

Clinton Courier

A Publication of the Clinton Parent Teacher Association
Issue 7, March 2010

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Spring is finally upon us. What seemed like the longest winter in history is almost a memory. As we “spring ahead” we are mindful of the fact that we are preparing our students to “spring ahead” as well. The March Progress Reports will be sent home shortly. We use these along with other data, to determine the progress our students have made thus far and what areas we may need to support them in to ensure a smooth transition for next year.

Spring is also a wonderful time to get out and share the beauty and wonder of the world with your child. Encouraging students to notice things and use their imaginations, and providing them with opportunities for multisensory, hands-on experiences help stimulate creative investigations for self-learning. This enhances memory, increases their knowledge, and makes learning meaningful. When you finish exploring and investigating, there is always a great book waiting to be read to them.

There are hundreds of wonderful books and many stories to be told on the lives and achievements of the women we celebrate during Women’s History Month. Sharing your own stories or those of members of your families is a great way for your children to connect the importance of the women in your lives and what they have achieved.

This month wouldn’t be complete without the many stories, fiction or not, that seem to be prevalent around the celebration of St. Patrick. From limericks to proverbs, to song, there are always a few words of wisdom to share during this festive time:

*...Bricks and mortar make a house,
but the laughter of children makes a home...*

*...Five frogs are sitting on a log. Four decide to jump
off. How many are left? Answer: five.
Why? Because there’s a difference
Between deciding and doing!*

Slainte,

Patty

MARCH-AT-A-GLANCE

1-31 ST	WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH
10 TH	PTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, 7:15 PM
13 TH	TRICKY TRAY/SILENT & LIVE AUCTION, 6 PM
17 TH	HAPPY ST. PATRICK’S DAY!
19 TH	IT’S WHAT’S HAPPENING, 7 PM
20 TH	IT’S WHAT’S HAPPENING, 11 AM & 3 PM
25 TH	AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT BEGINS
<u>COMING IN APRIL</u>	
1-30 TH	FAMILY HERITAGE MONTH
2 ND	SCHOOL CLOSED, GOOD FRIDAY
5-8 TH	SCHOOL CLOSED, SPRING RECESS
14 TH	PTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, 7:15 PM
16 TH	SCHOOL PRIDE DAY
22 ND	INTERNATIONAL DINNER, 6:15 PM



HAPPY ST. PATRICK’S DAY!

Don’t forget to dress your kids in green on March 17th! And be sure to come to school a little early in order to catch bagpiper Lou Johnson piping the kids into the building. Stick around—you may even catch Principal O’Neill doing some Irish step dancing!

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FROM THE PTA PRESIDENT

Hello Clinton Families,

Get Ready, Get Set, Go! With the snow hopefully behind us, we're gearing up for a month filled with lots of events and activities at Clinton School.

We began the month with both "Crazy Hat Day" and an amazing author visit by **Suzy Kline**, the popular children's author of the *Horrible Harry* series. Many thanks to **Alanna Kaplan Muñoz**, **Amy Janay**, and **Liz Salituri** who helped make the day possible.

Our children felt a great sense of school spirit and pride during **Dr. Seuss Week** as they all wore crazy hats, socks and many more outfits to school. Our 2nd annual **Read-a-thon** comes to an end. Thank you to all who participated in the effort to raise money for our school library.

Our 7th annual **Tricky Tray** night is being held **Saturday March 13th** at the Woman's Club in Maplewood. This has been a great community night as parents come together to celebrate and raise money for Clinton School programs and our children.

St. Patrick's Day is coming! Arrive early as Principal O'Neill and the bagpiper will greet us and march around the school—all before the first bell rings!

With almost 200 students and over 65 parents working together, our 2nd annual Musical Revue will be a spectacular show. Please mark the calendar for **March 19th and 20th**, as you won't want to miss *The 60s: It's What's Happening*.

This extraordinary list of events, programs, and activities is the result of our amazing and awe-inspiring Clinton community, a community consisting of talented and dedicated teachers, administrators, staff, parents, and the reason we do it all, our **students**. Our students' lives are enriched each day and on behalf of them I thank you for all you do for our children.

Spring is just around the corner!

Karen Bethel

ALL THAT JAZZ

Thanks to a generous grant from the Artists-in-Education Consortium, which includes the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Arts Horizons, and Young Audiences New Jersey, 4th graders at Clinton School will have a wonderful opportunity to learn about jazz composition this spring by working with professional jazz drummer Vince Ector.

A native of Philadelphia, Mr. Ector has put out two CDs and is featured on over 40 international recordings. He performs regularly at jazz festivals around the world and has worked with many jazz luminaries including Freddie Hubbard, Randy Weston, James Moody, Slide Hampton, and Jimmy Heath. He recently received wonderful reviews when he performed with the Dizzie Gillespie All Stars in London. Ector is also the president and executive director of Arts for Kids Inc., a non-profit arts-in-education company that he founded with his wife in 2000.

Mr. Ector will introduce the 4th graders to jazz and will work with them to create original compositions. The work that they create will most likely be featured in a culminating performance, though no date has been set yet

CLASSROOM NEWS

Classroom News provides a wonderful opportunity for everyone in the Clinton community to learn about all the different activities that engage students during the school day. Please send information about classroom activities to bobhugel@gmail.com.—*Bob Hugel*

First Grade Mrs. Cutrufello's class enjoyed a month full of celebratory activities in February. The class hosted a Valentine's Day celebration that featured everything red. The students wore red clothes that day and the refreshments consisted of red fruit, red jello, and red juice. The class also planned activities for the 100th day of school celebration. On February 16, the children celebrated the Chinese New Year. They learned about a traditional Chinese holiday and created colorful masks. The children also learned about U.S. Presidents for President's Day, and the significant contributions of African Americans to the nation and world for Black History Month.

Second Grade Second graders are excited and proud to be finishing their "All About" and "How To" books this month. Parents look forward to them coming home in early April. The Black History Month Projects were a great success. Please stop by to view some of the interesting facts that the students have learned and recorded in their projects. During the month of March the class will devote time to women's studies, poetry, and realistic fiction. Be on the look-out for our Women's History Month Projects.

The following students had lunch with our visiting author Suzy Kline: Taniyah J. from Ms. Hall and Mrs. Ortiz's class, Julia C. from Mrs. Poutre and Mrs. Gordon's class, Michele G. from Mrs. Frascella's class, and Max S. from Miss Froelich's class.

The second graders have a field trip planned for the month of March. They will be going to the Paper Mill Playhouse to see *A Year with Frog and Toad* on March 19th. Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Seltzer, *The Seeing Eye* will be visiting the second grade at Clinton School on March 27th.

Third Grade Students in Ms. Kent and Mr. Ferriero's class celebrated Valentine's Day with a party filled with lots of treats. They each made a special valentine card with materials supplied by Susan Dillon. The kids in the class were especially delighted at the end of the day when Ms. O'Neill announced the winner of the Student Government's How Many Kisses contest and it was Manny D!

All third graders turned in a project at the end of the month in which they researched a famous person from history and created a campaign poster promoting that person for president.

Fifth Grade Fifth graders took a field trip to the Liberty Science Center on February 19th. The visit culminated with a viewing of the Imax 3D film *Planet You*, an exploration of the human body from the inside!

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

In February we celebrated civil rights figure Laura B. McCray, as well as leading scientists and inventors of African American heritage. Big thanks to Laura Gyan and family for contributing. Stay tuned in March for an all new display highlighting the achievements of outstanding women as part of Women's History month.—*Tricia Bloom*

CANDYGRAMS A HUGE SUCCESS!

The student government raised **\$1300** from its Valentine's Day Candygram fundraiser! The money will be donated to **Doctors Without Borders** to be used to aid in Haitian relief efforts. The members of the student government and Lindy Rollo had to work extra hard to get all the Candygrams delivered on time due to the two snow days that came before Valentine's Day. Their efforts are greatly appreciated. Also, congratulations to Manny D. for winning the chocolate Kiss contest.

The student government also collected **over \$500** for **UNICEF**.

IT'S WHAT'S HAPPENING

We're counting down the days until the opening of the Clinton School Theatre's groovy all-school musical review **The 60's: It's What's Happening**. Showtimes are **Friday, March 19th at 7 pm** and **Saturday, March 20th at 11 am and 3 pm**. The cast party will follow the last performance. Reservation forms are due on March 12th. Tickets are free, but in order to accommodate as many people as possible, each individual can only attend one performance.

Here are some important dates to remember: There will be a run-through after school on **Wednesday, March 10th**, a tech rehearsal on **Tuesday, March 16th**, and a dress rehearsal on **Thursday, March 18th**.

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

Starting this month the Clinton School Food Pantry will be collecting fresh produce on Wednesdays. Fresh foods including vegetables, bread, fruits, meat, poultry, eggs, milk, cheese, etc. can be dropped off at Ms. Bodner's office. Of course canned and boxed foods can be dropped off any time during the week. Your anticipated participation is greatly appreciated.

INTERNATIONAL DINNER

Get ready for the **Eighth Annual International Dinner, "A Taste of Clinton,"** to be held on **Thursday, April 22nd from 6:15 to 7:45 pm**. This wonderful event brings together the culturally and ethnically diverse families that make Clinton School so very special. Share in the delicious array of international dishes prepared by our own Clinton families. So come and socialize with other Clinton families over a fabulous meal.

In order to make this event a success we need your help. Flyers will be going out later this month. Please let us know if you are willing to prepare a dish for the dinner or volunteer a bit of your time by aiding with set-up, clean-up, or other miscellaneous tasks. For more information, please contact Robin Davenport at 973-763-9165 or rdavenport@caldwell.edu.

TRICKY TRAY PREVIEW

The Clinton PTA Seventh Annual Tricky Tray/Auction is completely sold out! If you do not have an advance reservation, unfortunately we cannot accommodate you. The evening begins at **6pm on Saturday, March 13th**, at the **Maplewood Woman's Club**. Your name will be listed on a reservation list at the door. When you check in you will receive a program which also serves as a bidding paddle. If you made reservations for a table of 10 or more, your name will be on one of the reserved tables. If you are not part of a group of ten or more, feel free to sit at any one of the unreserved tables, which will also be marked. Every seat in the house will be accounted for.

For a sneak preview, check out the program online:

<http://www.clintonelementary.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/TRICKY-TRAY-PROGRAM.pdf>

Pay special attention to the Live Auction prizes. The new Live Auction Dinners we have for the first time this year already have dates assigned to them, so check your calendar to see which ones you'd like to bid for. They all promise to be delicious and fun.

BASKET RAFFLES: When you enter you will be given 20 tickets for yellow baskets (as part of your entrance fee). You can then purchase more yellow tickets or red tickets (for red baskets) at the ticket tables at the front and back of the room.

DOOR PRIZES: You will also be given a door prize ticket. Complete half of it and put it in the door prize jar at the front ticket table. Door prizes will be given out throughout the evening.

50/50: You can also purchase 50/50 tickets from volunteers walking around the room. This is a cash prize that will be announced toward the end of the evening.

SILENT AUCTION: Silent Auction prizes will be set up on tables around the perimeter of the room. To bid on those, use your paddle number (back of program) and your initials. Check back frequently to be sure you have not been outbid and be mindful of the minimum bid increases for each prize. Silent Auction categories will be closed throughout the evening.

LIVE AUCTION: Our Live Auction prizes will be auctioned off toward the end of the evening. There will be a table where the prizes or descriptions of them will be displayed for you to see.

CLAIMING PRIZES: Basket prizes will be handed to winners as they are announced. Silent Auction and Live Auction winners will be announced by our emcee by paddle number. If you are a winner in one of these categories, you will visit the check-out tables at the end of the evening to make payment and claim prizes.

PAYMENT METHODS: We accept cash and checks as payment. Also, please be patient with us at the end of the evening. Our volunteers will tally and distribute prizes as quickly as possible.

We are looking forward to a fun and successful evening, and as always, thank you for your support. Once again we are asking attendees to bring canned and dried goods to donate to the Clinton Food Pantry.—*The Clinton PTA Tricky Tray Committee*

THE CLINTON GREEN

Not to sound ominous, but water is going to be *the* issue of the 21st century: fresh water, clean water. The problem here in the East isn't just conservation, though that is an important practice you can do every single day (use *less!*). The problem is toxicity, and possible death. It's not certain, and it's not impending—yet.

If you think all this is happening far away, think again. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has just designated the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn as a Superfund site. A Superfund site is the pits, literally. It's a governmental takeover of a toxic, hazardous wasteland. Remember Love Canal? The Gowanus, built in the 1860s, is a mere 1.8 miles long, but its dumped toxins have been seeping into the New York Harbor for over one hundred years, the waters of which swirl around the tip of New Jersey and down the shore, where you and your family swim in the summer (or maybe you visit the Hamptons, where the other currents flow out to Newfoundland).

The EPA is expected to create a plan by 2014, with the work lasting five years. No rush, right? Yet, in 2007, like a canary in a coal mine, a seemingly healthy minke whale swam right up to the mouth of the Gowanus Canal and promptly died, probably from eating krill from the canal. This is just one animal that we could see clearly.

The clincher is that the EPA with its Clean Water Act of 1972 has been losing ground since two Supreme Court decisions in 2002 and 2006 call into question the power of their jurisdiction over "navigable waters." Since then, a growing number of businesses circumvent the Act purposely and knowingly by dumping their manufacturing wastes into other local waters, such as streams and ponds. Wastes include oil spills, lead, arsenic, zinc, bacteria, hormones, and man-made chemical compounds that are registered on the EPA's Hazardous Waste list.

It is estimated that around 117 million Americans ingest drinking water that is sourced from waters that could be left vulnerable by the Supreme Court's decisions. Do you know if you are part of the statistic? Maplewood and South Orange residents: the answer is "yes." (Not that bottled water is faring any better.)

Don't wait for the government to act on something all of us already know deep in our own hearts. Don't use toxic chemicals. Don't support companies that use toxic chemicals. And, don't be quiet in your opposition to those companies and those chemicals. Believe in your ability to be heard and to make a difference.

Remember Erin Brockovich? Go ahead, get a movie made in your honor! —*Clare Payton*

CINDERELLA STORY

On the weekend following Clinton School's wonderful All School Revue South Orange Middle School will present its production of *Cinderella*. This promises to be a great show featuring some Clinton School Alumni and it's a great opportunity to get your kids excited about the theater opportunities that await them in middle school. Show times are Friday and Saturday, March 26 & 27 at 7 pm and Sunday, March 28 at 2 pm. Reserved seating is \$15 (rows 1-10), general admission is \$10 for adults and \$7 for students/seniors. For more information and tickets call Sara Griffiths or Kathy Hester at 973-378-2772.

SUZY KLINE WOWS STUDENTS

Third grader Ceci M. talks about the recent visit from Horrible Harry author Suzy Kline:

Some lucky students had lunch with Suzy Kline on March 1, 2010. Suzy talked about the notebook that she kept in her pocket and encouraged all of us to do the same to keep "story seeds" from our everyday life. She said that she has about 200 notebooks filled and she only has about one page in her 201st notebook. I enjoyed the visit most because I learned so much about Suzy, and I also got advice on how to be a writer. It was really nice of Suzy to come. Two first graders showed Suzy some of their work, and, wow, was Suzy impressed!

There were a lot of questions Suzy had to answer. Here are some examples: how many notebooks she had (201), when she started writing (as a girl), how many books she has written (over 45), and about her family (2 daughters and 6 grandchildren). The people in Suzy's books are based on people in real life—students she has had or friends (but they don't know it!). She told students that every year (when she was a teacher) she had a "Horrible Harry" in her class, but their name was not Harry. Her husband wrote a book or two, one about weirdos and another book illustrated by Suzy!

Suzy was a teacher for more than 25 years. She taught sixth grade in California and second and third grade at Southwest School in Connecticut. She did not get her first book published until she was about 40 years old, and she received over 127 rejections! I think Suzy was a great author and it is great to have her visit our school. I hope all the students enjoyed the great presentation!

FUNDRAISING NEWS

The David's Cookies/Aunt Anne Pretzel orders will be delivered on **Friday, March 26th**. Reminders will be sent home the beginning of the same week. Thanks to all who participated. If you have any questions, please contact Rosanna McCrear at rosanna@mccrear.com.

Remember that Readathon pledges are due on **March 16th**. All participants will be entered into a raffle. Raffle winners will be announced on **March 22nd**.

A NIGHT ON THE TOWNS

On **May 23rd**, **The South Orange-Maplewood Education Foundation (SOMEF)** will celebrate its 20th anniversary with a multi-faceted event called "A Night on the Towns." The dazzling program, kicking off a long term initiative to raise significant funds for the restoration of the Columbia High School auditorium, features a star-studded musical review directed by local residents Bethany Pettigrew and Tricia Benn. The performance will be chock full of local celebrities as well as Columbia High School's own impressive talent from the past, present, and future! Admission will include a delicious post-show dessert reception, sponsored by the CHS Music Parents Association.

An extravagant pre-show cocktail party will be an additional option. Invitations will be mailed in late March and information about ticket choices and prices can be found at www.somef.org. Since its inception, SOMEF, soon to adopt a new name, The ACHIEVE Foundation, has raised more than one million dollars to support the South Orange Maplewood schools. "I can't think of a better way to celebrate our 20th anniversary than to showcase one of our district's most valued treasures—performing arts at Columbia High School. Our campaign gives everyone a chance to support this institution. In addition to ticket sales for the show and dessert reception and the pre-show cocktail party, opportunities will be available for donors to dedicate new auditorium seats with a permanent plaque honoring a student, teacher, or special occasion," says Deborah Prinz, the organization's director.

—Cecelia Cancellaro

FLOWER POWER

As spring planting season approaches, the Clinton PTA is delighted to bring back the **Spring Mother's Day Plant Sale**, a wonderful opportunity for you to buy flowers and plants for your garden while supporting Clinton School. The flowers and plants will make great gifts as well as great additions to your garden. Not only is this fundraiser ecologically friendly, it is also neighborhood friendly since it is being coordinated with a local Maplewood nursery. Materials and order forms will be sent home in backpacks this month and the flowers and plants will be ready for pick-up at Clinton School in early May. We're hoping to allocate three days for pick up and will need lots of help coordinating this effort. Please contact Elizabeth Deutsch at EDeutsch2001@verizon.net or Lizbeth Dornfeld at LDornfeld@verizon.net if you have questions or if you can volunteer to help. As with all of our efforts, this program will only succeed with your help, so please consider volunteering some of your time.

AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT

The PTA is busy planning our **spring After School Enrichment** program. The session will, once again, take place on Thursdays from 2:35-3:45 pm and the dates are: **March 25, April 1, 15, 22, 29, and May 6, 13, 20**. Look for registration materials in backpack and via email this month.

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