



PTA

Holiday Cheer!

**Volume 6
12/5/08**

THE EAGLE'S EYE Center Grove School PTA

Programs/Events

Datebook

Wear Red/ All-School Meeting	Dec. 8
Toys for Tots	Dec. 8 – Dec. 19
Holiday Concert	Dec. 11 at 9:30am and 2pm (Snow date: Dec. 12)
School Closed	Dec 24 – Jan. 2

Holiday Concert

CG's annual holiday concert will be on Thurs., Dec. 11 in the gym. Our fourth and fifth grade musicians and vocalists will hold performances at 9:30am and 2pm. We encourage parents to attend the morning session because more seating is available. In the event of a school closing, the concert will be held on Fri., Dec. 12.

Toys for Tots

It's that time of year again!! CG will collect new, unwrapped toys to give to needy children in the community. You may drop off your donations in the box located in the front lobby from Mon., Dec. 8, through Fri., Dec. 19. Please support this awesome program sponsored by the US Marine Corp. Thanks in advance for your generosity!!

PTA Meeting Update

Thanks to everyone who attended the Dec. 1 PTA meeting. Meeting highlights included:

- **A Responsive Classroom presentation** by Mrs. Laureano, one of our second grade teachers. Research has linked the approach with higher student test scores, better social skills, and fewer behavioral problems. You can see how Mrs. Laureano implements this approach by visiting her classroom or checking out www.responsiveclassroom.org.
- **A SMART board demonstration** by Mrs. Darbig and Ms. Hicok, two of our fifth grade teachers. The teachers showed parents how they use this tool in a wide variety of ways to make the most mundane lessons interactive and exciting for students.
- **A PTA budget vote** in favor of a \$5,000 donation from the general funds to CG to purchase LCDs and SMART boards for classrooms. It is a goal of the PTA to fund the purchase of LCDs and SMART boards for every grade-level class at Center Grove.

The next PTA meeting is Mon., Jan. 12, at 7pm. We hope to see you there!

We're Looking for a Few Good Volunteers...

For Gift Wrapping

Dee Pokorny is looking for volunteers to **help gift wrap at the Ledgewood Barnes and Noble on Thursday, December 18**. The CG community did such a good job at last spring's fundraising event that the store invited us back to gift wrap for their customers during this holiday season. We do not need to purchase anything. We simply wrap the books, and the patrons give a donation if they wish. Dee will be there from 9:30am until 9:30pm. Please stop by for as long or as short as you would like. Thank you in advance and enjoy the holiday season! Any questions? Contact Dee Pokorny at 973-361-5180 or at dee27@optonline.net.

For Eagle Enrichment

Eagle Enrichment wants you! Bored, looking for a way to volunteer with kids in the middle of winter? Eagle Enrichment needs instructors for a couple of more classes – we have curriculum for a **science class and a book writing class**, and we can support any other ideas you may have. Each course has a budget for supplies.

Aides also needed. In addition to instructors, Eagle Enrichment needs volunteers to assist in the classroom. **If you volunteer, your kids may attend Eagle Enrichment for free!**

Questions? Ideas? Contact Stacy Gellert at sgellert@optonline.net, Michele Ross at billmichross@aol.com, or Margaret Clark at mclark0213@optonline.net.

Principal's Message

By Mrs. Debbie Iosso, Principal

Hello Eagle community! Wow – November was a whirlwind of activity here at CG, and I must compliment the staff! With all of the extra activities this month, they continued to turn out quality products and maintain the academic standards they set for their students.

Grade 4 conducted our **November all-school meeting**. Highlights were re-introducing the official CG Song and holding a school-wide presidential election. On Nov. 4, the staff participated in a **professional development day** with a morning of digital storytelling by Samantha Morra, a technology expert from Montclair University, and an afternoon of working on building initiatives. Dr. James Sheerin, Interim Superintendent, met with our PTA on Nov. 11 to gather feedback. Our **Veterans Day assembly** was very special, featuring more than 20 veterans and their families. During the program, CG and RHS students described the significance of the holiday, and Ms. Hackett sang *America the Beautiful*.

American Education Week was a huge success with many families sharing positive comments on what they saw and heard in our classrooms. We launched two big events this week. First, students will generate and vote on a CG Slogan. Second, students will design the very first CG Flag. Students will judge all designs and select the winner. The goal is to have a flag and slogan by the end of this year. November ended with **Special Senior Person's Day**. More than 200 special guests enjoyed a special performance by our CG choir, followed by visits to our classrooms. It was a wonderful way to kick off the season of giving thanks!

We are progressing at great speed with our technology advancements with the next wave of **SMART board installations**. At the Dec. 1 PTA meeting, Ms. Hicok and Mrs. Darbig demonstrated the use of the SMART board while using one of our new FM systems. Also, Ms. Laureano discussed the benefits of Responsive Classroom. Finally, we reviewed the results of last spring's student survey.

CG will hold its **Holiday Concert** on Dec. 11. This is always such a fabulous day. Is there anything better than the sound of children's voices?

As we enter the winter season, please review with your children dismissal destinations on days of emergency closing. Because these days are always hectic, please prepare for them in advance. If you have not signed up for RAM ALERTS at www.rtnj.org, I strongly suggest that you do. Among other things, RAM ALERTS will send a message to your phone whenever there is an emergency closing or other important school update.

The Eagle Community continues to soar ☺

District News

STUFF YOU SHOULD KNOW...

By Jeanne Stifelman,
CG BOE Representative

The 09/10 school budget process will be a challenge:

1. NJ state law allows for a maximum 4% increase on the tax levy from year to year. However, the District's fixed costs go up by more than 4% year to year.
2. Due to the economic climate, we can expect fewer dollars from the state for the 09/10 budget.
3. Randolph's rateable base is decreasing.

This means that the Board of Education (BOE) and Administration will face a major challenge in allocating dollars to make up the 09/10 school year budget.

The BOE Finance, Facilities & Transportation (FFT) Committee's next meeting is December 15 at 8pm in the Administration Building. I encourage you to be part of the process and join me at this and future BOE FFT Committee meetings. Let your voice be heard or come to gain an understanding of the process that leads to the budget that will be voted on in April.

One last point: The 08/09 budget only passed by a narrow margin last year.

Want to know more? Join me at **the next BOE meeting on December 10 at 8pm** in the RHS Library. You also can reach me at jstife@optonline.net.

District Datebook

- 12/10** BOE Work Session at 8pm, RHS Library
- 12/10** Community Outreach Committee Meeting at 9:30am, Admin. Bldg.
- 12/15** Finance, Facilities & Transportation Committee Meeting at 8pm, Admin. Bldg.
- 12/17** BOE Business Session at 8pm, RHS Library

On the Fundraising Front...

50/50

The following are the latest prize numbers for the PTA Council's 50/50:

- 1st prize - \$2,703
- 2nd prize - \$1,622
- 3rd prize - \$1,081

We will accept 50/50 tickets until Dec. 12 so please get your tickets in! Check www.rtnj.org for prize updates. Any questions? Please contact Sue Matos at 973-989-0157 or at susan@matosfamily.com.

Market Day

Please mark your calendars! **Market Day pickup is scheduled for Wed., Dec. 10**, from 3pm to 4pm in the cafeteria. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Downtain at 973-328-6602 or at cdowntain@optonline.net.

Order Your Gift Cards!

For the holidays, consider using gift cards for family, friends, babysitters, teachers, and corporate gifts. You can give your favorite stores, a dinner on you, a night at the movies, etc. You can also purchase Walmart gift cards to fulfill the church gifts many of us give as a donation for others. Here's how to do it:

- Go to www.shopwithscrip.com.
- Register to create a family account.
- Use enrollment code 6F3ALLF51554L for CG.
- Choose your gift cards, and place your order.
- Send in your check to CG PTA in an envelope marked "Gift Card Order" with a copy of your order.

We will have two gift card orders this month:

1. **Orders due on Mon., Dec. 8**, for pickup on Fri., Dec. 12, from 2pm to 3pm, at the front desk.
2. **Orders due on Mon., Dec. 15**, for pickup on Fri., December 19.

Any questions? Please e-mail Coleen Barbieri at cbarbiere113@yahoo.com.

CG Readers Update

Congratulations to **Daniel Kim** and **Matthew Chan**! They were the winners of the *CG Readers* raffle drawing held last week. Each winner won a \$10 Barnes and Noble gift card.

Keep reading and fill out the brief summary forms available in the CG library. We will hold our next drawing in February 2009.

Thanks!

The Caring and Sharing Committee would like to **thank the CG community for their overwhelming generosity**. We collected an *astounding* amount of unwanted Halloween candy, which we bagged and delivered to local charities.

In addition, the **Hope House food drive** was once again a great success. The items collected from Center Grove, Ironia and the Randolph Administrative Offices helped to provide Thanksgiving dinners for more than 115 families. This is the sixth year in a row that our school has touched the lives of those less fortunate. Many thanks to all who participated! – *Patricia Marciano, Trish Coyne and Mary Ellen Carle*

A BIG THANKS to Paula Scali, Andrea Wesolowski & all the volunteers who made the **holiday bazaar** a great experience for our kids! – *Heather Sheehan*

Spotlight on Specials

FROM THE SPANISH DEPARTMENT

By Sra. Alison Megaro, Spanish Teacher

¿Qué pasa en la clase de español? Visit us at www.rtnj.org, click on Center Grove, click on Elementary Spanish, and read our November/December issue of the "Olé Times." ¡Bravo!

FROM THE ART DEPARTMENT

By Ms. Stacy Watson, Art Teacher

Now on display in CG's hallways:

- **Kindergarteners** created watercolor/crayon resist paintings inspired by Kandinsky and his colorful compositions.
- Ms. Watson's **first graders** created paintings inspired by Piet Mondrian.
- Ms. Weiss's **first graders** created compositions of colorful apples using crayon.
- Ms. Weiss's **second graders** got fancy with their colorful cat paintings.
- Ms. Weiss's **fifth graders** were in the spirit of fall with their leaf paintings.

Now on display in the front lobby showcase are masks created by our **fifth grade** art enrichment. The masks were made with plaster and hand-painted with acrylic.

Thanks to those of you who contributed Purell, antibacterial wipes, and tissues. We greatly appreciate it. If you would like to donate any of these things to the art room, please send them with your students on art day.

Student Achievements

Congratulations to November's *Thumbs Up* classroom winners:

- Mrs. Darbig and Mrs. Hicok's fifth grade class, and
- Mrs. Laureano's second grade class.



Counselor's Corner

By Ms. Alycia Zemlanicky, Guidance Counselor

December's character education theme is **caring**. To kick off the caring theme, we ask all students and staff to **wear red at the all-school meeting on Dec. 8.**

Caring means to be concerned for the welfare of one's self and others. The truth is that we all have many people that care about us and want us to succeed. At Center Grove, our teachers and our friends all care about us. At home, our family, neighbors, and most of all, our parents care about us.

In December, I will participate in the morning meetings to discuss caring with our students. In addition, please talk with your children about doing something kind and caring for someone else – either in school, at home, or in the community. We can all be caring and helpful towards one another.

Don't forget to check out the front showcases this month. In them, the Kindergarten shows how they are caring.

Learning More about Responsive Classroom

By Mrs. Beth Laureano, Grade 2 Teacher

Morning Meeting is one of the many components of *Responsive Classroom*. It is the component that CG classrooms are currently implementing across all grade levels. Morning Meeting supports the academic curriculum, while teaching the social curriculum.

There are four components to Morning Meeting:

1. **Greeting.** There are many different greetings that students practice throughout the year. Students practice eye contact and the use of a clear and friendly voice when greeting their peers.
2. **Sharing.** Sharing can be done with partners, as a 'whip' share (where students share quickly, related to a topic) or individually. This gives students the chance to practice public speaking skills, as well as gives the class insight into who they are.
3. **Activity.** Activities build teamwork and classroom community. Activities also help students practice five social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self control (CARES).
4. **News and Announcements.** News and Announcements allows students to read the Morning Message that is written by the teacher – chorally or individually. The message can let students know what events are happening for the day. The message always includes a question for students to answer or think about. The question can be related to academics, social skills/problems or something personal.

Morning Meeting truly brings a classroom together as a community or family. Once this community is created, students feel more safe and comfortable in their environment. This encourages students to open up, take risks, and grow academically and socially. It is a great way to start a day—with fun, laughter and learning!

NEXT ISSUE: Friday, December 19. Please e-mail your submissions to Karen Pierro at mkpiero@optonline.net.

Articles MUST be received by 10pm on the Tuesday prior to Friday's distribution.

In an effort to conserve paper, we reserve the right to edit all information.

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