
Setauket Signals

Volume 1



Winter 2010



News and Noteworthy Items at Setauket School



Kindergarten

◆ Kindergarten welcomed the winter with some “cool” events. One of the highlights this month was seeing “Frosty” at the Broadhollow Theatre in East Islip. The children had fun interacting with the characters throughout the show and helping to save Frosty from melting away!

First Grade

◆ Students in first grade celebrated a Thanksgiving Feast in the Setauket School cafeteria. Each class performed a poem or song to a room full of parents, grandparents, and special guests. The children wore Native American headbands and pilgrim hats, and shared a Native American blessing before enjoying their feast. As part of the feast, each student contributed a non-perishable food item to donate to the local soup kitchen.

◆ Our first graders will be celebrating diversity and how families are alike and different by creating a family museum in our classrooms. Parents will be invited to tour the museums in February with their children and will be entertained by performances of songs and poems about diversity, our world, and families.

Second Grade

◆ Second graders had a unique experience going to the Vanderbilt Museum on Wednesday, January 20th to see the Stars and Moon show at their planetarium. It was a fun experience with thunderstorms, rain, constellations, phases of the moon, millions of beautiful stars, and moon walks! The children also had a lot of fun playing an ABC game on the bus ride.

Third Grade

◆ In mid December the third grade teachers pulled out various packs of colored construction paper to create our annual toy soldiers in celebration of “The Nutcracker.” The original pattern was designed some 20 years ago by retiree Jackie Costello and has been lighting up our holiday halls ever since. Various mini lessons explained body proportions as well as how to accurately handle and measure using a ruler. The pattern requires following intricate directions and numerous opportunities for the students to practice measuring widths of full inches as well as 1/4, 1/2, and 3/4 inches. Completed soldiers dressed in blue jackets and snappy red pants protected the Best Buddy Boulevard hall for several weeks before taking their holiday leave.



Fourth Grade

◆ Each fourth grade class got a discovery tank which included a starfish, mussels, sponge, slipper snail, seaweed, scallop, shrimp, and hermit crabs. The students are responsible for maintaining the tank. They are very excited to watch the food chain in action.

Fifth Grade

◆ Fifth grade is the place to be! Students in some of the classes have been volunteering their time to work with the elderly population in nursing homes and adult day care centers. These kids put many smiles on the faces of these adults while they play games, share stories and bake treats. They enjoy it just as much as the adults they visit.

◆ Academically, fifth grade students have been strengthening their research skills for upcoming social studies projects. Students have also been using computer programs such as Microsoft Word, Publisher, and Excel to create their projects for the Civil War and Westward Expansion units.

◆ Many students have mentioned how the school days have been flying by lately. Our response... "*time flies when you're having fun.*"

Sixth Grade

◆ Mrs. Roberts and the sixth grade teachers showed the movie, "Darius Goes West," to the entire sixth grade. The movie is about a 16 year old boy with Duchennes Muscular Dystrophy, a disease which results in a short life expectancy. The documentary gives a look into Darius's life and a journey that he takes with his friends from Georgia to California in an RV, paid for by monies that came from fundraising efforts of Darius' friends. The movie touches on every emotion and opens the students' eyes to the ideas of living life to its fullest. The students will be doing some community service, DNA activities, and persuasive writing related to the movie.

◆ Mrs. Villari's sixth grade class will be painting "least Terns" (decoys) for Adam Gitten next week in Mrs. Caine's art class. Adam, a student at WMHS, is working on his Eagle Scout Project. He asked the art department for their help. Mrs. Caine and art teacher, Mike Sacco, from Gelinias, are working on 25 least terns each. Our students will paint them and give them back to Adam who will then clean up West Meadow Beach for the decoys to be placed. He will also be running mating calls 24/7 to attract the birds. The decoys come from a firm used by Cornell University. Adam is trying to get the least tern population back to West Meadow Beach. The decoys will be placed in early March.



SETAUKET SCHOOL ANSWERS THE CALL!



Our Setauket community has once again come to the forefront in helping people who need our aid. The library is sponsoring a Read-a-Thon to help the victims of the Haiti earthquake. Students and staff are pledging to read a certain number of books or read a certain number of hours and donate money to Doctors Without Borders who will tend to those Haitians in trouble. As you know, because Haiti is such a poor country, the few hospitals have been damaged. There are no ambulances to transport the wounded, and there is a shortage of medical supplies. As of this writing, we have already raised \$5,119.88! Because of the enormity of the problem and the need for speed, donations are being collected before the actual reading. There is an old American proverb that says, "He Who Gives Quickly, Gives Twice." Completed pledges will be posted on our Wall of Hope outside the main library. Pledges must be completed by February 12th. Thank you for your help.

SETAUKET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S FIRST ANNUAL SPELLING BEE

Setauket Elementary School hosted a Spelling Bee in Grades 4, 5, and 6. There were 16 participants for our school Spelling Bee. The goal of our Spelling Bee was to have our students become more aware of how powerful words can be. Students worked on improving spelling, increasing their vocabulary, learning language concepts, and developing correct English usage which will help them throughout their lives.

Our Classroom Champions from Grades 4 through 6 are:

Fourth Grade

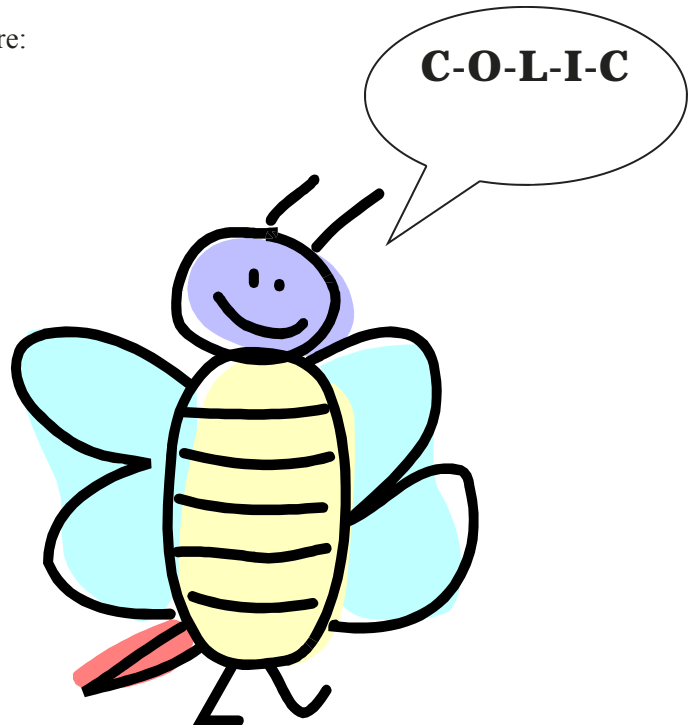
Brady—Sophia Zhukovsky
Fernandes—Luis Rivera
Hannemann—Matthew Seyfert
Negus—Andrew Zhang
Stanco—Annajte Clark
Wall—Kate Mulham

Fifth Grade

Austin—Emily Paul
D'Onofrio—Kiera Ramaliu
Dowling—Brooke Pikiell
Prinzo—Arianna Ferretti
Tortorici—Shannon Sartain

Sixth Grade

Castellano—CJ (Courtney) Manz
Foster—Emily Winston
Guez—Courtney Williams
Varacchi—Amber Li
Villari—Hanna Bliska



These students were declared their Class Champions through an active spelling bee competition. Regardless of the outcome, all of these students are already champions and Setauket Elementary School is proud of their accomplishments.

We are pleased to share that **Courtney Manz** is our Setauket School Spelling Bee Champion. Courtney secured her place as School Champion with the word "colic." Courtney will move forward to the next level of competition. The semifinals will take place at the Hebrew Academy of Nassau County in Plainview, on Thursday, February 4, 2010, at 5 p.m. Setauket Elementary School is extremely proud of Courtney's accomplishment and wishes her the best of luck!



Student Council



The Setauket School Student Council has been quite busy this school year. The Co-Presidents and fifth and sixth grade representatives have explored various ways to make our school, community, and world a better place.

Included in their tasks was the creation, administration, analysis, and reporting on a survey given to fifth and sixth graders. The survey examined students' perceptions regarding the cafeteria food and service. The information has been requested by the district to help improve students' overall lunch experience.

In addition to the survey the council had a very successful Thanksgiving Day Food Drive. Our school was able to collect over 950 food items. The amount was so amazing we were able to help our own Setauket families, as well as donating a substantial amount of food to the Farmingdale food pantry. The Farmingdale food pantry, destroyed by a fire, was woefully undersupplied for the holiday. Volunteer sixth graders organized and packed the food, created the food basket menu, and decorated the holiday baskets for the season. Financial contributions for our Setauket School community exceeded \$670. This money was used to purchase gift cards at local supermarkets so families in need could buy their holiday turkey and supplies.

The Student Council's first annual Holiday Gift Tree went exceptionally well. Setauket families were able to choose a designated gift off the holiday tree in the school for a community family in need. As always, the generosity of our students, teachers, parents, and staff made sure every requested gift was provided. In remembering our neighbors in need, Setauket showed that giving is a lifestyle we cherish – not an occasion.

Setauket's Student Council is currently having a "Soup"er Bowl. This is critical as food pantry supplies are diminishing due to an increased need. Additionally, the council is assisting with a school wide fundraiser for Haiti's earthquake ravaged people. The drive, *Rebuilding the Hearts, Minds, and Homes of Haiti*, is a Read-A-Thon throughout our school. This effort included having a table at Family Game Night. Student representatives accepted donations and increased awareness for the drive.

"Name Calling Week," a national program to raise student awareness will be spearheaded by the student council. It will begin in the next few weeks where representatives will visit every Setauket classroom to discuss and encourage school wide participation. A No Name Calling Contract will be distributed to each classroom to celebrate our unity in supporting this important endeavor.

The Student Council members, along with their fifth and sixth grade peers, are learning that their hard work can make a positive difference in their school, community, and the world.



Setauket String Players Shine

Setauket School congratulates Elizabeth Merrifield & Martin Vaillancourt for being selected to the Long Island Strings Festival Association (LISFA) 2010 Orchestra. They will be representing our Setauket School Community and The Three Village Central School District at this wonderful music event! Elizabeth is currently a sixth grade violinist in Mrs. Varacchi's class, and Martin is currently a sixth grade violinist in Mrs. Foster's class.

The Long Island Strings Festival is an association comprised of string music teachers from both Nassau & Suffolk Counties. They host several festivals throughout the course of each school year that represent the very best student musicians from each county. Students are recommended through nomination forms from their current school orchestra teacher, as well as their prior school year's NYSSMA forms.

On Friday, January 29, 2010, Elizabeth & Martin took the Three Village LISFA bus to Commack Middle School for their first rehearsal. Elizabeth & Martin were nominated at the beginning of our school year to the LISFA Board, and we are so fortunate that both students have been accepted to represent Setauket School and our Three Village School District at the 2010 Suffolk County Division LISFA. Not only were they chosen to play violin, but they received the First Violin music parts for the 6th/7th Grade Orchestra. This also is a wonderful accomplishment, as the selection committee has usually placed 7th graders on the first violin parts at this festival in the past.

Elizabeth & Martin performed with the LISFA select orchestra on Sunday, January 31, 2010 at 1:00 p.m., at the Commack Middle School. They will audition for their seat on Friday evening; rehearse for four hours at the festival site on both Friday evening and Saturday morning to prepare for what is going to be a magnificent concert on Sunday.

The Setauket School Music Department thanks our school community for supporting these wonderful student musicians. Congratulations!



Friendship Fridays

Each week, Mrs. Patti Mastropiero's third grade class joins together with Mrs. Janine Pelkofsky's class for thirty minutes of socialization and fun. The students interact and engage in a variety of activities in either our mini gym, or outside on the playground. In addition, the two classes have parties, go on picnics, and play games.

According to Mrs. Pelkofsky, "The students in my class are friends with their third grade buddies." My students have various degrees of social challenges. They greet their buddies each week by saying, "Hi friend!" Mrs. Mastropiero's students are learning a great deal from these consistent interactions as well as being positive role models for Mrs. Pelkofsky's students. The third graders become extremely excited when their buddies return a smile, participate in a game or activity, and make a positive connection.

This is the second year Mrs. Pelkofsky and Mrs. Mastropiero's classes have worked together with their students. It is evident to both teachers that everyone is benefiting from this project tenfold! Parents from both classes have shared positive feedback with both teachers. Mrs. Mastropiero's students continue to express how grateful they are to have the opportunity to work with students who have various social challenges. Parents share that their children arrive home after the days they work with Mrs. Pelkofsky's students excited to report what they did with their buddies. The benefits of this project have extended beyond the school day. A parent from Mrs. Pelkofsky's class was ecstatic when she was out in the community with her child and one of his third grade buddies approached him to say, "Hi." Her son responded with, "Hi friend." Both teachers agree "That says it all!"

Reminder!

According to the Department of Motor Vehicles and New York State Law, "When a stopped school bus flashes its red lights, traffic approaching from either direction, even in front of the school and in school parking lots, must stop before reaching the bus. Drivers should stop at least 20 feet away from the bus." The fine for passing a stopped school bus ranges from \$240-\$1,000. Additionally, drivers who are convicted of three or more violations in three years can have their license revoked for a minimum of six months.



Passport to Reading

Congratulations to the following classes for reading the most minutes during Setauket's Reading Month:

Kindergarten—Ms. Hall's Class

Grade 1—Mrs. Pantelidis's Class

Grade 2—Mrs. Dunbar's Class

Grade 3—Mrs. Metz's Class

Grade 4—Mrs. Wall's Class

Grade 5—Mr. Dowling's Class

Grade 6—Mr. Guez's Class

All students participated in our Passport to Reading Month as part of our school-wide motivational contest to read as many minutes as possible. Families joined us in the reading fun at Family Reading Night as students decoded a top secret message as they traveled through different genres of Fantasy, Adventure, Mystery, and the Animal Kingdom! Our students know what to do.....read, read, read!