

Parsippany GRO/PGT Gazette

June, 2012

Volume 2, Issue 2

Sponsored By The Parsippany Parents For The Gifted And Talented

Knights, Squires, Dungeons & Falcons!



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Upcoming Events

- ◆ PGT Meetings in 2012 - Sep 24, Oct 29, Nov 26, Dec 17 - 7pm Parsippany Main Library

The Medieval Festival held on March 21, 2012 was a great success!

The children arrived at the Parsippany PAL building donning their medieval attire. There were knights, ladies, royalty, some craftsmen, and even a falconer or two. The children were split into 3 groups and rotated into activities which included listening to a storyteller relate medieval stories, creating castle pop ups and crowns, and fashioning bejeweled goblets and personalized shields. They were then split again, this time into 2 groups for another rotation. The groups entered the "dungeon" and encountered a Knight, his Squire and a lady. These professional actors entertained while educating them on the hard life in the medieval ages as well as how heavy a knight's gear truly was. The students also enjoyed working with authentic brass rubbings and crafting their own court jester.

At noon, the children paraded into the Great Hall for lunch and entertainment from a minstrel, a juggler, and the medieval actors. The room was decorated with artwork and projects that the students had completed for this unit. The PGT volunteers completed the look with a maypole, flags, torches and other hangings. They enjoyed cheese, crackers and fruit for the appetizer. Fare of the day was leg of chicken, potato wedges and roasted root vegetables with bread. Dessert included fruit tarts and rice cakes drizzled with honey. Quite the feast! One lucky student even won a trip for 2 to Medieval Times in Lyndhurst.

After lunch, a falconer showcased his birds of prey including an eagle, hawk and various falcons. He demonstrated the equipment needed to handle these birds and how they were used to capture food for their owner. The students then traveled back to school by bus with their teachers.

The Medieval Festival was taped by Video-on-the-Go and the DVD can be seen and purchased through their website under the Elementary Schools category:

<http://www.pthsd.k12.nj.us/videogo.html>

The event couldn't have been possible without the many volunteers who helped to cut out crafts, solicit donations, organize the event and entertainment, participate in entertaining, decorate the PAL building and come in costume to help during the festival.



Knight with his Squire (Period Productions)

Check out more pictures from the Medieval Festival in our special insert.

Did you know?

At just \$15.00, a PGT family membership for an entire year costs less than a nickel a day. Now is that a deal or what! The PGT is a 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Organization.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ PGT Meetings in 2013 - Jan 28, Feb 25, Mar 25, Apr 29, May 20 - 7pm Parsippany Main Library
- ◆ Back to School Night - Oct 24, 2012 - 7pm NorthVail School
- ◆ Book Club (4th & 5th Grade) - November, 2012

The PGT awards one \$500 scholarship every year to a graduating senior from each high school.



On behalf of the GRO Program, PGT, parents and students, Thank You Mrs. Elzer!

End of Year Message from the GRO Teachers

The Parsippany-Troy Hills School District strives to ensure that all students achieve their highest level of critical thinking and creativity and that they value themselves and the diversity of others. In support of this goal, the Gifted-Reach-Out Program offers special learning opportunities to those students identified as gifted. The district recognizes that these gifted individuals exhibit special strengths in problem solving and/or thinking skills. This demands special instruction to foster divergent thinking which is abstract, complex, and multifaceted.

The gifted educators of the Parsippany-Troy Hills School District understand that gifted children are an important resource for solving problems of the future and they have the potential to become leaders in society. A rich and rigorous gifted curriculum provides our students with the opportunity to reach their fullest potential and to satisfy their intellectual curiosity. Opportunities are provided to engage in meaningful research, to foster critical and creative thinking, and develop problem solving strategies. As teachers of the gifted, we pride ourselves in capitalizing on students' unique abilities, talents, interests, and needs.

The successful education of gifted children has a single common thread: advocacy. Therefore, we would like to

take this opportunity to thank the families of our gifted students for their ongoing support that promotes an understanding about gifted and talented students and their educational needs among educators, parents, and community.

We look forward to next year's units:

Grades 1-3: Aerodynamics and Voyages

Grades 2-3: Architecture, Aerodynamics, and Voyages

Grade 4: Shakespeare and Financial Literacy

Grade 5: Archeology and Brain/Mind Connection

In closing, we would like to thank the PGT Officers for their commitment to gifted education and for all their special talents and willingness to support our efforts in educating our students. One last final thank you goes out to Mrs. Catapano, President of the PGT, for her dedication and allegiance to the program and to the students of this district. Although this will be her last year serving as the PGT President, her influence and hard-work will long be realized and remembered.

Sincerely,

Terry Murphy
Stephanie Dasti
Laura Long

Madeline Brown
Janet Armstrong
Judy Elzer

Special Message from Mrs. Elzer

Dear Northvail and Lake Hiawatha parents,

At this time, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your cooperation and support for the Gifted Reach Out program and for me, personally, over the last several years. I am retiring.

As a GRO teacher, I have endeavored to provide your children with creative learning experiences and encouraged their use of imagination. I have asked them to find their inner artist, actor, inventor and architect and hopefully have opened their eyes to exciting possibilities for the future.

I see your sons and daughters as lighthouses shining their own special little lights.

Help them to keep those lights glowing brightly by allowing them to be who they are and nurturing all the wonderful gifts, both big and small, that they possess. They are part of you but they are also uniquely themselves. Enjoy and cherish them.

I wish you and your families health and happiness.

Sincerely,
Judyth Elzer

Expanded Coverage: Medieval Festival

The PGT would like to extend a Special Thank You to our...

Knights (\$100-\$249)

David and Becky Kaplan
Gourmet Café
Kraft Foods, Inc.
Medieval Times
Shop-Rite of Parsippany
Viking Bakery

Artisans (Under \$100)

Anitha Ramakodi
Anthony & Sons
BJ's Wholesale Club
Burger King
Costco Wholesale of East Hanover
Foodtown of Denville
Friendly's of Morris Plains
GPR Company, Inc.
Lake Hiawatha Foodtown
Shop Rite of Morris Plains
Stop & Shop of Morris Plains
The Ramesh Family
Trader Joe's of Florham Park

Additionally, Thank You to the GRO teachers and parents for making this Medieval Festival a success.



Bob Dowling, minstrel & parent volunteer



Kinjal Potdar, Sofia Rodriguez, Kiera Duffy making crowns



Mrs. Madeline Brown, Mt Tabor GRO teacher

And a Very Special Thank You to our...

Royalty (\$500+)

Edward Lee - Emerald Financial of MassMutual



Edward Lee
Financial Services Professional
1140 Rte. 22 East, Suite 202
Bridgewater, NJ 08807
P: 908.252.2308
C: 862.246.6160
F: 908.704.3535
edwardlee@financialguide.com

www.emeraldfinancialresources.com

Nobility (\$250- \$499)

Geeta Krishnadas - Kumon Center of Denville South



Rotary Club of Parsippany-Troy Hills



Getting ready for the Falcon demonstration



Eagle from the Delaware Valley Raptor Center



Feast in the Great Banquet Hall



Falcon from the Delaware Valley Raptor Center



Ananya Rath, Julianna Gaudio, Amy Trella

Upcoming Events

- ◆ New Parent Meeting - Jan 16, 2013 - 1-3pm
Parsippany Main Library
- ◆ Gifted Fair - Spring, 2013
- ◆ Moving Up (Middle School) - May, 2013
- ◆ Quiz Kids - May 31, 2012 - 9am - 12:30pm
Intervale School
- ◆ GRO Picnic - Jun, 2013 -
Smith Field Park

Medieval Festival (contd.)



3rd Graders from Littleton enjoying the Festival: Tyler Gurth, Aidan Wall, and Emma Peters



Decorations from the Festival

PGT Scholarship

Every year the PGT offers two scholarships, in the amount of \$500 each, to a graduating senior at each Parsippany high school. Only seniors who were enrolled in the GRO Program during their time in elementary school are eligible to apply. Scholarships are merit based. Students are required to fill out an application and submit an essay in which they recount how their participation in the GRO Program influenced their time in high school. Personal information about the applicants is removed before the

Scholarship Committee reads the applications. This year's winners were Anji Zhao (Hills) and Gloria Ho (High). They received their checks for \$500 at the Senior Awards Assembly held earlier this month at their respective high schools. Congratulations to them both!

Details on how to apply for the PGT Scholarship are available on the PGT Website.

If you are interested in serving on the PGT Scholarship Committee, please contact Corey Abate, Secretary to the PGT (the.csabate@gmail.com).

Quiz Kids

This year the Quiz Kids went for a new and exciting format. Participants were required to answer educational questions and had to dance to music to keep their points. It certainly held the students' interest until the end of the show. The music, dance and the professional PA system created a lively atmosphere making it more enjoyable for everyone present. The kids just had one reaction, "Absolutely amazing!"

The event was conducted by The Brain Show, an educational assembly that

travels throughout the country with their on-the-road game show.



Teacher Ranger Teacher - Mrs. Armstrong

Thomas Edison National Historical Park - 5th Grade

The fifth graders from all schools took field trips to Thomas Edison National Historical Park in March. Among other historical items, they got to see the Black Maria, which was the very first motion picture studio.

Our very own GRO Teacher, Mrs. Armstrong is a Teacher Ranger Teacher at the park and invites all GRO families to come visit the park so she can give you a personal tour this summer! Kids under 16 are free!

Information Session: Moving Up to Middle School

The PGT held an Information Session for 5th Grade Parents on May 17, 2012. Dr. Norman Francis, Jr. Principal of Central Middle School and Ms. Eileen Hoehne, Principal of Brooklawn Middle School spoke to an audience of 50 parents regarding their curriculum, sports programs, scheduled day, and advanced

programs for gifted and talented students. They graciously answered everyone's questions and provided insightful information on our children's Middle School education. The PGT would like to thank Dr. Francis and Ms. Hoehne for taking the time to speak with the GRO parents.

Book Club

In an effort to continue to offer new and exciting programs for GRO students and their families, the PGT was proud to create and offer a Book Club to our 4th and 5th Grade students and parents. Two Book Club meetings were held this year. Our first meeting was held on April 18 to discuss *A WRINKLE IN TIME*,

which celebrates its 50th Anniversary this year. By popular demand, a second meeting was added on June 12 to discuss *THE GRAVEYARD BOOK*. This November we will be reading *CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY*. Our moderator is Corey Abate, who is serving as the PGT Secretary.

Financial Literacy Program

On May 3, 2012, Edward Lee of Mass Mutual introduced to our GRO families the Kids Smart Start Financial Literacy Program. The children enjoyed the age-appropriate lessons on such topics as how to budget and savings plans.

This program aims to help parents meet the challenge of instilling good financial habits in children. There was a great turn out and children participated in a lively question and answer session.

Gifted Fair

The PGT organized our 2nd annual Gifted Fair on March 5, 2012. We had 20 organizations and programs present to provide information on their after school or summer programs. Programs are educational and specific to gifted and bright elementary and middle school aged children. Programs such as Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth, G&T Institute, SEE

Camp, Montclair Academically Gifted & Talented Youth Program, ID Tech Camps, Summer Institute for the Gifted, Storming Robots, Camp Discovery at FDU and International Ivy Summer Program and Caldwell College are a few that were present to provide information on their exciting programs being offered to our gifted and talented children.

Picnic

The Year End 2012 GRO/PGT Picnic was the largest group we have ever had. Over 400 GRO students and families enjoyed a fun filled afternoon at Smith Field in Parsippany. The GRO Teachers put together a Scavenger Hunt for each

grade and Picnic games were played on the nearby fields. A special thank you to all of our volunteers. This could never have happened without you and your support.



Ms. Eileen Hoehne and Dr. Norman Francis, Jr. presenting to 5th Grade GRO families



An overflow crowd at this year's GRO/PGT Picnic



Future Olympians



Mt. Tabor Second Graders become falconers.

We're on the Web!
<http://www.pthsd.k12.nj.us/PGT/index.htm>

PGT News

PGT Officers & Committee Chairs Needed:

In order for the PGT to continue to provide exciting programs to our GRO students and families and to provide assistance to our GRO Program and teachers, we need your help. Please consider being a part of your child's Gifted & Talented education. Join the PGT for the 2012-2013 School Year. We need PGT School Representatives and volunteers to chair the Gifted Fair, Membership, Website, Newsletter, Information Sessions, Field Trip and Picnic committees. Please contact the PGT at: pgtparsippany@gmail.com.

PGT Executive Board Officers for the 2012-2013 School Year:

President: Lani Duffy, Mount Tabor
 VP: Archana Kakirde, Lake Hiawatha
 Treasurer: Macey Lee, Troy Hills
 Secretary: Corey Abate, Littleton

PGT Treasurer's Report: Year to date spending

Gifts to the GRO Program

- Gift Cards to all GRO teachers for classroom expenses \$324.85
- Back to School Night Expenses \$168.99
- Book orders for GRO classrooms \$244.28
- Annual subscription to edHelper \$199.90
- Medieval Festival \$2459.17
- Gifted Fair \$58.85
- Convocation \$51.47
- Year end picnic \$1155.62
- Scholarships \$1000
- Year end gift to teachers - new Brain Models \$257.88

Medieval Festival donations set a record of almost \$1000! In addition we received generous donations from Parsippany's local merchants. Thanks to the generosity of all donations, the PGT was able to host an exciting and wonderful event for the GRO students.

PGT Book Club Summer Reading List - Summer 2012

Here, in no particular order, are ten suggestions for summer reading:

1. The View from Saturday (E.L. Konigsburg)
2. The Phantom Tollbooth (Norton Juster)
3. Chasing Vermeer (Blue Balliet)
4. Ginger Pye (Eleanor Estes)
5. Tom's Midnight Garden (Philippa Pearce)
6. The Lion, The Witch, and The

Wardrobe (C.S. Lewis)

7. The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle (Avi)
8. Dear Mr. Henshaw (Beverly Cleary)
9. The Giver (Lois Lowry)
10. Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH (Robert O'Brien)

And for those younger readers, we have a suggestion for you as well - Cynthia Rylant.

Stay Tuned!

If you would like to stay informed about GRO and PGT news and events, we'd love to keep on telling you about them!

You can request to be placed on our email list by sending an email to: pgtparsippany@gmail.com. We value your privacy and will not use your address for any reason other than to send you information relating to the GRO program and the PGT.

In the next edition of The Parsippany

GRO/PGT Gazette, we will have reports on the Fall class units, projects and class trips.

A special thanks to all the GRO teachers, Corey Abate, Lani Duffy, Vicky Huynh, Macey Lee, Archana Kakirde and Kim Catapano for contributing to this edition of the Parsippany GRO/PGT Gazette!

See you next time!
 Rafi Reza, Editor



Fourth graders at Mt. Tabor perform acts from Julius Caesar.