



Washington Township Schools "Making a Difference"

Holiday Class Parties

With the holidays soon upon us and the class parties coming up before you know it, we wanted inform you about our holiday parties. Grades 1-6 will be having their annual holiday parties on Friday, December 20th and students in preschool, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten will celebrate their parties on Thursday, December 19th.

We have a tradition in the district of hosting a Holiday Book Exchange. We will continue with this again this year. Students buy a book as a gift for another student in his/her class and the books are exchanged during the holiday parties. This year student participation will once again be optional. If you would like to participate and cannot afford a book, please contact your child's teacher. Please note, the cost of the book should not exceed \$5.00.

Thank you and have a wonderful holiday season!

Port Colden School
Brass Castle School

Volume 6, Issue 4

December 2013



Port Colden Concert

Thursday, December 12th is the date for the Port Colden School's Winter Concert, which will be held at Warren Hills High School, at 7:00pm. The concert will feature students in grades 1-3 singing winter and holiday musical selections. Parking at the concert is available on the side of the building (please do not park in the front circle). Snow date for the concert is Thursday, December 19th. We look forward to seeing you there!



December PTA Arts Events

The month of December is an exciting time for the arts in our schools! Tuesday, December 3rd is the deadline for Reflections, the National PTA competition, where students can submit their work in seven different categories including Literature, Photography, Music Composition, Dance Choreography and more! Go to njpta.org for entry forms. Submit all entries must be submitted to our school.

On December 17th the Cultural Arts Committee will present *Holidays from Around the World*. The Bright Star Theatre, a professional children's theatre troupe from North Carolina, will enlighten and entertain our students on the winter holiday celebrations that occur around the globe. Visit brightstartheatre.com to learn more.

For information on the Reflections program or the Cultural Arts Committee, please contact Bridget Asbury at bridgetasbury@gmail.com or (732)829-8496.

Honoring our Veterans

Each year Veteran's Day is celebrated on November 11th to honor the men and women who have served our country. Port Colden and Brass Castle Schools paid tribute to our local Veterans by hosting assemblies. Discussions with our veterans also helped us to learn more about this special day.

Port Colden began their assembly with students gathered around the flagpole and Veterans seated next to the Veteran Memorial Bench. After the flag raising ceremony and *Pledge of Allegiance* our first, second, third graders and honorees sang *America the Beautiful*. The third graders then read a play entitled "*What is Armistice Day?*". Justin Daniel, this year's Hero Essay contest winner, read his essay about his grandfather. Justin and his family then rang the Old School House bell 11 times, in remembrance of Armistice Day. Port Colden's outside assembly ended with first grader Echo Picone singing the Star Spangled Banner.

Brass Castle School honored local veterans, as well as family members of staff and students that are veterans and active duty service members, at a school-wide assembly. The program featured patriotic music, songs and essays for the 18 veterans who attended. Proudly, the Veterans were introduced, asked to state their years of service to our country and then each Veteran introduced the student to whom they were related. Select grade 6 students, Noah Fink, Alina Pringle, Julia Stiles and Skylar Warren read their Patriots' Pen Award essays and John Gorman read his armistice poem. Following the ceremony, veterans were invited inside to view our Wall of Honor and engage in conversation with students. It was a wonderful way to learn about our nation's history and pay respect to those veterans and servicemen and women who have made the United States what it is today!

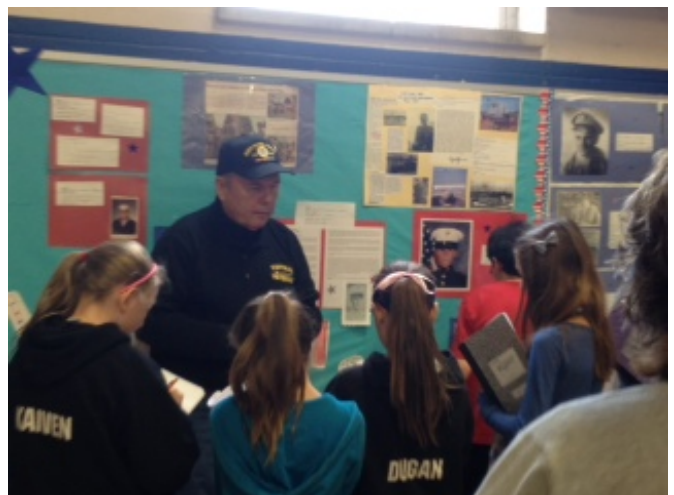
Veteran's Day is a Washington Township Education Association P.R.I.D.E sponsored event. Through N.J.E.A., Brass Castle and Port Colden Schools, along with our local Veteran Post # 6701, received a plaque stating our allegiance to our Veterans, refreshments and gifts.



Alia Wimmer, Gabriella Garay and Ava Rhinehart



Mr. Yencha talks to students about his service experiences




Ken Carlstrom (Mrs. Carlstrom's husband) shares his military experiences with students.

Rolling Thunder Rainbow Collection

During the week of November 11-15, Brass Castle students collected a 'Rainbow' of donations for troops currently serving in Afghanistan. The generosity of our students was truly overwhelming! Rolling Thunder, a non-profit organization whose major function is to publicize the POW-MIA issue, will create care packages to send to the troops. In addition to the food and toiletry donations that we collected, students also wrote letters and created cards to send with the care packages. These students have made a wonderful contribution to help brighten the day of a soldier who won't be home with his or her family over the holidays!



Back Row: Tyler Ostrander, Haley Delaney; Middle Row: Tyler Montero, Kyan Hamilton, Eric Wian, Ricky Lewis, Ryan Elbassiouny, Alex Stanneck, Julian Winfrey, Julia Hanshaw, Cassidy Fredo, Phillip Leidner; Bottom Row: Alexis Amey, Rebecca Anema, Angela Pawloski, Lauren Kohansby, Zoe Ozerianski; Absent: William Colavito, Eric Paruta



The Washington Township Board of Education is excited to introduce you to the new "Parent Connections" area on the New Jersey School Boards website!

Please take some time and visit this new section of the NJSBA website: www.njsba.org/parents. You will find a wealth of information to help keep our parents and community better informed. This site was premiered in mid-November and is already brimming with useful information and links. There is information on school finance and how schools are run. There will soon be a page dedicated to student achievement and there is a tab that provides links to a media library with more great resources.

Reminder to Dress Weather Conditions!

With the cold weather upon us, it is important that children arrive at school each day dress appropriately. Weather permitting, children go outside each day for recess and we are finding that many children are coming to school wearing shorts, lightweight fall jackets and sweatshirts.

Let's keep those sniffles away by dressing to match the temperature of the day!

News from the Nurses—Vaccines Required to Remain in School

IMPORTANT IMMUNIZATION REMINDER FOR PRESCHOOL/PRE-K PARENTS

All children attending a Preschool or Child Care program in the state of NJ, must annually receive one dose of influenza vaccine between September 1 and December 31 of each year.

Please provide documented proof of your child having received this vaccine by Friday, December 20th, before we dismiss for winter recess, so that your child may remain in school in January 2014.

Reminder to all parents - when you take your child to the doctor/ER for immunizations, physicals, stitches, broken bones, surgery, etc., please provide documentation for the school nurses. This should indicate the date and name of immunization(s), diagnosis of injury, illness and gym status as necessary. Gym/physical activity restriction notes should indicate participation level (if any) and date student may return to all activities without restrictions. This ensures maintenance of your child's optimal health during school and keeps health records current.

ABSENT OR RUNNING LATE? CALL THE ABSENTEE LINE!

Please call your child "out absent" on the school Absentee Line. If they will be late, please call the line as well. If there is a scheduled day for an absence, please also notify the school nurse, besides your child's teacher. Thank you.

Port Colden School: 689-0681, press "1" for absentee line.

Janine Barzdines, RN: ext 507

Brass Castle School: 689-1188, press "1" for absentee line.

Ashley Colnett, RN: ext 607

Third Grade Senses Sound Science

Matt Picone, the father of Sophie Picone, who is a third grader in Mrs. Melhem's class, went to college to be a teacher but ended up working for a sound electronics company. There, he "teaches" pop stars, musicians, producers and Broadway sound designers how to get the most out of their sound equipment. As a follow up to a unit on the "Physics of Sound", Mr. Picone visited Mrs. Melhem's class to present an informative, highly engaging, hands-on sound demonstration for the class. The following information was highlighted for the students:

- * how sound begins with motion;
- * how air transmits sound waves;
- * what "tone," "pitch" and "volume" mean;
- * how sound energy feels;
- * how amplifiers and loudspeakers work;
- * how the human ear works; and
- * how a microphone works.

Students left with a sense of new-found energy—sound energy!

Mr. Picone and Sophie Picone



Is Your Child Too Sick for School?

As we are in the midst of cold and flu season, and many other winter illnesses, please keep these tips in mind for when to keep your children home from school:

A bad cough or cold symptoms can indicate a severe cold, bronchitis, flu, or even pneumonia. A typical cold should not be a reason to miss school. But if your child is not acting right, has a fever, has difficulty breathing, or is becoming dehydrated, it could be serious. Check with your doctor right away.

Diarrhea and vomiting make children very uncomfortable. If your child has repeated episodes of diarrhea and/or vomiting, consult your doctor and keep your child out of school until the illness passes.

Fever is an important symptom. When it occurs along with a sore throat, nausea, listlessness or a rash, your child could be carrying something contagious. Always keep your child home during the course of a fever and for an additional 24 hours after the fever has passed, without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Strep throat and scarlet fever are two highly contagious conditions caused by streptococcal bacteria infection. They usually start with a sore throat and fever. Sometimes, 12-48 hours after the onset of a fever, a rash may appear. A child with either strep throat or scarlet fever should be kept home and treated with antibiotics, as prescribed by a doctor. After 24 hours on an antibiotic and fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, the child may return to school, with doctor permission.

Conjunctivitis, or pink eye, is highly contagious and uncomfortable. If your child has an eye or eyes that burn, itch, and produce a white, yellow or green discharge, contact your doctor. Minor causes (caused by a virus) and severe cases (caused by bacteria) require treatment with prescription eye drops. Keep your child home until they have been on antibiotics for 24 hours, and the discharge is gone.

Ear infections, unless properly treated, can cause hearing damage. Contact your doctor for treatment.

Sending children back to school too early before they are well, can result in their illness lasting longer and risks spreading illness to others. Please help us to keep our schools healthy!

If you have any questions, please contact your School Nurse. At Port Colden, Janine Barzdines, RN, 689-0681, ext 507. At Brass Castle, Ashley Colnett, RN, 689-1188, ext 607. Thank you.

Adapted from the American Federation of Teachers



Native American Unit



Standing: Tess Errickson & Shawn

Redfield; Sitting: Anthony Mammaro, Sophie Picone & Emma Smith

Mrs. Melhem's third graders just completed a social studies unit entitled the Native Americans. Their unit presented ideas about how past Native Americans' beliefs continue to this today. They read how American Indians today are sharing their traditions and passing them on to their children. Doing just that was Shannon Tubman, mother of Sophie Picone, who is a student in Mrs. Melhem's class.

Ms. Tubman brought in a collection of Native American vessels, drums, rugs and weapons. All the items were made by artists who keep the traditional methods of creating the pieces alive and have been made exactly how they would have been made hundreds of years ago.

Ms. Tubman spoke of how the different pottery pieces reflect the culture of the various tribes. Sedentary tribes, such as the Hopi and the Navajo, had very ornate pieces that would take a very long time to make. Other pieces, such as the pinch pots from the Lakota Sioux Nation,

reflect a more transient lifestyle where durability is of better value than the art work.

The pieces were made of local clays available to the tribes and the colors in the artwork were created with plants and minerals found in the region in which they are made. The pieces were dried first in the sun and then fired using traditional methods, including wrapping the pots in grasses and dung to get the high temperatures needed to cure the clay.

The drums that Ms. Tubman brought in were all from the Oglala Lakota Nation. Two large drums were traditional drum circle drums, exactly the same types used in powwows of today and generations past. They were handmade from cottonwood from the region and hand scraped bison hides that have been soaked in water and limestone and dried in the sun. The drums were laced together with tough bison sinew and the striking head of the drumstick was stuffed with bison fur and covered in soft elk skin. The paintings on the drums depicted traditional Oglala Lakota designs. The children learned about drum circles and the call and answer style of chanting that is traditional in many Indian Nations; students learned a simple song in that style. Students also had the opportunity to hear a recording made at the Sunflower Powwow, recorded with a Dictaphone in 1983 on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

A third type of drum presented was a Ghost Drum. Students learned briefly about the sad tale of Wounded Knee. The Lakota people believed that the symbol on the Ghost Drum, accompanied by performing the Ghost Dance, gave them protection from bullets. This belief proved to not be true and over 150 Lakota people were killed at Wounded Knee in 1890.

The children also learned about the Churro sheep, a breed of sheep vital to the Navajo Nation due to its ability to live in a harsh climate. The sheep provides lean meat and its soft long wool is excellent for weaving. Ms. Tubman displayed a handmade rug, created from the wool of the Churro breed and dyed using traditional methods and materials.

Kindergarten Thanksgiving Feast

On November 26, 2013 the Kindergarten classes celebrated their Thanksgiving Program in the all-purpose room. Family members joined their little pilgrims and Native Americans for a performance of Thanksgiving songs. After the show the students and family members created a turkey centerpiece using apples and candy.



Afternoon Kindergarten Classes



Morning Kindergarten Classes

The students' artwork was displayed on the walls around the room. The program concluded with a delicious feast. We wish to thank all of our Kindergarten families for their generous donations. We were excited to participate in our wonderful Thanksgiving celebration and wish everyone a very Happy Thanksgiving!

Seniors Spend Quality Time with Sixth Graders

On October 29th forty-five sixth grade students met their senior citizen partners for the first time at the senior program at Brass Castle School. Forty-three senior citizens from our community also volunteered to spend time with us and share information about their interesting lives. The participation has increased 25% since last year! These particular sixth graders were the first students in the sixth grade to volunteer to be in the program. In order to be in the program the sixth graders needed to be available four specific times after school to work on the senior program project under the direction of Mrs. Lee. The sixth graders are writing a biography chronicling their senior partners' lives, which will be presented to them in April at our last meeting. A DVD is also being prepared by Mr. Flumerfelt of all the meetings for the year. It will be shown at our last meeting in April as well.

During the first meeting the sixth graders interviewed their seniors about the important events in their lives by decade. Everyone enjoyed a wonderful breakfast while being entertained by our very own chorus, which was led by Mrs. Laura Dahmer. But the best part was meeting new friends. New relationships have begun between the senior citizen partners and the sixth graders. Everyone is looking forward to our next meeting which will be held on February 19th at Brass Castle School. The program is sponsored by the Municipal Alliance, New Jersey Education Association and Washington Township BOE.

Gifted and Talented and Enrichment Programs

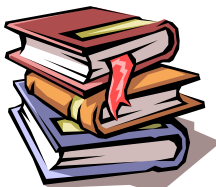
The students in the Second Grade Gifted and Talented Program are focusing on the topic of animation. They have used the operations of a basic animation program to create short animations. Students in the Second Grade Math, Science, and Technology Program are exploring the subject of architecture. They substantiated the architectural concept form follows function by researching, analyzing and designing an animal's habitat.

While preparing to write and publish their own book, the Third Grade Humanities Class has examined different authors and illustrators' techniques and writing and illustrating styles.

Robotics is the area of focus for the Third Grade Math, Science and Technology Program. Students learned distinctive functions of a robot's components and then assembled these components on an interactive robotics website. The Third Grade Gifted and Talented Program performed various investigations of physics principles. They formulated explanations from the outcomes of these investigations and constructed their own examples.

National Young Readers Week

National Young Readers' Week was celebrated across America the week of November 12th - 16th. Young Readers' Day was co-founded in 1989 by Pizza Hut and the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress in order to help children go from reading because they "have" to, to reading because they "want" to. Teachers and students at Brass Castle School were encouraged to celebrate the week by inviting someone to their classroom to read to them, watch and listen to stories on-line or read various types of poetry. We hope all of our students take time to read because they "want" to and become life-long readers.



Mrs. Casserly's Daughter Visits Grade 6 Students

Meghan Casserly was a writer for Forbes Magazine where she profiled celebrities, entrepreneurs and heads of state. This fall she joined Google in Mountain View, California where she leads public relations in the company's corporate culture. Before Ms. Casserly ventured off to her new career in California, she spent time with our 6th grade students in their Language Arts class.

Prudence Slinkowski, grade 6 student, wrote the following reaction to the visit:

Meghan, Mrs. Casserly's accomplished daughter, came into school to teach sixth graders about my favorite subject, writing! Meghan is a reporter; her stories have been in famous magazines such as Forbes. She has interviewed people from Selena Gomez to us, Sixth Graders. She taught us everything she knows about being a reporter, and let me say...that's A LOT!

We learned everything from a lead to a catchy title, but my favorite was the nut graph. This is the part in the article when you talk about trends and outcomes.

Meghan is a fantastic writer, and I hope one day the world will know that she taught me how to write the one genre that I couldn't write. I wish one day I will be able to write something like her work and get it published into a book or a magazine.

I hope you will have a fun time reading her work in Forbes magazine and seeing how marvelous her work really is.

So Sweet Sugar

By: Emily Leidner

Do you have a sweet tooth? Do you love A&W Root Beer or Minute Maid Lemonade? Well, listen up, because after hearing about the summary of our latest and greatest science lab, it's going to 'blow your socks off!' I am going to take you behind the scenes of our experiment so you can find out just how much sugar is in your favorite drink!

The first thing I would like to tell you about is that one of the best drinks, unsweetened iced tea, contains 0 teaspoons of sugar. I think all of you can guess another drink that has zero teaspoons of sugar, that's right, water!

There are some drinks that are better, in order from least to greatest amount of sugar:

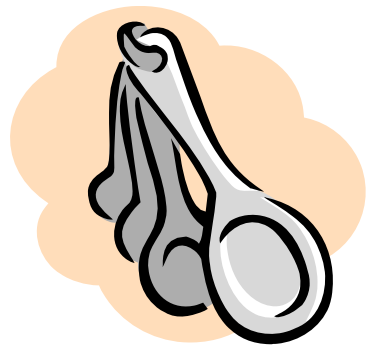
- Skim milk - 3 teaspoons;
- Orange juice - 6 teaspoons of sugar; and
- Welch's grape juice - 10 teaspoons of sugar.

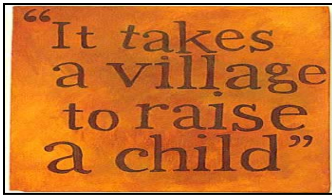
Of course, there are many drinks that you should avoid altogether:

- Red Bull - 7 teaspoons of sugar;
- A & W root beer - 12 teaspoons; and
- Minute Maid lemonade - 17 teaspoons of sugar.

The drink tested that contains the most sugar, McDonald's triple thick chocolate shake. It contains 42 teaspoons of sugar!

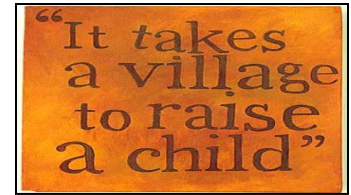
That's the summary of our science lab.





Counselor's Corner

December 2013



I personally embrace the concept of "it takes a village to raise a child." My child, your child, does not grow up within an isolated home. Our children grow up in a community that they belong to, take from and contribute to. It also means that each of us have some responsibility to support the communities that we are a part of - whether religious communities, our township, our country or our schools. Everyday, the teachers, administrators and volunteers in Washington Township recognize that we are an integral part of "our village" and give our best to our children - nurturing them, teaching them a respect for diversity and tolerance, encouraging individual self confidence and ultimately developing a positive community where respect and learning flourishes. Each of you are a welcome and vital piece to our 'village.'

As I often find this time of year, the Holiday season simply appears. We go from apple picking, to treat-or-treating to turkey and gift wrapping in a blink. This season also brings out the best in Washington Township School District. Our children have been very generous donating supplies and food items for our community gift baskets which will be distributed for the Thanksgiving Holiday. This is a tangible lesson for all that as a community, our 'village,' we take care of each other. Every small contribution matters and I would like to thank you all for participating. What a wonderful lesson we are showing our children.

In addition to continued Character Education lessons, individual and small group counseling, I have been busy organizing our next Lunch Bunch which will run for grade 5 students and will focus on 'Being Assertive.' We will be exploring the fine line between assertiveness and aggression and how to stand up for yourself without hurting or offending others. Mastering positive self advocacy is a wonderful skill that our children will carry forward with them.

I believe I promised you a reminder regarding Bullying vs. Conflict this month. That topic will wait until January, as we begin an incredible 2014! Thank you for sharing your delightful, engaging children with me. I appreciate them and I appreciate you.

Thank you for being a part of my village.

Deb Tierney

Guidance Counselor

DECEMBER 2013 - Community Awareness

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <i>"Many people are good at talking about what they are doing, but in fact do little. Others do a lot but don't talk about it; they are the ones who make a community live."</i>	2 Think about how you can be a positive member of your community, school and family	3 Take a moment to thank a school volunteer today - a classroom parent, PTA member or Big Brother/Big Sister - what they do matters!	4 Give back to your community - Volunteer for something positive this month	5 It is always worth being reminded - Treat others how you would like to be treated	6 Be a good citizen of your classroom-work as a positive team player	7
8	9 Citizenship begins at home - do your chores with a smile	10 Appreciate what you have and be willing to share with others	11 Show pride in our school - you are lucky to have great opportunities and a bright future!	12 Do a good deed for someone today - without being asked	13 Do a kind deed for someone less fortunate than you	14
15	16 Be a role model for others	17 Do something kind for your teacher today	18 Reach out to someone in need today and share a smile	19 Celebrate the Joy of the Season with your friends and family!	20 <i>Early Dismissal</i> - Be helpful and kind at home	21
22 Holiday	23 R	24 E	25 C	26 E	27 S	28 S
29	30	31	HAPPY NEW YEAR!			

In recognition of the 50th anniversary of his assassination this thought begs reflection, *"Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."* John F. Kennedy