the values of academics, culture, athletics and ethics together constitute a complete education.

Upper Division Highlights

A flurry of activity—no, NOT snow—abounds in the Upper Division Science Department!

Have you ever wondered what a flightless cormorant looks like? What about a red footed booby? A pega pega plant? The seventh grade knows. During their study of Charles Darwin's epic journey aboard the *HMS Beagle*, students were assigned an organism found on the Galapagos Islands and asked to create a mask to represent it out of nothing more than a paper plate or two and some ordinary arts and crafts materials. The results were amazing. You may visit the Galapagos mask display in room 31. In addition to the masks, students presented information researched about their

Lower Division Updates

The Nursery class has been talking about clouds, rain, and of course snow. They have added the book *Little Cloud* by Eric Carle to their readings about weather. The students painted with the actual snow, making it colorful by adding drops of food coloring. Number 5 has been the number of the week. Each child glued 5 colorful paper fish into a paper fishbowl. They have been learning one-to-one correspondence by counting their fish.

During social studies class, the Pre-Kindergarten celebrated Black History Month by learning about George Washington Carver, Marian Anderson, and Harriet Tubman. They enjoyed hearing different books and a flannel board story. On the day of Fat

Continued on page 3

Continued on page 2

Tuesday, Pre-K read the book, *Pancakes, Pancakes* by Eric Carle and then cooked pancakes in cooking class. There was a lot of measuring, stirring, and pouring but the best part was the tasting. The Pre-K students are the best cooks. The fine arts are an integral part of the Pre-K program. The children have been studying the art work of Georges Seurat. This famous artist painted with minute brush strokes which look very similar to dots. The Pre-K Art classes have been filled with students “painting like Seurat” with cotton swabs and tempera paint. Monday’s big snow day caused giant icicles to form outside the windows of our Pre-K classroom. As one student put it, “There is an icicle celebration out there!” This prompted the Pre-K to do some water experiments for science class. One student put a container of water outside over night and brought it to school so everyone could see that it froze. It was then placed on the heater to see what would happen. After it melted, the container was placed outside again for the remainder of the day. This is when the students learned about the freezing point, when it was not cold enough outside to freeze again.

The Kindergarten wrapped up February with lessons on Harriet Tubman, The Underground Railroad and dental health. As we spring into March, the children are excited about new topics that include legends from the British Isles and Ireland. They are intrigued with stories of Nessie, the Loch Ness Monster. The students have created new art work in the classroom, with inspirations of Spring, rainbows, and the new artist they have been learning about, Andy Warhol.



Underground Railroad Badge

First grade completed a Marc Brown author study. They read many Arthur stories, compared Arthur’s nose from his first book to his most current books, and made connections between Arthur’s experiences and their own. As a culminating activity, first graders are designing their own slideshows about one Arthur story. The presentation will include a title, characters, and the beginning, middle and end of the story. Students have taken time to experiment with font, color, clipart, and animation to add to their presentations.

Second graders are reading E.B. White’s *Charlotte’s Web* and are learning about character analysis and literary elements such as plot, setting, conflict, resolu-

tion, narrator, protagonist and theme. Some of these themes include friendship and the power of language, and call for them to ask themselves what it means to be a hero. In science, students are learning the many parts of the spider and the functions of each part in addition to exploring how a spider makes its web.

The third grade is enhancing their studies of the Anasazi and Powhatan by creating travel posters of Mesa Verde National Park and the Jamestown Settlement Living History Museum. They are working with Mrs. Prio in art class using the information they have learned in social studies.



The third graders have also done research on these topics in computer science to augment their classroom studies. The art concepts that they will be incorporating are: centering text on a poster, manipulating and planning lettering, bubble lettering, advertising terminology. This cross-curricular project also leads into our next unit in language arts, using language to persuade.

Math plays a significant part in our everyday lives. The math department aims to help students develop necessary math skills and to connect these skills to practical matters.

The fourth grade is currently studying division and interpreting remainders. This will prepare them to later study fractions and decimals. It also helps them to connect multiplication with division. Fourth graders interviewed an older person and inquired about their experiences with mathematical studies in earlier generations. One student, for example, was surprised to find out that a parent had to use a slate as a notebook. Another fourth grader was interested in comparing prices from today to years past.

The fifth grade is in the midst of discovering fractions and the relationship between fractions and decimals. When they study geometry, students will build and study different shapes and sizes.

The sixth grade is involved with ratios, proportions, and operations of integers. They are also studying coordinate geometry and looking at patterns in families of graphs. Students had the opportunity to create tests and answer keys, based on the material. Students got a new understanding of organizing and presenting facts. Students also became amateur cartographers as they drew a map of their “dream rooms.” They had to draw these rooms to scale.

*Upper Division Highlights**Cont. from Page 1*

organism to their fellow classmates. What a terrific way to honor the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth.

It's a bird! It's a plane! No, it'ssoda bottles? Not to be outdone, the eighth grade has been busy designing and building bottle rockets. Students can be found hunched over plans for fins, carefully tracing and cutting out patterns in the hopes that their finds will be on the rocket that achieves the greatest height. The race is on for the creation of the ultimate bottle rocket. Mr. Hale's class will be launching these in the near future. Watch out, Superman!

Do you know why table salt is iodized? Why Andre the Giant, a wrestler, was so tall? The ninth grade class does. They are currently studying the anatomy and physiology of the human body. The unit on the endocrine system provided the answers to these and many more questions and culminated in a research report on a hormone-related disease or disorder and a laboratory exercise modeling blood glucose levels. Students now have a better understanding of the roles these chemical messengers play in their daily lives and how a seemingly insignificant change in their levels can adversely affect their health.



Ahoy, matey! Mr. Hale's Marine Biology and Mrs. Dapice's AP Biology classes will soon be embarking, literally, on a boat trip departing from Captree Boat Basin on Long Island. Students will be collecting and



examining various marine organisms as well as conducting research on such topics as dissolved oxygen content of water and the effects of pollution on marine life.

Shh... maybe they'll find buried treasure!

Alumni Alert!!!!

This year's high school's graduation, which is being held on Tuesday, June 9th at 7:00pm marks a milestone in Garden School's history. June 9th, 2009 will see the 80th class to graduate from Garden School. In June 1929, we graduated our first class, consisting of three seniors: Catherine Brown, Florence Cave and Jack Leonard. Now thirty-one seniors will graduate eighty years after that first class.

Save the date: June 9th, 2009

We are planning to have an alumni gathering before this momentous occasion in our history. Please save the date so that you can be a part of this very special evening.

*Spring Fundraiser
"Let's Kill the Boss"
Originally scheduled for
Saturday, April 18th, 2009
Has been postponed until the
Fall, 2009*

International Night



Come join us, on the **evening of March 27 (6:00 to 9:00)**, for a night of culture and food from around the world. This event has been planned for the entire Garden School community, with activities for all ages. The gymnasium will be transformed into an EPCOT style center representing all seven continents with several cultures of each continent present. Teachers will host different activities and give a small taste of food from each continent. There will also be an activity at each continent that relates to the culture of each specific place. The Upper Division will host a variety of foods from around the world, all home cooked and made by our students and teachers. Students will also have a chance to showcase their talents with Karaoke.

So please come and enjoy this night with us and share your culture and experience the culture of others.

Please fill out the form below and return it to your child's homeroom teacher. ***All proceeds will be donated to various charities.***



Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

We are attending and would like to buy the following sets of tickets.



- Individual Tickets (\$10 per person) (____ number needed)
- Family Tickets (\$35 for a family of 4+) (____ number needed)
- We are unable to attend but would like to make a donation to help out the charities.

Amount Enclosed - _____ Cash Check

Please return to homeroom teachers by Wednesday, March 25.

Students in the Lower Division (Nursery to Grade 6) must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

Green Thumb or the Greening of Garden

Mr. Vogel has embarked on a two week project with lower division students to improve the décor of classrooms and common spaces. At early morning meetings held this week, students in grades 1,2, and 3 as well as the 4,5,6 cluster were asked to think about the spaces we share, and what those spaces would look like if each had 5 to 7 houseplants. Adding plants to our spaces would definitely add to our “hominess” as well as to create opportunities for science exploration, student responsibility, and school citizenship, not to mention the ecological advantages of increasing air quality or the emotional benefits of pleasant surroundings.



During the next two weeks, students will contribute plants and containers to beautify the classrooms and common spaces such as hallways and the library. Parents may help by sharing a plant from home that has either “outgrown its place” or “needs a new home.” Science teachers will assist with class discussions on botany terms, plant dissections, propagation, and plant care. Some favorite choices of houseplants are coleus, philodendron, spiders, and rubber and snake plants.

Book Talk

In a previous edition of the newsletter, many “Lincoln” books were suggested, giving all various glimpses into Lincoln’s character.. To add to the human side of Lincoln, Rosemary Well’s *Lincoln and His Boys* is a quick read. Reading this along with your child can be a great bonding experience. It portrays the great father that Lincoln was. Biographical in nature, the story centers on the relationship between Lincoln and his sons and the playfulness of this president. Children will quickly see the connection between this family’s life in the People’s House and that of the Obama family, who most recently have included a play set on the grounds of the White House.

As we enter March, commonly referred to as “Women’s History Month” parents may wish to send us their selections of interesting books, by and about women. Email your comments to Mr. Vogel at vwogel@gardenschool.org for inclusion in future newsletters. Already one parent suggested *If You Lived When Women Won Their Rights* by Anne Kamma. Again, this is a quick read, a book to be shared with your child, and one filled with short biographies of influential women. Some of this information will be used in various lower division classes this month.



Garden School Dates to Remember

- Mon. 3/9 to Fri. 3/13—Upper Division Spirit Week
- Tue. 3/10—Daffodil orders due for American Cancer Society
- Wed. 3/11 to Thur. 3/19—Color Days
(3/11 Rainbow; 3/12 Red; 3/13 Orange; 3/16 Yellow;
3/17 Green; 3/18 Blue; 3/19 Purple)
- Mon. 3/16—Sr. Raffle Drawing & 2009/10 Enrollment Agreements
- Wed. 3/18—Coffee Series—7:45am—Meet the Coaches
- Thur. 3/19—Grade 5 Trip
- Fri. 3/20—“Rocket Boy Project”
- Mon. 3/23 Faculty Workshop Day School Closed