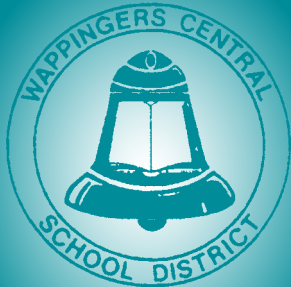


InPrint

WAPPINGERS Central School District newsletter

Fall/Winter 2012-13 Volume 13.1

The Wappingers Central School District Newsletter



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Superintendent's Message



With the close of the year approaching, this is a good time to reflect on the school year as a whole, the highlights that have brought us pride, and the pivotal events that have been challenging catalysts for change. This year our instructional program was marked by three major state initiatives reaching fruition. The acronyms APPR, DDI, and CCLS, have become part of our professional vernacular. Respectively, the three represent Annual Professional Performance Review, Data Driven Instruction, and Common Core Learning Standards. As a District, we have done a good job keeping pace with an unprecedented level of far reaching changes in education.

We underwent extensive preparation, planning, and training for the new mandate on the Annual Professional Performance and Review for teachers and principals. The Wappingers Central Schools District successfully navigated its way to approval of our plan by the New York State Department of Education. The process proved to be highly complex, challenging, and costly in terms of the time and resources required for its implementation.

Throughout the year, data driven instruction and the Common Core Learning Standards have occupied a position of prominence on the agenda at school staff meetings, depart-

mental meetings, and academy sessions for administrators, and were incorporated into our conference days.

Any time spent on reflecting over the past months of school cannot be done without including the painful memory of the tragedy that occurred in Newtown. The event stirs the emotions and registers as a pivotal time in this year that has caused school districts such as our own to revisit, rethink, and adjust where possible our methods and protocols for school safety. Alongside our partners in law enforcement from around the District, we have carefully examined and revised our practices and put plans in place that support the safe operation of our schools. We have also developed plans and proposals for the future after consulting with law enforcement, technology experts, facilities management professionals, and our school safety team members.

In the weeks ahead we can expect to be communicating with our community on the budget for the next school year, including the propositions for capital improvements designed to deliver sorely needed critical support to District infrastructure. Major improvements to school buildings and campuses, as well as a new bus garage, are included in the proposed work that will be presented to the public for approval. We will have a great deal more to share in the remaining months of the school year.

Regards,
Marco F. Pochintesta
Superintendent of Schools

WAPPINGERS SCHOOLS

Elementary Schools

Brinckerhoff.....	897-6800
Evans.....	298-5240
Fishkill.....	897-6780
Fishkill Plains.....	227-1770
Gayhead.....	227-1756
Kinry Road.....	463-7322
Myers Corners.....	298-5260
Oak Grove.....	298-5280
Sheafe Road.....	298-5290
Vassar Road.....	463-7860

Secondary Schools

Van Wyck JHS.....	227-1700
Wappingers JHS.....	298-5200
John Jay HS.....	897-6700
Roy C. Ketcham HS.....	298-5100
Orchard View Alternative HS.....	298-5000

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IN PRINT: WCSD NEWSLETTER

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Greetings from your Board of Education!



Dear Parents,
Employees, Students and Community members,
Greetings to all from the Board of Education!

Please join me in congratulating our new Superintendent, Mr. Marco Pochintesta. Mr. Pochintesta is already well known in our school district as he has served as Principal of John Jay High School, Assistant Superintendent for Administration and most recently as our Interim Superintendent.

We conducted a nationwide search, interviewed many qualified candidates and found Mr. Pochintesta the most suitable for Wappingers School District. Our two finalists were interviewed by a panel of almost 30 community members and employees of the district who overwhelmingly supported Mr. Pochintesta for the position. The Board of Education is very proud of the process we followed and we wish Mr. Pochintesta well and look forward to collaborating with him for the next three years and beyond.

The Wappingers Board of Education has adopted the Regents Reform Agenda to make every student college and career ready. Our teachers are teaching the new Common Core curriculum and our students are preparing to take state tests in the new curriculum this year, as New York State is the first and leading state in the nation to adopt the Common Core curriculum. Our children's success can be accelerated with the cooperation and support from our parents.

We are also working hard to close the achievement gap between children from

various backgrounds because we believe demographics should not determine destiny and every child, irrespective of race or color, can reach his or her highest potential.

Since the Newtown, Connecticut tragedy, it has become very important to secure all our schools. We are extremely mindful of our spending and are adopting cost effective solutions to ensure that every dollar is spent on our children. We are working to eliminate all rental space and move our facilities in our own buildings. We are working to move our bus garage, central administration offices and Orchard View School from rental places. Our administration is hard at work reviewing our budget so that we can stay within the cap. We will do everything possible to be able to maintain all the current programs with all our current employees in the school system.

We thank the staff members who work diligently for our children on a daily basis. We are also very grateful to the community for your support and feedback, without which we would not be able to accomplish our goals. We will keep you updated as we work towards our mutual goals.

Ved Shrivah, President
WCSD Board of Education

Around The Schools: What's Going On

Roy C Ketcham HS

A WOODW PERFORMANCE



Brigetta Barrett has been quoted as saying, "Since I was little I have loved doing something that makes people smile and clap. I love putting on a show for people," and wow, what a performance!

Former WCSD student Brigetta Barrett, now a Theater Arts major at the University of Arizona, celebrates winning the silver medal in the high jump at the 2012 London Olympics.

Brigetta Barrett's first international competition took place in Daegu, a metropolitan city in South Korea, at the World Championships last year. She qualified for the final and then finished 10th overall at 6'-4", which was a bar lower than she had cleared to qualify for the final two days earlier. She felt going to the World Championships last year really helped her understand how to handle herself in high-performance situations like that of the Olympic stage. She had commented how she went on to the London Olympics fully expecting to get a medal, knowing what she could do.

Eluding early elimination and making it to the finals, Barrett, carried a clean card to the 6'-5½" jump, which she employed two attempts to clear. At 6'-6¾", Barrett again needed a second attempt to get over, which propelled her from seventh place to fourth. With the bar raised to 6'-8", Russia's Anna Chicherova cleared on her first attempt. Barrett did it on her second. Clearing the 6 feet-8 inch jump not only set a personal record for Barrett but touts her status as the first American to medal in the high jump since Louise Ritter won the gold in Seoul in 1988. She comments, "I knew that during this time, championship time, I am always ready to do my best."

Barrett is the sixth athlete who has lived at least 10 years in the Dutchess County area to win a medal. She grew up in Wappingers Falls and attended Roy C. Ketcham High School for two years, winning a state title in the high jump. After moving to Texas she won additional state high school titles in 2008 and 2009. Barrett is an NCAA indoor and outdoor champion, and has entered her senior season at the University of Arizona.



Congratulations!
-WCSD



According to the official website, The Stock Market Game offers a learning experience that has scholastic correlations to educational standards in subjects including Math, Business Education, Economics, English / Language Arts, Technology, Social Studies and Family and Consumer Sciences.

Although the program is primarily used in grades four through twelve, "Anyone interested in learning more about investing can participate; potential investors of all ages and economic means can benefit from practicing first with the SMG program." David Barysh, a gifted sixth grade teacher at Van Wyck Junior High School, was one of the many teachers to incorporate the program into his class' curriculum this past year.

Also, according to the website, "the SMG program is designed so students and teachers learn as they go along; therefore, minimal knowledge about investing is needed. In fact, it serves as a valuable tool to learn basic investing skills.

To enhance the experience, there are many resources available to participants: Teachers and other adults have access to a variety of curriculum guides and materials made available online in the Teacher Support Center."

The Stock Market game is an introduction to stock, bond, and mutual fund exchanges. The students competed in an impres-

sive year-long session that began in September and ended in late April last spring. From introductory lessons such as "What is a Stock?" and "What is Investing?", to more complex topics like port-

folio diversification and analyzing corporate financial summaries, students had real world experiences with money management. Students were broken up into fifteen teams with five to six students per team. They were allotted \$100,000 to create a stock portfolio. In their teams, students researched stocks using financial websites and were responsible to keep detailed records of their transactions.

David comments, "I am proud to say that we had a regional winning team this year! Competing against fifty-six other teams in the lower Hudson Valley region, we had six teams finish within the top ten. As far as Coordinator rankings go, our top team ranked fourth amongst 364 teams including several high school teams!



In addition to investing strategies, students were exposed to the foundations of capitalism, the workings of a free market economy, entrepreneurship, and the importance of establishing and maintaining one's credit rating. The Stock Market Game is an engaging and informative program that can set the stage for a lifetime of prudent financial decisions.

Around The Schools: What's Going On

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS



National Merit Scholarship Program

National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC)

was established in 1955—a time when there was concern that the United States was lagging behind in the cold war scientific race. In response, the National Merit Scholarship Program was founded. The idea was to identify and honor scholastically talented American students in high-school and encourage them to develop their abilities to the fullest.

no small feat

ROY C KETCHAM HIGH SCHOOL



JOHN JAY HIGH SCHOOL



Wappinger's High Schools definitely have stars to shine and it is no small feat. Of the **1.5 million entrants**, some 50,000 with the highest PSAT/NMSQT® qualify for recognition in the National Merit® Scholarship Program.

In early September, about 16,000 students, or approximately one-third of the 50,000 high scorers, are notified that they have qualified as **Semifinalists**.

We would like to congratulate the following students:

Roy C Ketcham HS:

Raymond T. Bartolucci,
Graham T. Bass and Austin Kim

John Jay HS:

Zhengjia Jiang, Beining Niu,
Xiaoying Zhao

In late September, two-thirds (about 34,000) of the approximately 50,000 high scorers on the PSAT/NMSQT® receive **Letters of Commendation** in recognition of their outstanding academic promise.

John Jay HS Laura Casaregola,
Jason Chan, Mehdi Elmouchtari,
Tyler Heitmann, John Knickerbocker,
Rebecca Martin, Adam Medla, Arjun
Nandi, Hea-Lin Oh, Chanwoong Park,
Christian Zollner

Roy C Ketcham HS: Alec J. Gemmell,
Keunho Koo, Rachel C. May, Brittany
A. Tompkins and Zahraa M. Badat

To ensure that academically talented young people from all parts of the United States are included in this talent pool, Semifinalists are designated on a state representational basis. They are the highest scoring entrants in each state. Semifinalists must advance to Finalist standing in the competition by meeting high academic standards and all other requirements. In February, some 15,000 Semifinalists were notified by mail that they have advanced to Finalist standing.

Keep up the good work!

Info for this excerpt and other helpful information can be located at: <http://nationalmerit.org>



Fishkill Rotary Donates Dictionaries to Myers Corners ES and James Evans ES

"The goal of the program is to assist all students in becoming good writers, active readers, creative thinkers, and resourceful learners by providing them with their own personal dictionary. The dictionaries are a gift for students to use at school and at home for years to come."

Since its implementation in 1995, over 18 million children have received dictionaries because thousands of people saw the same need in communities all over the United States. "Educators see third grade as the dividing line between learning to read and reading to learn."



Myers Corners' third grader Raegan VanZandt looks through her new dictionary while WCSD Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Dr. Kathleen Walsh and Wappingers Falls Rotary members George Jennings, left, and Stan Straub look on.

--photos by Melina Makris

Myers Corners' third grader Austin Smith smiles as he holds open his new dictionary.



We are glad our sponsors at the **Fishkill Rotary Club** decided to participate and donate dictionaries to our children in the third grade. Thank you!

Healthy Steps at Fishkill Plains



This year's Fishkill Plains' Healthy Steps Program ran from October 1st, 2012 to October 12th, 2012. The program was tremendously successful. Fishkill Plains' ES students, parents, faculty and staff collectively walked over 25,000 miles for the two week health program!

The Healthy Steps program is designed as a health initiative to inspire students and their families to walk every day in school and out of school. It provides the opportunity to not only have a healthy lifestyle program, but also a good natured competition between the classes in each grade level. Every year the classes walking the most miles from each grade win a prize for their efforts. This year's prize was a customized Healthy Steps wrist band.

What started as a simple healthy lifestyle program has now evolved into a family and community event. With the help of the Dutchess County Rail Trail, Fishkill Plains now holds an annual walking event for the entire Fishkill Plains community. This year hundreds showed up in support of both Healthy Steps and Fishkill Plains Elementary School to walk two miles together in solidarity. "We here at Fishkill Plains hope to hold more events like this in the future."

Vassar Road ES Native American Songs and Dance

"DID YOU EVER FIGHT A COWBOY?"

2nd grader, Vassar Rd ES

The 2nd Grade at Vassar Road ES participated in a Native American Algonquian music program this fall. David Beck conducted the two day event teaching each class about the New York State area Algonquian group tribes. He comments, "The idea is to give the students an experience in traditional Native American music and dance in a fun context they can comprehend."

While highlighting cultural belief differences of the past, Mr. Beck also included fun facts about the present day lifestyle of local Native American tribes or bands and the use of music and dance in the culture today making note of Native American rock, rap and hip-hop artists. He feels bringing this people group



out of a solely historical context into the modern day closes common separation gaps with such an historical group.

On the first day each class is taught a unique song, story or dance and a song common to all the classes. Mr. Beck has learned many of the traditions, traditional songs and customs by simply being around those who still live the American Indian culture.

Among the instruments he brought to share with the children were handmade drums and rattles that were given to him. He mentioned to the students, "Today, we want new items as gifts but among many indigenous folks it is common to give things they've had for a long time. It is a lot more meaningful to give something that's important to you to someone else." He said this while demonstrating a turtle rattle gift from a friend who had it for a long time; "This one was better than getting a new one."

The children also discovered that if they wanted to know what happened in the tribe's past, they would have to ask the oldest person in the tribe and once they were told that story, they would become responsible for it, to pass it on when they were asked.



Passing around instruments, they were encouraged to really appreciate the hand-made items especially if part of an animal was used because of not just all of the hard work that goes into it, but also valuing the life of the animal given to make it with.

The second day is a great assembly where all come together and share what they've learned; teaching it



to the other classes. This is a wonderful day of creating a community atmosphere and reinforcing what they've learned with the experience. When asked about dressing up for the event Mr. Beck responded, "We don't do the clothing because that is actually a really touchy subject. It can be seen as mocking if it's not done perfectly. The inaccuracies can be very insulting, so I've always left that part out, and I don't see it as necessary." At the very end they sing the song that all of the classes learned finishing the assembly with lots of classic 'who-who's' for the girls and 'hu-chaas' for the boys!

10th Annual "Taste of Ketcham"

This year was the 10th annual Taste-of-Ketcham. It is an event held to raise funds and awareness for Ketcham HS's Interact Club's international project. Interact Club is an affiliate of the Wappingers Falls Rotary Club, a chapter of Rotary International. Each year Interact Club participates in an international project as a requirement for recognition from Rotary. This year's funds will be donated to Polio Plus, a Rotary International charity.

A Taste-of-Ketcham was started ten years ago by Patricia Glancey, a Living Environment and AP Biology teacher. It seemed to her at the time that everywhere she went there was a "Taste of..." something. She comments, "I thought it would be a good way to highlight the diversity of both the school and the community. A Taste-of-Ketcham is an awesome event for me as the advisor. I get to work with all types of students with various skill sets and abilities and it is fun to watch the new chairperson each year put their unique spin on the event."



This year's President, Emma Pilon, organized the event. She demonstrated true leadership in every sense! She did much hard work herself and delegated work to members as well so that everyone could take part in some aspect of

the event, according to their ability and interest level. Mrs. Glancey remarked, "She was amazing! She was a leader who really appreciated the work everyone put into the event and made everyone feel needed. This year we had more member involvement in the planning process than ever before!"

Various committees worked hard to pull this event together. The Decorations Committee had to decide on the theme, color scheme, decorations for the cafeteria and favors. This year it was the Roaring 20's. The Publicity Committee made posters and flyers to hang around the school and other schools in the district and the Food Committee made phone calls asking for donations and dropped off request letters to local businesses and restaurants for raffles.

The food was picked up from the restaurants by National Honor Society members. The food was served by National Honor Society, Business National Honor Society, and Interact members and the soda and desserts were donated by National Honor Society members. The Interact club had access to the Cafeteria for the event due to the much appreciated help of Helga, a Cafeteria worker.



For entertainment there was face painting, henna tattoos, and international crafts! There were readings from RCK's own Odyssey literary magazine students, instrumental selections performed by students, a dance performance and a presentation by the foreign exchange



students currently attending the school. They also had a Rotarian give a speech about Polio Plus, families of former students returning

to the event, and alumni coming to help out.

Mrs. Glancey recalls how she loves to see all the enthusiasm of the students working together during the planning process, participating in the event, and talking about it afterwards considering how to change it for the next year. She notices how the students get excited as freshmen and continue helping with the event for four years. "We often get new Interact members as a result of this event. The students are involved in all aspects of this event!"



Since the fight to end polio began, 20 million volunteers have immunized 2.5 billion children against polio. In spite of the inclement weather, they still had a nice turnout raising **\$700.00 for the Polio Plus Rotary International Charity.**

Around The Schools: Getting to Know You

John Jay HS Students Accepted into Garrison Artist Mentor Program

The Garrison Art Center Mentor Program is an independent study in the arts. Annually since 1988, it has been “a means to encourage and guide high school students in the production and presentation of a unique project through collaboration between students and the professional artist community.”

The Art Center invites students from Putnam, Westchester, Orange, Rockland and Dutchess Counties. The program is conducted for nine-weeks during the winter/spring semesters of the school year and is available to a limited number of students. This year’s program begins in January and ends in late March.

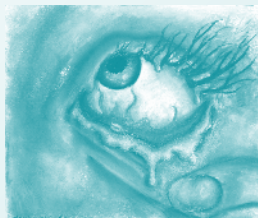
Students are teamed with a professional artist/mentor in a directly related specific field of study which include the visual, performing, and literary or applied and design arts. The students must be prepared to handle more responsibility and complete an independent study project. The mentors volunteer their time and share their talents on a one-on-one basis to guide students in the development of their project idea for exhibition.

In the past John Jay HS has had an Advertising & Design student make a window display, and a Ceramics student make a tea set complete with tea bowls. This year congratulations are due to: Annona Giam, Lauren Levrini, Lindsey Siller, Jason Dinelli, and Vincent Esposito for being accepted into the Artist Mentor Program.

Lauren Levrini: Senior Lauren Levrini met with mentor Lisa Steffens twice a week at the Garrison Art Center. Her pieces are centered on different points of view of the story *Little Red Riding Hood*. Lauren comments on how Ms. Steffens has helped her with setting up the measurements and placement of the human and wolf faces. She has also learned with which colors enhance the subjects and make the piece ‘come together’. Lauren comments, “Although I

never quite got it the first time, she was very patient and helped me pull through. She is so fun to work with and it is never a dull meeting.” Lauren feels it has been an honor to work with Ms. Steffens and that she was very fortunate to have had the experience.

Annona Giam: Annona Giam decided to work with chalk pastel to create images of eyes. She feels they are surrealistic in that they show a person’s perceptions and feelings; having observed and studied eyes through countless pictures, both her own and others. Annona’s mentor, Maria Pia, has taught her to study the form and structure of an entire face and body as well and has challenged her to draw more from life.



Lindsey Siller: Lindsey Siller is an AP Studio Art student. Her mentor is Coulter Young, who is an art teacher in Garrison. When they met they discussed different techniques of creating portraits. Since then he has taught her how to build value into the faces by using the background of the canvas in addition to using different marks and lines. She is working on three pieces for the mentor program. These pieces are also closely related to Lindsey’s AP concentration which she will be submitting at the end of her senior year.



Jason Dinelli: He is a photography student who after meeting with his assigned mentor decided to work on a project using low lighting situations. He has explored all sorts of different



landscapes in Dutchess County over the past two months, seeing what he could get out of late night and early morning exposures. His mentor also taught him how to use the software program Light Room, to edit his work.

Vincent Esposito: Vincent Esposito has taken art through all four years of high school and has become quite the skilled art student. He is excited to be one of twenty students chosen for the mentoring program. After meeting his



mentor Lavinia Wiggins, he knew this would be a fun and memorable experience. His task throughout the year has been to create a 12 piece concentration in order to further develop his skills. Being selected to participate in the mentoring program is a perfect way for him to continue to produce strong work.

Also of note, there will be a gallery opening at the end of the nine week program. For many of the students in the Mentor Program, this open event not only exhibits their work but encourages them in their future endeavors. In the past they have had representatives from SUNY New Paltz, School of visual Arts, Pratt Institute and several local professional artists in attendance.

Around The Schools: Getting to Know You

Civility Counts is a club of middle-school level students interacting with distinction. The club began as an initiative in the heart and mind of CJ Pansa, now an 8th grader at Wappingers JHS during the latter part of last year. One day CJ Pansa was watching the movie “Chronicles of a Fat Boy” with his family at a school movie-night and the next day found him talking with the principal and assistant principal about it.

CJ told them, “I saw this movie, and it affected me. I’ve been thinking about having an anti-bullying group to help make sure it doesn’t happen here.” He conveyed how he realized he was a daily bystander and his core motive for the club was seeing bullying in action and now doing something about it. He named the club based on the definition of civil: ‘Of or relating to citizens and their interrelations with one another’. CJ explained, “The name is “Civility Counts” because, even though a main focus is anti-bullying, it’s not the only area we want to impact. To me it means respect and responsibility rolled into one word”



The club meets on a regular basis doing a variety of heartfelt projects such as collecting non-perishables for the Project H.O.P.E Food Drive and collecting old towels and blankets, food and toys for the local animal shelter.

They’ve gone out on in-district field trips, attending Roy C Ketcham’s B-U and Delete Bullying Club.

Similarly, they have participated with Meyers Corners ES, assisting with their Halloween function, speak-

ing to inspire the Character Counts group there.

The club has quite a few ideas they’re just waiting to put into action. One “on-the-burner” idea they’ve seen before and would like to do is to have a mural painted and covered with paper bricks in the cafeteria. Each time someone sits next to a new student to

Principal Thompson notes, “He (CJ) initially appears very shy, but when he speaks, he speaks from conviction.” With the support of his family, he continues to present his ideas about how to promote well-being among fellow students. The group started out as a club and became an advisory this year; Ellen Mead is the chairperson and their logo is a pair of helping hands. Creating a highly visible statement to declare “Civility Counts”, the club members took a pledge and signed it with their name and handprint on the wall in one of the school hallways. Also during the last school-year they established a bully box. Housed by a real ‘old-school’ phone booth, it is for submitting reports or anonymous tips about any bullying incident; complementing the link available on the WJHS website.



be friendly and help them acclimate, a brick is taken down from the wall to eventually reveal the hidden scene and its message. They also spoke about addressing the impact of the media and even parental awareness.



Some members have suffered being bullied themselves. Others have observed and stepped in. Each of the cabinet members is thinking of their siblings coming into the school after them and what they want to leave behind for them.

They total about sixty members in the group inspiring other students to become active even sparking off a chapter of S.A.D.D. (Students Against Destructive Decisions) in the school, which is also hosting approximately 60 students as well. The groups are all student based separate entities with their own allegiance per se, but they do work together.

The great thing about these clubs is the sort of meshing and overlapping of student efforts, leadership and activism that

continues on through high school shaping a way of life for themselves and inspiring those around them.

Around The Schools: Getting to Know You

Sheafe Rd ES and the Two by Two ZOO

The Two by Two Zoo was established in 1993 by the Iannucci Family; Peter, Heather, Jessica and Casey. They do not consider themselves a typical petting zoo, but rather “an educational traveling zoo with a message”! Most of their animal ambassadors were adopted and placed with them voluntarily. They provide the animals with spacious enclosures, nutritional zoological diets, scheduled veterinary care and daily enrichment/ socialization activities.

Two years ago the school leadership team at Sheafe Road ES had a year-long project that culminated in a math and science safari. One of the teachers that lives in Millbrook happens to be friends with the zoo owner. She suggested having the Two by Two Zoo bring a sampling of their diverse and exotic collection of animals from all over the world to complete the safari. They conducted an



assembly for the younger students in the morning and an afternoon assembly for the older students; and then again that evening for the parents.

During the assemblies they took time to entertain and educate the students about endangered species, the destruction of their habitats and the remedial conservation efforts being made. The students were thrilled when they brought out a tortoise and wallaroo for petting. Respect for the animals and why some animals do not make good pets was also discussed. Principal Daley commented, “For the “safari” we had math and science games set up along with a kind of petting-zoo. They returned this year bringing with them a Wallaroo, which is a cross between a kangaroo and a wallaby. They brought an American alligator, a ring-tailed lemur whose name is Oreo, a blue and gold Macaw parrot and a tortoise as well. It was great!”



Holiday Shopping* at Fishkill ES



For many children at Fishkill ES, this may be the first time they experience the thrill of picking out their own gifts for family and friends. The holiday shopping is a great success with the students. Having these “shops” at the school, parents can feel comfortable that their children are shopping in a safe place. They are not hampered by crowds or expensive items and there is something for everyone on a student’s list including pets. With the help of volunteer parents and teachers, the students can learn the value of money and how to spend it wisely. This activity truly “wraps up” to be a fun way to teach kids how to budget and to be thoughtful of others.

Red Light School Bus Program

The Village of Wappingers Police Dept is teaming up with Wappingers Central School District to help ensure the safety of children being transported to and from school each day.



Officer Michael DeFrance of the Village of Wappingers Police Dept. works as a part of the Community Affairs Division being assigned many various local community events. Last summer he came across a program called the Red Light School Bus Program. After further research, Officer DeFrance discovered endorsements and recommendations from other police departments that had implemented the program.

Over the summer he presented the program to Wappingers Central School District and gained Board approval. Kim Catalano, Transportation Supervisor at WCSD commented, "I have spoken to Susan Penney about the new initiative being spearheaded at the local level by a Wappingers Falls Police Officer, The Red Light School Bus Program. The WCSD Transportation Department would like to participate locally, as we already are involved with the State program."

Surprisingly after six months of targeted on-site traffic enforcement the frequency has not significantly decreased. On an average Monday and Tuesday, without discretion or warning, ten to twelve tickets, have been given to drivers overtaking a school bus while loading/offloading children; mandating appearance in

the Village Court. To supplement onsite traffic enforcement is the local implementation of the Red Light School Bus Program.

The Red Light School Bus Program is similar to the state program. For the State program, Districts are asked to report when a car passes the red lights of a school bus. The report should include the license plate number, color, make and model of the vehicle as well as time of incident and location.

When reported, the dispatcher takes down the information and completes a form provided to by the Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) in Albany, NY. The DMV then sends a letter to the registrant of the vehicle stating that the vehicle passed a school bus while the red lights were flashing and what the violations and fines are etc. The Wappingers Falls Police Department would like to implement this program on a "village" scale and WCSD is happy to be involved.

The WCSD bus drivers send a weekly incident report creating statistics identifying problem areas. If a license plate number is also obtained, a letter is sent to the registrant warning them their vehicle was observed overtaking a school bus demonstrating clemency to create awareness and allowing for the case where a student may be driving their parent's vehicle. If the same vehicle is observed a second time, the vehicle is then issued a traffic ticket; the owner of the vehicle was made aware and is now responsible.

Within the Village limits, Officer DeFrance observed between eight and ten

cars passing the school buses picking up children during the morning routes around 6:30am and the afternoon times around 3:00pm when dropping them off. Officer DeFrance noted that generally these occurrences happen in the same areas; Route 9 being a major problem.

The people driving on Route 9 in Dutchess County must be aware that there are school bus routes in both northern and southern directions, and they endanger the lives of children by not following state and local traffic laws concerning school bus stop arm regulations.

**Traffic on
Both Sides of
the Median
on Route 9
Must STOP
Regardless
which side of
the Median
the Bus is
on.**

Kim Catalano remarked, "We will work cooperatively in developing this program locally, as we do have previous experience at the State level. Any attempt to make motorists more aware of school age students and their safety is a goal of the WCSD and the Transportation Department"

Students' lives are endangered every time a driver ignores the stop signals of a school bus. Let's keep them safe.

When Red Lights flash - Do Not Pass