

Clinton Courier

A Publication of the Clinton Parent Teacher Association
Issue 8, April 2009

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

April is an important month in education. We strive to complete our work for this school year while planning to get our students ready for their state tests, and our next school year. As we begin our last few months, we need your help to assist your child with maintaining their academic focus and continuing to do their very best.

So, the 2009-2010 school budget passed with a lot of support from most of the members of the Board of School Estimate and the South Orange/Maplewood communities. Kudos go to our Board of Education, Superintendent Brian Osborne, and Business Administrator/Board Secretary Karla Milanette for trimming where they could without eliminating our instructional, related arts, and sports programs.

What does this mean for Clinton's 2009-2010 school year? For one thing it means that we will begin our school day earlier. It also means that our students will be in classes with manageable numbers of students. It means we will continue to have staff members who care deeply for your children, make sure they are fed, and can help them enjoy a leisurely lunch and recess.

It means our students will continue to show their creative sides as they sing, dance, play in the orchestra or band, and create imaginative works of art. It means they will read and enjoy great stories and learn how best to use our media center. It means they will be able to continue working to stay healthy and fit through healthy eating, health lessons, and challenging physical activities. It means they will be taken care of on a daily basis by support staff who make sure all their administrative needs are met. It means they will have the instructional materials and the teachers they need to enrich their lives and help them reach their full potential. It means we will not be burdened and stressed with wondering, like other districts, how we will maintain the programs our students deserve.

It means we can begin planning for an academically rigorous, physically challenging, and wonderfully creative year for our Clinton kids.

Happy Spring,

Patty

APRIL-AT-A-GLANCE

1-30 TH	FAMILY HERITAGE MONTH
8 TH	PLANT SALE ORDER DEADLINE READATHON PLEDGES DUE
10 TH	SCHOOL CLOSED, GOOD FRIDAY
13-16 TH	SCHOOL CLOSED, SPRING RECESS
22 ND	PTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, 7:15 PM
23 RD	GENERAL PTA MEETING, 7:15 PM

COMING IN MAY

1-31 ST	ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH
1 ST	SCHOOL PRIDE DAY
8 TH	PLANT SALE PICK-UP DAY



FAMILY HERITAGE MONTH

Thank you to Catherine Peyroux and Jennifer Latimer for working on the Women's History Month display in March. We hope everyone had a chance to see it—they did an impressive job! And congratulations to the students who participated in the March raffle.

In addition to celebrating Earth Day this month we thought April would also be a good month to debut Family Heritage Month, an opportunity to celebrate Clinton's families—the heart and soul of our diverse community. What makes your family unique? Watch the display case to get to know some of the families here at Clinton, and share some of your own family stories. For more information, contact Tricia Bloom at rubbybloom@earthlink.net.

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FROM THE PTA PRESIDENT

March was truly an incredible month at Clinton School and although I don't usually devote this space to wrap-ups, the events we experienced last month demand notice.

The *Clinton Kids Connection*, our first student newspaper, made its debut in March and our 4th grade students did an awesome job of planning, writing, editing, and illustrating its pages. Made possible by a grant from SOMEF (the South Orange Maplewood Education Foundation), the process was facilitated by Assistant to the Principal Ann Bodnar and parents who volunteered their time during many 4th grade lunch and recess periods. Thanks to Eli Connaughton, Liz Herring, and Bob Hugel, who worked with me to guide our savvy newspaper staff. Issue number two is scheduled for June and the 5th graders will be at the helm this time.

The 4th graders also wowed their classmates and families with the culminating performance of our NJ Council for the Arts Artist-in-Residence Grant. Called *Dance Around the World*, the show featured each of the classes performing Latin, Haitian, and Chinese dances, and it was absolutely amazing. Our three dancers-in-residence, Nancy Turano, I-Fang Huang, and Fabrice Lamego, provided our students with an incredible dance education experience, and several members of the school district administration, including Superintendent Brian Osborne, were on hand for the spectacular performance.

Speaking of performances, I'm not even sure how to pay tribute to our first all school musical revue, *Around the World in 80 Minutes!* Hundreds of children and parents worked months to put that very special weekend together, and I am quite sure that many audience members walked away astonished by the quality and energy of the show. I must thank, again, Suzanne Roghanchi and Jeremy Moss for coming up with the idea and for their persistence, diligence, and extremely hard work throughout the long process. Hundreds of students were involved in the show, both on stage and off, as were a small army of incredibly talented, creative, and tireless parents. I thank everyone involved for creating such a community-building event and for allowing our children to celebrate their individual and collective giftedness.

And lastly, thanks to Robin Davenport and all of her volunteers for yet another fabulous International Dinner. Clinton's cultural diversity was showcased on the food tables and in our cafeteria as the Clinton School community came together, once again, to (as Patty O'Neill's letterhead says) "celebrate our differences and share our similarities."

Happy Spring!
Cecelia

COME TO THE NEXT GENERAL PTA MEETING!

Please join us for a General PTA Meeting on **Thursday, April 23rd, at 7:15 pm**, in the Clinton School Cafeteria. Come find out all the latest news and hear from our guest speaker, Lindy Rollo, the Clinton School Social Worker. Ms. Rollo will discuss the social work program at Clinton as well as the student government and student mediation programs that she sponsors. Babysitting is provided for children age 4 and above

ORDER YOUR 2009 YEARBOOK

The 2009 Clinton School yearbook will be available through pre-order only. A flyer with an order form will be sent home soon. If you have candid photos from Clinton School events in any grade, please forward them to Maureen Davenport as JPEGs at maur760@hotmail.com. If you prefer to send copies, you can forward them to Maureen Davenport, c/o Emily in Mrs. Khan's class. For more information, contact Maureen at Maur760@hotmail.com.

CLASSROOM NEWS

Classroom News provides a wonderful opportunity for everyone in the Clinton community to learn about all the innovative and inspiring activities that engage students during the school day. Thank you to all those who've been sending in reports; they are very much appreciated. If you would like to have your child's classroom experiences included in next month's *Courier*, send an email to Bob Hugel at bhugel@scholastic.com.

Kindergarten Students in Mrs. Shelffo's class baked Irish soda bread to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. As the weather warms up, they are spending more time outdoors observing their special adopted tree and checking for signs of spring. Students also devoted much of March to learning about dinosaurs and they made a papier-mache volcano to gain an understanding of what life was like during prehistoric times.

In Mrs. Swan's class, Jordan L.'s mom and dad helped the kids balance an egg on the vernal equinox. All of the students got to try this balancing act.

Second Grade Students in Mrs. Frascella's class celebrated St. Patrick's Day by eating soda bread, hearing limericks, and making shamrock people. A highlight was listening to an Irish tale read using an authentic Irish brogue.

All students in the second grade made incredible wind socks to celebrate women's history month. Students also made wonderful Achievement Quilts in honor of Black History Month. The children did a terrific job with their research and presentation. The finished products are currently hanging in the hallways, so please come take a look.

Fifth Grade Mrs. Fleming's class had a wonderful St. Patrick's Day. Mrs. Peyroux, a parent, visited and taught students about the history of St. Patrick's Day, including how Americans came to celebrate the day and the differences between how the day is celebrated in the United States and Ireland. She also discussed medieval Irish manuscripts and maps. Students enjoyed coloring their own Irish knotworks, eating homemade soda bread (provided by Allie M.), yummy green cookies (provided by Dalila R.), and "lucky charms" (provided by Roodly O.). Students also drank flavored "shamrock" juice. The experience was rich with Irish culture, music, and all. The students would like to express their gratitude to the parents of everyone in the class for adding a special touch when visiting the classroom.

Fifth graders also enjoyed their field trip to the Liberty Science Center.

SPRING FAIR IS COMING!

The Clinton School Fair will take place on **Saturday, May 16th, 11 am-3 pm**, in the Clinton parking lot. This year it will have a fun new theme, which we'll tell you more about in the next few weeks. To make the School Fair the huge success it is every year, we need your help. All we ask is that you give one hour of your time. The rest of the day can be spent enjoying the fair's fun activities, which include games, rides, music, food, and prizes! To volunteer, please contact Deb Yohannan, Volunteer Coordinator at deb1105@verizon.net or 973-761-4055. Please provide a time slot during which you are available (set up, 11-12, 12-1, 1-2, 2-3, or break down). Your participation makes this event an awesome one every year. Please volunteer!

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Thanks for supporting the Cookie dough/Cheesecake fundraiser. We made a profit of **\$1314!** Make sure you get your orders in for our brand new Spring Plant Sale fundraiser. Order forms are due on **April 8th** and the plants will be available for pick up on **May 8th**.

OUR SAY!

As you know, many of you participated in our annual Valentine's Day fundraiser. We sold lollipop candygrams and made an \$807 profit. We voted about where to give our money and decided to send it to Heifer International. Heifer International provides families from around the world with animals to improve their lives by helping them earn money to support their children and also send their children to school. The following is how we distributed the money we raised:

- A Love Basket (heifer, goat, water buffalo)
- An Earth Basket (bees, trees)
- A Hope Basket (rabbits, chicks)
- A Promise Basket (geese, ducks, chicks)
- A Water Buffalo
- A Llama
- A Pig

Now many families will be helped by the generosity of Clinton School's families. Thank you!

—*Michael Hoey and the Student Government*

SUPPLY KITS FOR NEXT YEAR

It's hard to believe that it's time to think about school supplies for next year, but it is! The pre-packed school supply kits will be put together using specific school supply lists provided by Clinton teachers. The company we use—School Kidz USA—features quality products like Crayola, Prang, and Staples at competitive prices. There are many advantages to getting your back-to-school supplies this way including not having to spend time shopping and not having to pay taxes on the supplies. Order forms for each grade will be sent home in backpacks shortly. This will be your only chance to order the kits (deadline is **June 12th**), which will be available for pick up the day before the first day of school and the morning of the first day of school. If you have questions, please contact Leah Gomberg at 973-275-0927 or ldgomberg@verizon.net.

TEACHER LUNCHEON HELP

On **Tuesday, May 5th at 3 pm**, during Teacher Appreciation Week (May 4-8), the PTA will host our annual Teacher Appreciation Luncheon in the Clinton School Library. Please help by preparing a dish or donating money for supplies. If you can bring a dish, please contact Patty O'Connell at poconnell@e-p-s.com (973-378-8707) or Janet Trzaska at meyers1113@aol.com and let us know what you will be bringing. All kinds of dishes are welcome, from appetizers to desserts. When you reply, please be sure to give us your email address so we can contact you about delivery instructions for that day. Also, let us know if you are free to volunteer to help set up and clean up the lunch that day (from approximately 1:30 until 4:30 pm).

DISTRICT GOALS

Please join members of the Board of Education for a conversation about District goals on **Thursday, May 7th** and/or **Monday, May 11th, from 7:30 to 9:00 pm** at the Columbia High School Library. RSVP to Judy Levy at jlevy@somsd.k12.nj.us.

Spotlight on: Art Teacher Christine Tischio

When Irene Dunsavage, Clinton's longtime art teacher, retired in January, Christine Tischio took over. Starting a new job in the middle of the school year would be challenging for any teacher, but imagine what it must have been like for Ms. Tischio, who graduated from college just a month earlier! Fortunately, she'd been a student teacher at Clinton earlier in the term, so she and the students were old pals by the time she came on board full-time. She shows her true colors below:



I graduated magna cum laude from Montclair State University this past December with a B.A. in Art Education.

I completed my student teaching in the South Orange/Maplewood School District at both Clinton and Maplewood Middle School.

Besides teaching, I've worked as a summer camp counselor and as a customer service representative at Rag Shop and Michaels.

The mediums I like working in are drawing and sculpture. But since I've been focusing on creating exciting lesson plans for the students, I've put my personal work on hold.

I knew I could draw when I first drew Fred Flintstone in 3rd grade!

I became an art teacher because I love seeing that "aha!" look on the children's faces when they understand a new technique, and I think it's important to give students an opportunity to freely express themselves.

My favorite artist is Chuck Close because his story is truly inspiring. I am amazed with his determination to create art, despite his being severely paralyzed. Plus his work is awesome!

Art is an important creative outlet for children because there is no right or wrong answer. They are encouraged to interpret the lessons in their own unique way.

It's amazing that I teach every kindergartener to fifth grader, which means I see the entire school in one week!

In my downtime, I like to be outside as much as possible, going for walks in the park and on mini adventures in the woods. Nature is truly fascinating, and if you don't stop and look around, you could miss it!

If I were a color, it would be green. It has a very strong tie to nature, and I feel that I do, too. I fully support the "go green" movement and firmly believe that it really is easy being green.

If I could be reincarnated for a day as a famous artist, I'd choose Georgia O'Keeffe. What I love about her paintings is their simplicity. She was able to capture raw beauty from nature and translate it onto her canvases with ease. I also admire her because at that time, it was uncommon for women to be painting.

I try to make every student feel like he or she is Picasso by varying mediums for lessons, which gives each student an opportunity to shine in the way that best suits them. The trick to teaching younger students is being animated. You have to put on a show!

The way I keep older students interested is by letting them be a part of their lessons. They need to know their opinion and ideas are important to me.

The hardest part of my school day is leaving. There's always more work to be done.

—Nancy Mattia Henegan

TRICKY TRAY THANKS

Thank you to all the Clinton parents, teachers, and staff who donated prizes and cash to the Tricky Tray and Auction in March. The \$23,000 we raised would not have been possible without your generous contributions. Please patronize these local sponsors as a way of saying thank you; the list also includes sponsors affiliated with a Clinton parent (designated with an asterisk).

In Maplewood:

Acting With Emily
Alison Oxman Designs* (jewelry)
Anthony Garubo Salon & Day Spa
Bass Family Chiropractic
Bill & Harry Chinese Takeout
Blue Life Karate Centers
Deutsch & Deutsch Attorneys*
Express Yourself Studios
Freeman's Fish Market
Fringe Salon
Geraldyn's Art Studio
Greensender.com*
Hershey's Ice Cream
Jackie Lahey for Lia Sophia*
Jeremy Shires* (house portrait)
Kathleen Ames* (yoga)
Kathy Morrow Reilly* (Zrii)
Kim's Nail and Spa
Little One & Co.
Lorraine Labonne Storch for the Traveling Vineyard*
Maplewood Boot Camp
Maplewood Movie Theater
Maplewood Stationers
Marina Stern* (soaps)
MGM Properties* (electricians)
Mona Lisa Gallery & Framing
Music Together With Kelly Heinze
Park Wood Diner
Perch Home
Roman Gourmet Pizzeria
Round Table—Kids Enrichment Plus
Sharon Geraghty* (makeup artist)
South Mountain YMCA
St. James's Gate
Leah Gomberg for Sweet Life By Design*
Tenth Muse Gallery
3R Living
Village Belle
Village Trattoria
Woody's Pig Roasts*
Words Bookstore

In South Orange:

Ariyoshi Restaurant
Cafe Arugula
Carvel
Cougars Soccer Club and MSO Kickers
Defino's Tree Service and Landscape Company
Eden Gourmet Market
Finishing Touches Unlimited
Kitchen a la Mode
Mark Murphy Music
Reservoir Restaurant
Village Trattoria

Other:

Barnes & Noble*
Brides Magazine*
The Broadway productions of "Hair," "Wicked" and "The Little Mermaid"*
Doral Arrowwood Hotel
Tiffany & Co*
West Ridge Guest House*

INTERNATIONAL DINNER THANKS

I am grateful to all the families who participated in Clinton School's 8th Annual International Dinner, "A Taste of Clinton." There were many wonderful dishes from all over the world represented at this year's dinner, and I commend the Clinton chefs for their culinary talents. Special thanks go out to Susan King for her entertaining PowerPoint presentation and her helpful assistance in planning the event; Liz Salituri for organizing the popular hot dog stand; Jeremy Moss for lending us his artful decorations; Cecelia Cancellaro, Karen Bethel, Ann Bodnar, and Patty O'Neill for their general support of the event; Leah Gomberg, Liz Herring, Keli Anthony-Tianga, Clare Payton, April Parker, Peggy Tornquist, Camille Abernathy, Kathy Reilly, and Deidre McLaughlin for assisting with set-up and clean-up; and of course, the kind Clinton School custodians for providing such excellent assistance during the set-up and breakdown of the event. It was a fun evening, and I was reminded once again of why Clinton School's diverse students and families make it such a special place. —*Robin Davenport*

LIGHTS! CAMERAS! BOOK FAIR!

Coming to the Clinton cafeteria in May is the spring **Scholastic Book Fair**, an event not to be missed! The book fair kicks off at the Clinton Spring Fair on **Saturday, May 16th** and will continue to run through **May 22nd**. It's a great opportunity to stock up on some summer reading.

We're always looking for extras on the book fair set, extra help that is, whether it's setting up, decorating, supplying refreshments for the teachers' preview luncheon, working during the fair, or packing it up. So if you can spare a few hours to volunteer, please fill out the volunteer flyer, which will come out later this month. Any questions, please contact Liz Herring at 973-378-3099 or echerring@verizon.net.

CLINTON FLOATS TO THE TOP

Clinton is building a float for the Memorial Day Parade, and we need your help! Our float designers have created a fantastic "green" theme to spotlight our standing as an extremely earth-friendly school, and we'll be using recycled materials to construct our float. Please help us gather materials. There will be a drop-off box inside the school entrance. We are collecting: **used, clean aluminum foil; plastic shopping bags; newspaper bags—especially BLUE; newspapers; old homework papers; bottle tops (any kind); soda cans; clear plastic bottles; paper towel rolls.** We also need **wire mesh**, like chicken wire. If you have some taking up space in your garage, please bring it to 10 Beach Street.

Mark your calendars for our float-building days: **Saturday, May 9; Sunday, May 17; Saturday, May 23; Sunday, May 24.** We welcome participation of both children and adults. Be on the lookout for further announcements. Please plan to march in the parade, **Monday, May 25.** Every child is encouraged to march in costume, either as an item that Clinton recycles (ink cartridge, cell phone, juice pouch, etc.), or in a costume made of recycled materials. Prizes will be awarded for the most creative costumes!

More information will follow. If you have questions, please call Jackie Lahey at 973-313-9757 or email jaclahey@aol.com.

BOX TOPS CLIPPERS

We collected \$68 worth of Box Tops in March! Great job! Keep on clipping! **Please do not forget to write your child's name, grade, and teacher on the envelope or baggie so we can include them in the Courier.** Any questions, contact Stephanie Mose at stephdog45@yahoo.com.

Kindergarten: Cosmas- Sylvie S., Grace U., Garret D., Ryland W., Angelina D.

Shelffo- Ben B.
Swan- Jordan L.

1st Grade: Cutrufello- Jack G.
Johnson- Declan L.

Marr- Toby C.
Motz- Caroline L., Julia C.
2nd Grade: Hall- Mike D., Ceci M. Kijuaun T.

Poutre- Daniel O., Mateo F., Joshua R.
3rd Grade: Banks- Jayson B.
Izzolino- Nickolas M., Christian P.

Kent- Adam F.
Pomares- Jashon S., Daniel F.
4th Grade: Johnson- Aliyah S., Matthew H., Zamir K.

Power- Scott M.
5th Grade: Ceccaci- Grant K., Christian M.

Kirkland- Socrates M.

THE CLINTON GREEN

"Rub, rub, here, rub, rub, there, and a couple of tra-la-las, that's how we laugh the day away in the Merry Old Land of Oz." It's time to rub-a-dub-dub and spring clean the Oz way!

Are you filling up your dishwasher? Dishwashers use at least one-sixth of the water it takes to wash dishes by hand. Don't rinse your dishes beforehand (just scrape). Green it up even more by filling the rinsing aid container with white vinegar instead of a petroleum-based rinse aid like Jet-Dry. Or make your own dishwasher powder by adding 1 tablespoon of washing soda and 1 tablespoon of borax to the soap bin.

In the bathroom, pour straight white vinegar onto tub and tiles, and leave on for 30 minutes to cut the water deposit build-up. Then use baking soda and water as a paste (your new Soft Scrub) to whisk away the tub ring. And, please say "no" to that little blue Ty-D-Bol man in the boat, and clean your toilets with—you guessed it—baking soda and vinegar.

Repeat after me: "Draino is a no-brain-o." Most clogged drains can be undone simply by using a handful of baking soda followed by ½ cup vinegar and boiling water.

For your laundry, try Charlie's Soap powder—it's hypoallergenic, non-toxic, bio-degradable, and so cheap it's almost free (available online). Add white vinegar to the water softener container; this will release into the rinse cycle, killing germs naturally and deodorizing wonderfully.

Have you figured out yet that you can stop buying all those jumbo-sized cleaning products at Costco? You can just stay home with your vinegar and baking soda and watch bad TV, like those ShamWow commercials. I'm that guy's number #1 fan—I bought two packs!

For more information on green cleaning and living, see some of these popular websites: sustainlane.com; grist.org; care2.com; among many others. —*Clare Payton*



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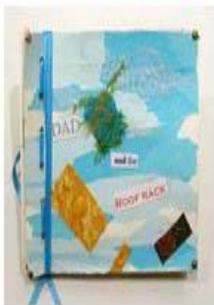
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- Includes a *Reading/Reception at the completion

Sessions scheduled for July and August 2009

For more information contact Janet Walentiny:

Phone: 973-275-0422
Email: walentinyj2@gmail.com

PAC NOTES

Concerns and questions brought to PAC in March covered a host of issues relating to learning and growing in the Clinton community.

On the playground: Students are very (very, very!) excited to be outside at recess now that the weather has warmed up. Please work with us to remind them that guidelines for play inside–taking turns, sharing, following the rules–are even *more* important in large groups outside. Mr. Lehman has reviewed the rules for four square and other games popular at recess.

Girls in the first grade all received invitations from school social worker Lindy Rollo to work on social issues, skills for developing friendship, and more.

At home: Please check your students' backpacks and folders everyday! Important information may be there–such as reminders about lunch account balances, field trip information, announcements, and programs at school.

Our students have read over 4,000 passages on Ticket To Read online. If you think your child is reading at a level that is too hard or too easy, please check with the teacher. Remember–sitting and reading with your child aloud is the best way to share your love and joy of it and to pass that on to them!

Help your child learn the four math operations and math facts so that we can all move ahead in this area. We are all reviewing how to add, subtract, multiply, and divide, focusing on a different number each week: the week of April 6 is for mastering the 4s, April 13 (school vacation week!) is for the 5s, April 20 for the 6s, and so on–all the way until the week of June 1, when we will all be working on the 12s. Even kindergarteners can be in on the math action with the smaller numbers.

In the district: The district hopes to include funding for another K-5 instructional supervisor for the upcoming school year. This will be helpful as we move toward more differentiated instruction at all grade levels, especially for students who are demonstrating mastery of content areas.

Looking ahead: March was a busy month. April will be a quieter month by design so that teachers and students have the chance to get ready for transitions to next year, work on areas of concern in class and in the after-school Excel program, participate in the Achieve tutoring program, and feel calm and prepared for the testing in May. If you have questions or concerns about what or how your child is doing in class, be sure to contact his or her teacher.

SEEKING LUNCH MONITORS

Do you like working with elementary aged children? Are you looking for something to do in the middle of the day? Lunch monitor positions become available from time to time, and we are looking for enthusiastic and energized applicants that are interested in working at the schools during the lunch periods. If you are interested in learning more about the position please call Mary at 973-762-5600, Ext. 1902.