



January 2012



Principal's News

Dr. James Welsch, Principal
Dr. Gina Cartolano, Assistant Principal
Mr. Jerry Cozine, Assistant Principal

Dear South Middle School Parents,

It seems hard to believe, I know, that we are nearly halfway through the school year. It seems like just a few short weeks ago I was drafting my "Welcome Back to School" letter and here we are in the December/January time frame. With the blink of an eye, we'll be saying goodbye to winter and welcoming the coming of spring (we hope!!)

Our Eighth Annual Cultural Heritage Celebration is scheduled for Thursday, February 9, 2012. From 6:15 to 7:00 PM we will have our cultural table displays and food tasting. From 7:00 to 8:00 PM our show will take place. This year we will have approximately eleven acts in our show and one culminating act. The cost will again be \$1.00 per person and/or \$5.00 per family, **plus one non-perishable food item**. The money collected will go to defray the costs of field trips for families who are experiencing economic difficulty. The food collected will be donated to the Interfaith Nutrition Network, a Long Island based food pantry. If you are interested in having your culture represented in our table displays, please email either Dalia Blanco (dblanko@greatneck.k12.ny.us) or Susan Zucker (szucker@greatneck.k12.ny.us). This is a wonderful community event, and we hope everyone will attend.

Bullying has taken center stage in the news media over the past several months. Our Board of Education has clearly stated that bullying behavior would not be tolerated in our schools, and passed a specific policy on harassment, hazing, and bullying in June of 2007. While we don't have many incidents reported on a regular basis, **we take every allegation of bullying seriously, and actively investigate every situation**. What is often the case at the middle level is that there are "two-sides" to each story. Investigations are primarily processed through the Dean's Office. Ultimately, once the investigation has been concluded, our administrative team decides what consequences are appropriate for student aggressors. Consequences range from a conference with a student and his/her parent(s) to a suspension from school. Factors such as the extent of the bullying behavior, the length of time the behavior has been occurring, the student's discipline record, the severity of the bullying behavior, and other issues are all taken into consideration. One of the frustrations in completing an investigation is that we often don't hear about alleged acts of bullying until many days and even weeks after they have occurred. This makes it very difficult. **If your child has experienced any type of harassing, hazing, or bullying behavior, please call our Dean (441-4604) and let her know**. Please encourage your child to speak to his/her guidance counselor (441-4620) or any of our teachers and/or administrators (441-4600) to let us know what's happening. We will investigate and do our best to resolve the situation as quickly as possible.

The development of the 2012-2013 budget is underway. Given the economic conditions we are all facing, including our Board of Education, the development of next year's budget will be most challenging for us in Great Neck. State and federal revenues will most likely decrease significantly. The challenge will be to maintain the high quality of educational programs that we have developed and that our community has come to expect, while at the same time to be fiscally responsible. Our Board of Education has put forth a compelling capital improvement program for the entire school system. You will be receiving specific information in the mail regarding this program. At SMS, we will be the beneficiaries of a new generator system to sustain our school should there be a serious power outage, a complete side-walk project for the area on Lakeville Road leading into our complex, a complete resurfacing of our recess/tennis court area near the pool, and new flooring for needed areas throughout our building. A referendum vote is scheduled for Tuesday, February 14, 2012. I urge you to come to the Board of Education meetings beginning in January. Our Board of Education will meet on Tuesday, January 24, 2012 at North High School, Monday, February 6, 2012 at Cumberland School, Monday, March 12, 2012 at North High School, Monday, March 26, 2012 at South High School, and finally on Saturday, March 31, 2012 (9:30 AM at South High School for a "line item budget review"). Each of the Monday evening meetings begins at 8:30 PM.

I want to again thank you for your continued support of our school!

Peace,
Jim Welsch,
Principal

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NOT TO BE MISSED!

- ◆ Jan. 17-Incoming Grades 7/8 Program Planning Mtg. @7 PM
- ◆ Jan.17 - PTA Mtg @ 8 PM
- ◆ Jan. 30-Qtr. 3 Marking Period Begins
- ◆ Feb. 9 - Cultural Heritage Celebration @ 6:15 PM
- ◆ Feb. 15 - Author Visit Gordon Korman @ 7 PM
- ◆ Feb. 20 - Feb. 24 Winter Recess

8th Grade Highlights from Dr. Gina Cartolano, Assistant Principal

Our eighth grade students have been involved in a variety of exciting activities. They have truly proven to be the leadership class! I hope everyone had a wonderful break and I wish you all a Happy New Year filled with joy and peace. I encourage you to call or email me with any questions that you may have regarding eighth grade issues. I can be reached via email at gcartolano@greatneck.k12.ny.us or by phone at (516) 441-4600. Please take some time to review the following eighth grade highlights.

TEAM A

Earth Science students are currently studying astronomy. Students first learned how the rotation, revolution, and tilt of Earth's axis affect the apparent motion of the celestial objects seen from Earth. Students have just completed the challenging Moon Lab to better understand why the phases of the moon occur. Star Lab, the inflatable indoor planetarium, came to SMS this month, and students observed how constellations change throughout the year due to Earth's revolution. Students identified Polaris and saw its position in relation to Ursa Major and Ursa Minor. Students next completed an in-class group research project using iPads, and learned how Aristotle, Pythagoras, Aristarchus, Eratosthenes, Ptolemy, Copernicus, Galileo, Brahe, and Kepler all contributed to our understanding of the universe.

In Science Research, students continue to work on their individual projects, and they have also begun using the greenhouse. They are learning how to collect the minimum and maximum temperatures of the greenhouse. The students are developing experiments to determine which plants are going to grow the best in the winter months.

Students in 8th grade integrated science are studying basic physics, focusing on forces and motion. They are currently exploring Newton's Laws and Archimedes' and Bernoulli's principles. Students enjoyed designing a boat that would hold the most marbles from a 6" x 6" piece of aluminum foil. We're proud to announce that the best designed boat held 51 marbles!

In Social Studies, students recently finished exploring how to incorporate more analysis in the body paragraphs of their Document Based Questions (DBQ). One of the greatest weaknesses in students' written expression in a DBQ is that it tends to be more literal than analytical; this assignment was designed to emphasize the skills of inference and connectivity, while at the same time serve as a review for our unit on World War I.

Earlier in the quarter, students explored America's rise as an Imperial Power during the Spanish-American War, the event that marked the shift from our historic isolation to imperialism. We further explored the cost-benefit analysis of the impact and implications of such a transition, and modern manifestations of our global prominence. Current issues, such as the impact of the recent Wikileaks security breach, as well as the impact that the rise of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) nations has played on the impact of American foreign policy were also being explored. From there, we delved into Europe's War, and how

- and why - President Wilson's reelection slogan, "*He kept us out of war,*" was quickly replaced with the call to arms that the "*world must be made safe for democracy.*"

Mr. D'Angelo's social studies classes focused on the emergence of the United States on the international scene, the impact of globalization, and America's role in the world today. Students conducted online research related to the status of Puerto Rico and discussed U.S. possessions around the world today. Following this, discussion moved towards the industrialization of war and the impact of World War I. Currently, classes are entering the Roaring Twenties and a nation acclimating to new amendments. Research skills and a project are to follow.

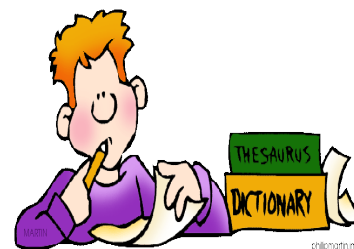
Math is an exciting time with Mr. Zweig this winter. Pre-Algebra is starting Chapter 5: Rational Numbers and Equations. In this chapter, students will write, compare, and order rational numbers and then add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers, first with the same denominator and then with different denominators. Then we will multiply and divide fractions and mixed numbers and use multiplicative inverses to solve equations with fractional coefficients. Finally, students will solve equations and inequalities with rational numbers.

Algebra is starting on Chapter 7: Systems of Equations and Inequalities. We will use graphing, substitution, and elimination to solve systems of equations. We will also be solving systems of linear inequalities. The graphing calculator will be used to check our solutions as well as explore ways to solve these problems.

In Geometry we are starting Chapter 8: Slopes and Equations of Lines. This will be a segue into coordinate geometry proofs. This is always a fun time for the Geometry classes as they love to attack the direct analytical proofs, which requires the use of specific coordinates and their previously learned theorems and formulas.

Students in Miss Kostopoulos' classes were assigned an outside reading assignment and chose novels from the classroom library. After reading a minimum of two novels, students analyzed them and constructed entries in their Readers' Notebooks according to a series of prompts. Students are currently working on a project showcasing a wonderful array of graphic novels. Using their skills in annotation, students will explore the interdependence between the illustrations and dialogue. They will also explore the social or political issues that are present in these titles. Their annotations will be shared amongst their classmates.

In addition, students were assigned to write a letter to an author expressing their feelings about a book, short story, or poem that influenced them for the annual *Letters about Literature* contest. Students also got their first taste of SAT vocabulary; they are well on their way to learning the 100 most common SAT words!



8th Grade Highlights (continued)

TEAM B

We are preparing another Team Day event the day before winter vacation. This Team Day will include Team Trivia, an opportunity for groups of students to work together to answer pop trivia questions; a subject-based Spelling Bee, during which students will be asked to collaboratively spell terms and concepts introduced to them in their classes since September; a Show-Off! Portion that allows everyone the chance to bring in something they have created thus far this year that they are proud of; and, lastly, a Celebration. During the last period of the day, winners from the trivia and spelling contests will be named and provided with awards. This is a great opportunity to work and play as a team, and to reflect on all of the accomplishments everyone has made since the start of the school year!

In English, students are either reading non-fiction novels or fiction novels in book clubs. Rather than responding to these pieces of literature with yet another essay, students will be able to choose from a wide variety of formats to best express their thinking about literature. English isn't always about essays! All students have been writing extensively in their Writers' and Readers' Notebooks.

To become better aligned with the Common Core Standards, English teachers are focusing on helping students master grammar and spelling skills.

Please encourage your children to read at home! That is the best way to expand children's vocabulary and internalization of literary structures. We have definitely been stressing the volume of reading in our classes.

In Mr. Giannone's Algebra class, students started the quarter by studying linear regression. They created linear equations to model statistical data, and used these equations to predict future values. Students have studied systems of equations and linear inequalities. They are currently working with the properties of exponents. This will lead to the introduction of exponential functions. They will apply this to exponential growth and decay models, such as compound interest and population growth and decay.

In Mrs. Hodgson's Algebra class, the students learned how to write equations of a line in various forms, given information such as the coordinates of points on the line. They took data from real-life type examples that could be represented with a linear model and found a line of fit for the data, then used their graphing calculators to write an equation of the line of best fit by performing a linear regression. Next, the students investigated the solutions of compound inequalities as well as of absolute value equations and inequalities. The next topic of study was linear systems. Students learned how to solve systems using three methods: graphing, substitution, and linear combinations. These techniques were applied to solving word problems involving quantities that could be represented using two variables. After the break, it's on to exponential functions!

In Mr. Isaac's Social Studies class, students have been exploring the events leading up to World War I. Mr. Isaac provided students the opportunity to creatively write poetry about trench warfare. He was amazed by the beauty and insight disclosed by these student writings! Some of these pieces were even submitted to Rebel Pen, our school's literary magazine. Students have been debating the value of being a part of an international organization.

Mr. Isaac is now launching into the scaffolding of Document Based Questions (DBQs). He is providing students with a step-by-step process they can use when faced with composing essay responses to DBQ tasks.

Students in 8th grade Integrated Science are studying basic physics, focusing on forces and motion. They are currently exploring Newton's Three Laws, Archimedes' principle, and the laws of aerodynamics. Students thoroughly enjoyed designing a tin foil boat in order to see whose boat was most buoyant and which could hold the most marbles.

In Earth Science, students have been studying astronomy and exploring natural phenomena such as the causes of moon phases, eclipses, and tides. Students were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to visit Star Lab, the district's mobile planetarium. Here they were able to observe the motion of stars, planets, and other celestial objects for themselves, as well pick out specific constellations. Now that students understand how Earth's rotation and revolution affect the apparent motion of stars, they will be on the lookout for Orion, a prominent winter constellation.

TEAM C

The grey skies and the rainy weather did not dampen our spirits as Team "C" began the second quarter with an exciting trip to the South Street Seaport and the September 11th Memorial. The overcast weather actually created a solemn tone that reinforced feelings of respect and remorse for those individuals who had perished on September 11, 2001. Students first dined at the South Street Seaport, and then they spent an hour socializing, shopping, and seeing the sights of lower Manhattan from the vantage point of the majestic seaport. Following this prelude, busses shuttled students to the September 11th Memorial. Here students walked in the footprints of the North and South Towers, touched the inscribed names of those who lost their lives, and watched the eternal fountains as individual streams of water joined together to form consolidated pools of remembrance. This was clearly one of those experiences that will remain in all of our hearts forever.



Team C visited the September 11th Memorial in November.

As our focus on humanity flashed back to an earlier time and continued to the present, Mr. DeSiano's social studies classes studied the emergence of the United States on the international scene, the impact of globalization, and America's role in the world today. Students conducted online research related to the status of Puerto Rico and discussed U.S. possessions around the world today. Discussions then progressed to include the industrialization of war and the impact of World War I on society past and present.

Currently, classes are entering the Roaring Twenties and gaining empathy for a nation acclimating to new amendments. Research skills and a project are to follow.

8th Grade Highlights (continued)

Human nature is again considered against the backdrop of history in Ms. Cahn's English classes. Students have been studying the rudiments of theatrical literature as Miller's views on tragedy and the common man. As is characterized in all genre studies, vocabulary and writing assignments were all generated by the original source. To bolster reading comprehension, both literal and figurative analyses were encouraged through class discussions and responsive writing.

Literary analysis will continue in application to varied literary works, and a greater understanding will be acquired. As the quarter progresses, we are going to take a closer look at the author's craft. A formal review of the mechanics of writing will foster a greater understanding of punctuation and grammar.

Essay structure will be refined through models and assignments. Clarity of expression and comprehension are the cornerstones of an English curriculum. It is evident that our students are on the progressive journey to reinforce and enhance these skills.

From the microcosm of our world to the macrocosm of the universe, Mr. Piteris' science classes were treated to his astronomy presentation in Starlab. In this experiential setting, planets, stars, asterisms, and constellations were explored. This viewing included some celestial sites that could be currently viewable from students' own backyards in Great Neck. Orion the Hunter with his component stars, including Betelgeuse and Rigel, might be visible in a clear night's sky. Students learned that the cosmos are still evolving, as just below Orion's belt a nebulous cloud of gas and dust is giving rise to new stars and planets as this is being written!

Finally settling back into the concrete world of mathematics, Mr. Powder's Pre-Algebra class has been covering a unit in geometry. After the New Year, the students will move into an exploration of functions. They will consider these questions: *What is a function? How is it graphed? What makes a function linear?*

Students will also begin to review for the math assessment. In Algebra, students have been covering the exponential functions unit. After the New Year, they will be moving into an understanding of polynomials and solving quadratic equations.

As is typical of an eighth grade curriculum, the students are learning the interdisciplinary nature of studies and how our past connects to our present.

Health

Many students and faculty wore the color red on Thursday, December 1st, not as a sign of early holiday spirit, but rather as a sign of consensus for World AIDS Day 2011. The Health Education Department, in concert with South Middle's Gay-Straight Alliance, spread a school-wide message that World AIDS Day is about raising money for research, increasing awareness, fighting prejudice and improving education. The day was important as the topic has historical, economic, and social implications. Students learned that HIV today is a threat to men, women, and children on all continents. Informing students of the 34 million HIV infected people worldwide and estimated 1.8 million 2010 AIDS-related deaths, reinforced that HIV has not gone away, and there are many things still to be done. Having our students examine public health concerns within their community, nationally, and globally gives them a better understanding of prevention - the key to good health.



World Languages

Many of our Spanish 8 students learned vocabulary that would be useful if one were ill in a Spanish speaking country. Our students are now able to explain their physical ailment in Spanish to a doctor or pharmacist. They also learned the Spanish words for important things that one might need to buy such as cough medicine, band aids, etc. Teachers discussed the differences in types of medicine that are sold, and where they are sold in the Spanish speaking world. The medical unit included a choice of activities such as students videotaping themselves speaking Spanish at the doctor's office, writing a book for children in Spanish about a doctor's office visit, making a Spanish poster for a new medicine, or creating a poster to explain preventative measures one takes to protect oneself from infections such as the flu as well as the required treatment.

In addition, some of our students had the opportunity to learn about students from Spain with "Epals," a computer site that links students and classrooms across the globe. Each of the students has written and received "epal" letters from Spain. In addition to learning what it is like to live in a different country and culture, our students are getting to use the Spanish that they are studying in class in an authentic way.

The Spanish I classes are currently studying the vocabulary for the rooms of the house and furniture. They are reinforcing what they are learning in class by pretending to buy a home in Costa Rica on the Internet.

In French 8, we learned body parts and health. The project, "Mon Monstre" (My Monster) compelled students to create monsters with a different number of body parts assigned by the teacher (7 heads for example) and they had to label and create the monsters on the computer. They then had to present and describe their monsters to the class in French. They were scary and funny creations.

Recently in Chinese, Mrs. Chao told her eighth grade class to invent their own medicine and give warning, side effects, and proper usage of the medicine. The students worked on this project in groups for a week. It was a challenging project, as the medicine had to catch people's attention with a catchy logo, a good name, and a good price. While making the project, the students had to worry about whether their medicine should be used by kids or adults as well as whether it should be in pill or liquid form. This project gave those students who wanted to become doctors a general idea of how to design and sell their own medicine. Even though this project was very difficult, the students still had a great time.

Students also created beautiful maps of their "Dream School." This project involved a lot of work, but also involved a lot of fun! These complicated but colorful maps highlighted what the students learned about the different rooms and "measure words" needed to create their wonderful projects. The students are all looking forward to the exciting and fun Shopping Project!

Technology

Some 8th grade technology classes are piloting the creation of a rubber band propelled car. This project will teach many different exciting topics to the students. There will be lessons on balance, symmetry, propulsion, friction, aerodynamics, energy conversion, construction and gravity. It is an exciting time to be in 8th grade tech!

7th Grade Highlights



Family and Consumer Sciences

November was a great month for the Chefs class. We traveled to Manhattan to visit the Food TV Network located at the Chelsea Market. Mr. Steves, a SMS parent and the Director of Operations at the Food TV Network, hosted us. Mr. Steves provided our students with a first class tour of the TV production department and the Test Kitchens at the Food TV Network. Currently the Chefs class is working very hard planning for its end of the semester party. It has been a great semester for all!

7th GRADE HIGHLIGHTS

FROM JERRY COZINE, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

We've had a busy ten weeks since the last newsletter, so I wanted to take this opportunity to update you on some of the great things taking place in our seventh grade classrooms:

Be well,
Jerry Cozine

TEAM 7SW – TEAM OLYMPIANS

A creepy Jack-in-the-box. A girl that dances as crazy as a daisy. A boy whose viral illness is slowly turning him into an . . . alien? A girl with screaming hair. A boy who has his first crush. These are just a few of the characters to which students in Mrs. Marr's and Mrs. Peretz's English classes were introduced in our short story author study unit. Students read stories from among such acclaimed young adult writers as Gary Soto, Joan Aiken, Jane Yolen, Walter Dean Myers, Rita Williams-Garcia, Ray Bradbury, Cynthia Rylant, Louis Sachar, and Neil Gaiman. Besides reading the stories, students watched videos of the writers speaking about writing, visited the writers' websites to explore how their lives influenced their work, connected the stories to their own lives, and wrote a prequel, sequel, or additional scene to one of the stories. Last year one student enjoyed the short stories so much that he emailed Jane Yolen and she wrote back! We're hoping to hear back from the authors this year as well. Students may visit our library to explore the writers' other works of fiction in picture books, short stories, poetry, and novels.

Students had a taste of what life was like during colonial times during our seventh grade "Life in the 1700's" Day. Students were put into six groups and each given a treasure chest containing artifacts from Colonial and Revolutionary America. They used iPads and the Voicethread application to record their analyses. Check out Edmodo for more information. Colonial Day set the stage for our historical fiction unit, which will culminate in students writing historical fiction. In reading groups, students are interpreting the crises faced by the teenage protagonist and the world in which he or she lives in one of the following novels: My Brother Sam Is Dead, Witch of Blackbird Pond, Light in the Forest, Sarah Bishop, War Comes to Willy Freeman, Jump Ship to Freedom, Soldier's Heart, The Fighting Ground, or April Morning. Students will be considering the questions:

How much different was life for teenagers back then? Are there universal teenage experiences that transcend time?

Mr. Giannone's Math 7 classes began the 2nd quarter with the study of inequalities and exponents. For most of the quarter, they have focused on geometry. They began by drawing and measuring angles, and later moved on to 2-D and 3-D figures. They learned how to classify different polygons and solids. They then learned how to find the areas and perimeters of different two-dimensional figures, stopping along the way to see how the ancient Greeks discovered the number pi. They used these skills to then calculate the surface areas and volumes of three-dimensional solids. They will finish the quarter with a unit on factoring and fractions.

In Mr. Powder's Pre-Algebra class, students have been covering the geometry unit. After the New Year, students will be moving into exploring functions: what they are, how to graph them, and exactly what makes a function linear. Students will also begin to review for the math assessment.

Math class is an exciting time with Mr. Zweig this winter. Pre-Algebra is starting Chapter 5, Rational Numbers & Equations. In this chapter, students will write, compare, and order rational numbers and then add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers, first with the same denominator and then with different denominators. Then, they will multiply and divide fractions and mixed numbers and use multiplicative inverses to solve equations with fractional coefficients. Finally, students will solve equations and inequalities with rational numbers.

In Science 7 with Mrs. Keyes and Ms. Byrnes, as our bean plants continue to produce hydroponically grown green beans, we began exploring the tiniest of living things under the microscope. There were plenty of ooh's and aah's as we viewed our own cheek cells and identified the individual components of a cell. As a culminating activity, students created a multi-area cell project which displayed creativity and talent. In November, all classes attended DNA Learning Center programs especially designed for our school. One of the amazing activities was *Better Milk For Cats* – a demonstration where students created lactase in the lab. Students agreed that the center was a great place to visit.



Also in November students practiced making butter from heavy cream as was done in Colonial America. Using plastic storage containers, students SHOOK and SHOOK until yellow butter appeared. Homemade muffins tasted even better with the homemade butter.

One of the major themes in Mr. Mannix's social studies classes this year is the concept of Federalism. Federalism is the division of power between the national and state government; essentially, it answers the question, "*Who should be in charge of the decisions in the United States, the national or the state governments?*" This question was at its height during the turmoil of our revolution from the distant and powerful King George III of Great Britain. The belief as to who should have the last word has ebbed and flowed throughout American history.

7th Grade Highlights (continued)



We began with our belief under the Articles of Confederation that the states should control most of the power. The balance swung the other way after the Articles of Confederation were deemed to lack enough power and Americans began the “2nd American Revolution” which resulted in an ideology. The North, after winning the war put the Federal government back on top and now, in our modern world, this very real philosophical debate over who should be in charge continues.

The issue of who should be in control of our government, the national government or the states has never been more divisive with Democrats, Republicans, the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street protesters all offering various interpretations. The modern day issues of healthcare and taxes have never been more connected to federalism. Social studies in the “Mannixlab” this past quarter has looked at the causes of the American Revolution, the fighting itself as well as the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution all through this lens. Hopefully, this lens will help students to critically examine and form their own opinions on what is taking place in our nation before them. We will conclude this unit with the students engaging in Congressional Hearings where they will “testify” before a group of adults about a particular section of the Constitution and have to answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge. They have used online virtual notebooks called LiveBinders to gather resources as well as EasyBib.com to compile those sources in MLA format as well as organize notes that are virtually connected to the resources they’ve chosen.

In Mr. Nahoum's social studies classes, students have been exploring the organization of the United States Government. We have examined topics such as the failure of the Articles of Confederation, the Constitutional Convention of 1787, the principles of our government, and the Bill of Rights based on different scenarios and violations of rights that are protected for us today. We have also inspected several current event issues that are related to the Constitution to illustrate its relevance today. When our unit on government concludes, students will see whether our Republic and the first presidents can meet the challenges facing the nation. Through literature, writing, and primary source documents, we will complete in-class projects on our first three presidents and how their actions and the situations they faced in the 18th and 19th centuries compare to America today. As the New Year begins, we will be following the Republican primary season so students can witness the candidates who are vying for the Republican Party nomination for the 2012 presidential race.

TEAM 7S – THE LUNCHBOX CHAMELEONS

In Mrs. Giani's English classes students have just finished a unit on short stories. During this unit, students practiced active and constructive reading. They were arranged in groups of 4-5 and spent one week planning a lesson on a particular short story. The lessons included motivational activities, discussion questions, vocabulary, graphic organizers, and writing. Everyone enjoyed the

opportunity to teach the class. Students welcomed the challenges of cooperation, planning, time management, and grading homework. The next unit will be Historical Fiction. Students are looking forward to book clubs and using their Reader's Notebooks.

The second quarter was a very busy time in science. The students studied the cell and all its organelles. Students had the chance to choose what type of project to do for this unit. The bulletin boards are decorated with everyone's cell projects. Under the microscope we examined onion cells and our cheek cells in order to see the similarities and differences between animal and plant cells. We are learning more about DNA and the process of how proteins are made, starting with the gene. Currently we are studying cell reproduction. This will give students a better understanding of what's going on when they encounter the genetics unit later this year.

In Mrs. Galgano's social studies, students have completed the unit on the U.S. government and have begun learning about the early Presidents. They began learning about our emerging nation by examining the Articles of Confederation and why they did not work, which led to our current U.S. Constitution. As they learned about the U.S. Constitution, written over 200 years ago, they examined it from today's point of view by sequence chaining how a bill becomes a law to explaining what hat the president is wearing from a newspaper article and discussing how the electoral college works by analyzing the 2000 and 2008 presidential elections. Students also discussed who their representatives are and what their jobs entail. All of this was done through creating posters and analyzing Schoolhouse Rock: America Rock. The Bill of Rights also came to life as students created posters on each amendment, and then role played Supreme Court Justices and examined real cases using the Bill of Rights, comparing our decisions to those of the Supreme Court. We then began our focus on the early presidents and our early nation, covering the creation of the nation's first political parties, analyzing important Supreme Court cases, the Louisiana Purchase, causes and effects of the War of 1812 and the Monroe Doctrine. In the near future they will study Andrew Jackson's presidency, including the Indian Removal Act and Trail of Tears, where students will analyze political cartoons, graphs and paintings from that time period. By the end of January they will be finished with Westward Expansion. During this unit they will map out the territories added to the U.S. and focus on why and how new territories were added. As they study the Oregon Trail and Texas annexation, they will be comparing how the movies *The Alamo* and *Into the West* depict real life historical scenarios.

Mrs. Hodgson's math classes completed a unit on rational numbers and explored the connections among different sets of numbers. Students converted between fractions and decimals and learned how to express repeating decimals as fractions. Students worked on all operations with fractions and decimals, including applications in word problems and equation solving. In Pre-Algebra, the students then studied ratios and proportions and their application to daily life such as in unit pricing and scale drawings. They also investigated measurements in similar and congruent figures.

7th Grade Highlights (continued)

After the break, Pre-Algebra students will work on percents and its many applications, such as discount, markup taxes, and interest. The Math 7 classes will continue to work on solving more complicated multi-step equations and inequalities. In addition, they will solve word problems algebraically.

All students have started working on *Study Island*, an on-line assessment prep program. Students are responsible for completing specific units each week, but they can do the randomly generated questions at their own pace. The program also provides lessons on each topic and gives students the opportunity to go over missed questions. But the feature that many students find most appealing is that the questions can be done in game mode!

TEAM 7SM – UNDEFEATABLE REBELS

We have started planning for a 7th grade spring trip, to Ellis Island, which will coincide with the SS topic of immigration

Ms. Pearce's English students just finished becoming masters of the short story. The roles reversed as students took on the part of teacher and taught an entire class period to their classmates. Students worked collaboratively with their peers to develop engaging and informative lessons using interactive technology.

Recently, students participated in Colonial Day and enjoyed the Colonial pastime of writing Rebus letters. Students challenged themselves to come up with creative pictures to represent their words and tried their hands at solving their classmates' puzzles.

Colonial Day was a fitting introduction to our next unit, Historical Fiction. Students will soon participate in Historical Fiction book clubs, delving into life during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Students will hone their critical reading and empathizing skills, as they participate in book club discussions, develop ideas in their readers' notebooks, and make connections between their historical time periods and today's world.

In English Flex, students have been working on another round of literary essays to prove that they have retained the skills practiced in our first essay. They are polishing their anecdotes, developing strong theses, and using lots of relevant details from the text to support their claims.

In social studies, Mr. D'Angelo and Mr. DeSiano's classes just finished discussing how our current system of government was created and how it works. We discussed the failures of the Articles of Confederation and how they led to the Constitutional Convention. We discussed the tug of war for power between the state and federal government, and how it still exists today, using examples such as education and gay marriage. We also learned about who our government leaders are today and what it takes to get elected.

Next up for our classes is learning all about the rights that the Bill of Rights guarantees. We will be learning about freedom of speech, religion, gun control, and the death penalty, among other things.

For Colonial Day students used the coordinate plane to draw Ben Franklin's kite. Math classes are continuing multi-step equations with decimals and fractions. The classes will be using scientific calculators when we explore probability.

In science, the students just finished creating 3-D cell models, posters, songs, and cartoons to demonstrate their understanding of cellular organelles and their functions. The students are now creating smiley face babies based on the probability of inheriting certain traits. The students will flip coins to determine which genes, dominant or recessive, their smiley face baby will inherit from each parent. After they create their smiley faces, the students will compare their smiley face babies to their classmates' faces to look for similarities and patterns of inheritance.

During Math flex, Mrs. Doyle's groups are finishing up alternate methods of problem solving. They are moving on to practice for the NYS Math Assessment. Students are also using Study Island, an online site for practicing skills through games and drills. In Social Studies flex, students have been learning what a day in the life of the president is like.

World Language

Our 7th grade Spanish students are learning about food and restaurant vocabulary. Each student will have the opportunity to share his or her personal likes and dislikes regarding good eating habits. Some classes will continue their study by completing a Spanish webquest to find a great place to eat in Spain. Other students will prepare to open their own Spanish restaurants by finding a location (in a Hispanic country), choosing an appropriate name for their restaurant, and creating a menu, complete with pricing in the currency of their chosen country. Additionally, the students will also get the opportunity to practice visiting a restaurant with friends and then orally present a dialogue between themselves, the customers, and a waiter.

In French B, we learned nationalities, countries that people are from, and professions. We did a project called "Qui Suis-Je?" (Who am I?) where students created identity cards in the computer lab. They included their name, age, family members, nationalities, and the profession that they want to be. The second part of this project was to either bring in or show a picture of an object that represents their culture. The students were very proud to share their cultures with the class and it was fun learning about them.

ESL

The ESL students went bowling on November 1st. It was a great day for everyone. Many of the students had never bowled before, but after some practice, they watched their scores improve dramatically. Students learned a new sport, participated in a great American pastime, and had a fantastic time!



6th Grade Highlights

Technology

7th grade students are in the Scantek lab exploring many areas of study. They are learning to draw a kitchen using a CAD program, exploring GPS location techniques with satellite triangulation, learning how a bridge is constructed and the importance of a triangular structure, taking digital photos and manipulating them with Photoshop Elements, exploring compressed air use in pneumatic systems, and much more. This is an exciting time to explore new technologies!

Health

Disability - a word once thought of as strictly a disadvantage or handicap, but our 7th grade students know better. Students are learning that people with mental or physical challenges prefer not to be labeled as disadvantaged. Through true stories of the deaf Miss America and surfer Bethany Hamilton, students realize the strength it takes to overcome health related obstacles. Students are also given a block to hold for 24 hours to simulate a physical limitation with their hand. Easy tasks, such as tying shoes and zipping jackets, are extremely frustrating - which provides students with a meaningful lesson in empathy. Whether a student gives up holding their block after two hours or eight hours, he or she comes to understand the impact of a permanent challenge. This unit gives a better understanding of stereotyping and acceptance within the challenged population. We have even had some of our own students speak of themselves or family members. How can you not love that bravery?

6th Grade Highlights

Math

369,450

Do you know whether this number is divisible by 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, or 10 without using paper and pencil or a calculator? Well, children in the sixth grade know and can solve it with ease. Ask your child to teach you the divisibility rules and you too will know the answer. This is just one of the many topics covered by all sixth graders as we began our second quarter of sixth grade math. The use of these rules led into prime and composite numbers, finding the greatest common factor (GCF) and the least common multiple (LCM) of a set of numbers. The basic difference in curriculum between the advanced and regular math classes is the degree of difficulty of the material presented. While all sixth graders learned the above material, the advanced classes work with LCM's and GCF's containing variables. As we progress forward, we will be working through the four operations with fractions.

Science

The 6th grade science classes' journey through the Ecology unit has come to an end. Our environmental studies were further enriched by an amazing outdoor adventure to Greenkill (or right here in our own backyard!). The students have completed their first research project on a selected organism. We spent time learning research skills in the library and parts of this interdisciplinary project were discussed and worked on in English, social studies, and even math classes. Your children are now able to tell you the most wonderful and interesting facts about their organism.

We are now delving into studying the Scientific Method and will

discover the process behind how problems are solved. The students will learn that they follow the scientific method every day without even realizing it. We will also be conducting labs to further reinforce the steps of the Scientific Method.

Overall, we are expecting a fun-filled, action packed quarter!

English

The students are happily reading and discussing classic themes such as character transformation, dual nature of man, and self-exploration through conflicts. They are actively engaged as they follow their characters' journeys of self-discovery. Annotating skills are being perfected. These units will culminate with a literary writing assessment. At the end of the winter break Mrs. Kuhn's students will be reading and presenting on the iPads. Mrs. Rauch's class will be sorry to see them go, but they are happy for their fellow 6th graders to also have this wonderful experience!

In addition, each team is working on an assignment that has been inspired by the science and social studies curriculum. The English component emphasizes critical thinking and writing skills. The children will be reading both fiction and non-fiction articles. They will learn how to extract the main ideas and then incorporate them into an essay. The emphasis will be on paraphrasing and avoiding plagiarism. Students are learning how to turn their reading and research into a coherent, well written, and informative piece.

"Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement and success have no meaning." –Benjamin Franklin



Students in Ms. Rauch's class take advantage of the iPad Pilot Program

Social Studies

"All cultures are the same, and all cultures are different." It is with this understanding that the sixth grade social studies classes have embarked on their study of culture. It is through the nine elements of culture that the students begin to recognize the qualities that make cultures special and unique. While every culture speaks a language, it may be a different language. While every culture has a form of government, it may be a different government.

Another main theme woven through the unit is *"Where you live affects how you live."* Connections and comparisons are made, relating culture to the geography of its region. For example, people who live in a desert will have different clothing, foods, and shelter than people who live in the Polar Regions.

Notetaking and study skills continue to be a major focus in the social studies classroom. Cornell notes, highlighting, and flashcards are some of the techniques taught.

In addition, the social studies and English teachers have been collaborating on a thematic essay dealing with cultural misunderstandings.

6th Grade Highlights

Using a series of short stories, essays, articles, and videos, the students will annotate and chart information which will later be used for their writing. It is our hope that through learning about cultural differences, our students will come to better understand the world around them.

Technology

Some sixth grade Technology classes have just completed three days in the library exploring inventors and inventions. Students learn and hone research skills while exploring different important technological contributions to our society. Students will make an informational poster to share what they have learned. Some of the topics being explored this quarter are the LASER, mp3 player, umbrella, light bulb, GPS, and cellular phone.

Physical Education

In November we participated in a football unit. The students learned the basic rules to the game, as well as offensive and defensive strategies before putting these skills into game play. We also participated in a fitness unit, culminating with our annual SMS Turkey Trot. We set a ¾ mile course through the school campus and challenged ourselves to complete the course in our best time. December has brought our volleyball unit. Did you know that the game volleyball was originally called "mintonette" and the first ball used for the game was a basketball? We learned the history of the game, rules of the game, and skills. Coming up next in Phys. Ed. will be basketball and fitness assessments. During the second semester our 8th grade students will participate in Dancing Classrooms. They will learn and perform ballroom dance steps.

SPORTS & FITNESS



In January we will be completing fitness assessments using Fitnessgram. The components of this test include curl-ups, push-ups, back-saver sit and reach and the P.A.C.E.R. The curl-up assessment will measure the strength and endurance of the abdominal muscles. The students will complete as many curl-ups as possible at a specified pace. The push-up assessment will measure the strength and endurance of the muscles in the upper body. The students will complete as many push-ups as possible at a rhythmic pace. The back-saver *sit and reach* assessment predominantly measures the flexibility of the hamstring muscles. The P.A.C.E.R. assessment stands for: **P**rogressive **A**erobic **C**ardiovascular **E**ndurance **R**un. The objective of the P.A.C.E.R. is to run as long as possible back and forth over a 20 meter space at a specified pace which gets faster each minute. The P.A.C.E.R. is easy at the beginning and gets more challenging each minute. The progressive nature of the test provides a built-in warm-up and helps the students to pace themselves effectively.

Athletics

The winter season is in full swing! Our teams are practicing or playing in a game every school day. For more information, including schedules and highlights please visit our website <http://www.greatneck.k12.ny.us/GNPS/SMS/athletics/index.htm>

Music

Not without coincidence, "harmony" is a word that transcends music. It is a word that is used to describe a perfect society. It is therefore incumbent upon our future leaders - our students - to learn the skills necessary for "harmony:" **listening, blending, cooperating, compromising** and most importantly, **collaborating**. Band, Orchestra, and Chorus are the only classes during the day which relentlessly reinforce those leadership concepts each moment of each class, each and every day - What other class features *EACH* student responsible for the productivity of *ALL* the students 100% of the time?

To that extent, we offer up our happy congratulations to the following 26 effective leaders of our SMS community who were selected to participate in the 2012 All-County Music Festival. They represent the finest of our leaders, serving as an inspiration to student and teacher alike, selfishly using their great ability to enhance the productivity of the entire ensemble:

Division 2 (Grade 6)

Susan Fendt, Choir, Bonnie Charles, Choir,
Derek Lin, Orchestra, Violin I, Michelle Song, Orchestra, Violin I
Ryan Chung, Orchestra, Cello, Michael Zhang, Orchestra, Cello
Emily Huh, Band, Flute, Katelyn Zou, Band, Flute

Division 3 (Grades 7 and 8)

Brooke Weinberger, Choir, Soprano, Samantha Ng, Choir, Soprano
Tara Sirotkin, Choir, Alto, Hallie Liman, Choir, Alto
Giovanni Xu, Choir, Baritone, Helena Woroniecka, Orch, Violin I
Hyerin Yoon, Orchestra, Violin I, Vera Lin, Orchestra, Violin I
Christine Suh, Orchestra, Violin I, Kathryn Lam, Orchestra, Violin I
Yerin Son, Orchestra, Viola, Christian Claus, Orchestra, Cello
Joshua S. Lee, Orchestra, Cello, Robin Park, Orchestra, Flute I
Robin Shum, Orchestra, Oboe I, Angela Chi, Band, Clarinet
Rachel Brenner, Band, Clarinet, Justin Ning, Band, Flute

In addition, it gives us an unbelievable amount of pleasure to announce that Great Neck South Middle School will be sending SIX students to Syracuse to participate in the New York-statewide Middle School Honor Concert Band. These students were selected by a statewide panel of music educators from the New York State Band Directors Association (NYSBDA):

Stephanie Chang, Flute, Grade 8, Robin Park, Flute, Grade 8
Robin Shum, Oboe, Grade 8, Angela Chi, Clarinet, Grade 8
Justin Ning, Flute, Grade 7, Rachel Brenner, Clarinet, Grade 7

Out of the 220 students who applied to the New York State Middle School Honor Band, only about 93 students in total were selected to participate.

These six talented individuals will be rehearsing and performing a concert with some of this state's most talented instrumental students from the seventh and eighth grade.

Their performance will be conducted by a college wind ensemble director and will take place at the Doubletree Syracuse Hotel on Saturday, March 3, 2012.



6th Grade Highlights/SMS Happenings

Our entire department is immensely proud of this achievement for these musicians. They represent the best in all of us and show fellow students that aspirations can indeed be realized with determination and an insatiable work ethic. If they bring their leadership abilities shown in our building up with them to Syracuse, then we are positive that this year's festival will be the best that it has been.

Library

As we enter a new year, the library is constantly adding to the collection to keep up with the latest and greatest materials out there. We added over forty e-books to our collection! You can find the link for these books on the library website. Come in to the library and check out our new books as well!

The library is also participating in a contest called "The Great Scavenger Hunt" all year long. There is a link on the home page of the library website. Read a book from one of the lists, answer the questions and be entered to win a gift certificate!

After the winter break, we will be announcing the books for our upcoming "Battle of the Books." Don't forget to sign up for this exciting event in the spring. Any questions about what's going on in the library? Come in and see Mrs. Graybosch or Mrs. Viggiano.

World Language

In 6th grade, our Spanish students began to study the days of the week, the months of the year, the seasons and the weather. The students are now able to reference a specific date and enjoyed practicing dates while finding out when the other students celebrate their birthdays. Many of our students also made Spanish calendars for 2012 in our computer lab and were excited to present them to their families for the holidays. As this unit takes place during one of our favorite holiday seasons, we discussed when many of our holidays occur throughout the year and the typical weather conditions during that particular season, both in the United States and in other parts of the Spanish-speaking world.

In French A, we learned how to describe the members of our family, such as their names, age, and hair and eye color! We did a project called, "Ma Famille Ideale," where students created their ideal family using celebrities and came up with funny combinations! They worked on these projects in the computer lab and presented them to the class as PowerPoints or as posters.



TV Studio

There are a lot of exciting things happening in the TV studio. Over the summer, the classroom was renovated into a *Final Cut* media-editing lab. Students now learn many different techniques of editing, such as sound effects, voice overdubbing, special effects, titling, and more. In the film and TV classes, students work together in groups for all phases of their projects, including planning sessions, filming and screening their work. This last part is critically important because students learn to respect each other's work, and at the same time give (and learn

to take) constructive critical analyses for every film screened. HTV is having another exciting year. In addition to broadcasting the school news every day, the HTV staff and crew also produces edited pieces filmed on location. This includes SMS's Colonial Day, the winter concerts, classroom activities, clubs, and sports games. HTV has also been producing educational pieces on historically important events, such as Veterans Day, the anniversary of the Gettysburg Address, the 10th anniversary of September 11th, and the 70th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. In all of these stories, students research these events, and find archival footage that ends up in the final edit. A script is written with the students themselves recording the narration. Through their work on these projects, students get a sense of the production and feel of documentary videos in a hands-on environment. More historical events are planned as we enter the new year. As a result of these reports, students stay informed and history comes alive. Our students enter the studio every morning with excitement as they prepare live broadcasts for the school. Many skills are learned in the studio such as, preparation, focus, and hard work. Students take pride in these responsibilities while they learn the art of TV production.



Community Action

The CAC is a club that works to help others in need. With this goal in mind, our year started with a collection of school supplies for St. Mary's Hospital in Bayside, in memory of a Great Neck student, Zach Portnoy. Mrs. Portnoy and her family brought the donations of notebooks, pencils, markers, crayons, and paper to St. Mary's. In addition, the CAC sponsors a Friday bake sale, with all profits being donated to St. Mary's Hospital. We have had such successful sales; we have already sent a \$1,000 check and we hope to another check in the near future.

Thanksgiving is a time to be thankful for all that we have, and then to look at what we can do to help others less fortunate. This year the CAC sponsored a food drive. The donations were given to local families from our own school district.

December found the CAC members busy in room 603 wrapping hundreds of presents to give to students in an elementary UCP school in Queens and Queens Children Psychiatric Center. Led by Ms. Musmeci, and accompanied by a magician, and, of course, Santa Claus (our own Mr. De Siano), we brought gifts and entertainment to the two facilities.

In December, we made our annual trip to the Oheka Castle. Under the supervision of Ms. Musmeci, a number of students helped create a festive atmosphere for students from Project Head Start. Dressed as elves, our students danced with the children and helped serve juice, cookies, popcorn, and cotton candy.

In January, the CAC will be sponsoring a trivia contest, which benefits UCP in Nassau. During their lunch time, students answer one hundred trivia questions. The highest scoring sixth grade team and the highest scoring seventh or eighth grade team will compete against other Nassau schools at the UCP Center.

Activities to look forward to for the remainder of the year include: Valentines for Vets, Daffodil Days to benefit the American Cancer Society, Parkville's annual picnic, and creating and selling bracelets to benefit The American Heart Association.



Message from the PTA President

PTA President's Message

Dear SMS Families:

I hope that your New Year will prove inspiring.

Thanks to many of you who attended the November General PTA meeting focusing on Great Neck South Middle School's Encore curriculum. The meeting was packed with information and the video profiled our outstanding Encore team: Technology, Art, Music, Health, and Family and Consumer Sciences. To be a well-rounded complete student, our school embraces the encore subject areas.

Thank you for your participation with the SMS Book Fair. It was fantastic! Many of you bought, but also ordered through the on-line option, and Trapped by Michael Northrop was quite a seller.

Thank you to the Korean PTA for their annual Apple Tasting event, which as usual was quite delicious, and the students enjoyed the variety of apples.

Thank your children for taking picture perfect photos, and by now you should have your kids' gorgeous faces in frames.

The PTA extends congratulations to all our students who participated in winter concerts. Music to everyone's ears. Well done!

Please mark your calendars for the next meeting on Tuesday, January 17 at 8:00 p.m. (after the SM grade 7/8 guidance meeting). We will focus on the English curriculum and Department Chair, Mr. Gabriel Carras, and members of the English department will be our presenters.

On the District level, and of import to you, is a proposition that was outlined for our community that is asking residents to authorize approximately \$17 million in funds that already are in place to be released to renovate, repair, and improve our aging infrastructures. These funds are from an Unassigned Fund Balance; therefore the proposition will have no impact on taxpayers.

On Tuesday, February 14, 2012, there will be a vote on this Referendum at Baker Elementary School (for residents living North of the LIRR) and South High School (for residents living south of the LIRR). There will be brochures sent out via mail, and you will be receiving these from the Great Neck Public School District. The handouts describe the repairs and costs of each project, as well as answer some frequently asked questions.

There will be Public Hearings on the Capital Projects – the BOE will hold these at the start of their meetings: Tuesday, Jan 24th at 8:30 @ North High and Monday, February 6th at 8:30 PM at Cumberland Adult Center (following student recognition).

I encourage you to attend these important meetings.

Our PTA is one of power in partnership. We are partners with our parents, teachers, administrators and students.

If you have already joined, thank you for joining, if you have not, I am asking you to join a team. You create your school's PTA; we meet and act together – speaking for every child and all children – diverse, united, speaking with one voice.

Be an “agent of change” – voice your concerns and ideas with a group of like individuals who have a similar vision and hope for children, for education, and for our community.

We are all volunteers committed to working on issues that affect children and families. Your voice is so important to us, and we need your help.

Our PTA extends its gratitude to our teachers, who dedicate themselves to our children every day, and we thank our teachers for their PTA involvement.

Please check out the calendar posted in the Great Neck District Public School website.

Judy Liman, *President*
Great Neck South Middle School PTA

SMS PTA Executive Board 2011-12

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Executive Vice President	Vicki Vlantis
VP's Communication	Michael Cuttino
	Miriam Kobliner
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	Deidre Greben
	Rachel Hershenhorn
	Reggie Mazurkiewicz
SDM Committee Chair	Po Shum
SEPTA Delegate	Carol Valic

Shared Decision Making

Our Shared Decision Making committee is in full swing. The committee meets one Wednesday each month. This month we welcomed our student representatives, who, together with the teachers, administrators and parents, decided on our goal for the year. It will be to continue to focus on the Habits of Mind, a goal introduced last year. Habits of Mind are “intelligent behaviors that lead to success in school and the larger world...an essential element for helping students at all grade levels successfully deal with the challenges they face in school and beyond” (Habits of Mind Across the Curriculum). The five on which we have chosen to focus are: listening with understanding and empathy, thinking and communicating with clarity and precision, thinking independently, creating, imagining, innovating, and striving for accuracy. Each subcommittee will come up with suggestions as to how their “habit” can be incorporated into school, home, and community.



Great Neck South Middle School PTA
349 Lakeville Road
Great Neck, New York 11020



GREENKILL TRIP

If you've never had dinner with 200 over-stimulated sixth graders, hiked in the rain over hilly, densely, woody terrain, observed a Revolutionary War soldier fire a musket, or made your own pretzels from scratch, then you haven't been part of the Greenkill experience. On November 15th, four busloads of sixth grade students and teachers embarked on a two-hour trip to the Greenkill Environmental Center in Huguenot, New York for four activity-filled days, demonstrating that middle school students can, indeed, survive for several days without their iPods, computers, televisions, and DVD players.

The annual Greenkill trip is a truly multi-disciplinary experience, where students learn survival skills in the forest, build shelters, complete team-building activities as part of Project Adventure, make crafts, get a dose of history and local folklore from Joe Ryan, the Revolutionary War soldier, do journal writing, learn about wildlife, and, most significantly, develop an appreciation of nature and an understanding of the need for the conservation of resources.

Another benefit of the Greenkill trip, in addition to the various learning experiences they have, is the bonding of students through four intensive days of activities, recreation, and dining and living together. For some students this was their first experience away from home. Most students made new friends, learned new skills, and had an experience they will remember throughout their lives.

In an age of global warming and the increased consumption of many of our natural resources, our planet is truly endangered. It is these students whose generation will be the future stewards of our planet, and if the Greenkill experience can help raise their consciousness of the importance of our interdependence with nature, then it is a trip of immeasurable worth.

The students who chose not to go to Greenkill had a great time during the stay at home program. Our very own physical education teachers helped us to work on Project Adventure and team building activities. We learned how to approach some pretty interesting challenges by working together as a group. BOCES also joined us that week continuing the project adventure activities. Naturalists from Alley Pond Environmental Center, and the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary brought reptiles, mammals, and birds of prey for an up close look at animals normally only seen in the wild. The students explored our campus with many interesting and exciting hikes during the week as well. An exciting week was enjoyed by all!