Brinckerhoff’s Jennifer DiGregorio Honored as Teacher of the Month

By Janet Petrone

Jennifer DiGregorio, a third grade teacher at Brinckerhoff Elementary School, was chosen to be 92.1 LITE FM’s Teacher of the Month in January 2008. Michael Diehl, a student in Mrs. DiGregorio’s class, sent a letter to the station describing why he felt she should be chosen for this honor.

Michael’s letter was a lovely tribute to Mrs. DiGregorio. He gave many reasons why he felt she should be picked as the January recipient of this award. Michael told of the patience and respect Mrs. D. shows for the class that she considers “her family,” the smile that is always on her face, and the fact that she plays kickball with the students. She also helps the class to “understand things” and takes them on special field trips.

Brinckerhoff celebrated with an assembly in the gymnasium which was attended by students, teachers, members of Mrs. DiGregorio’s family, and many of the 92.1 LITE FM staff, including Cameron Hendrix, Joe Daily, and Lou Brown.

Mrs. DiGregorio received not only the recognition for this award, but also a plaque, flowers, and several other prizes, including gift certificates to Davis Furniture and the Double-O Grill. Michael not only received the satisfaction of his letter being picked, but he also received some prizes from the radio station.

The entire Brinckerhoff family is very proud of Mrs. Jennifer DiGregorio’s achievement and it was an exciting day at school! Jen now joins two other teachers at Brinckerhoff who were recognized at assemblies. Greg Renino won Teacher of the Month from 92.1 LITE FM in 2005 and Gina Torres was chosen Wal-Mart’s Teacher of the Year in 2007.
3rd Grade Vassar Road Class Reads Around the Planet

By: Brenda Maiolo
Vassar Road News Rep

Kathleen Skidgell and Librarian, Therese Coyne at Vassar Rd. worked with Kathleen’s third grade class on “Read Around the Planet 2008”.

The class video conferenced with a third grade class in Houston, Texas.

After listening to the Texas students perform a poem and song about space, Miss Skidgell’s class read and acted out a skit based on the book, Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes. Afterwards, both classes had the chance to talk and ask questions. It was a great opportunity for the students to work with technology and learn about another state.

4th and 5th Grade Gayhead Students Create Quilts for the Homeless

By: Adrienne Monzet and Nicole Scalzo

Gayhead Elementary School’s art teacher, Ms. Adrienne Monzet, taught her 4th and 5th grade students how to sew, while contributing to a local charity.

During the month of January, students practiced their sewing skills by hand stitching squares of fabric together in an effort to create a quilt. The students have been so motivated that each of the seven participating classes has determined that they would create two quilts!

Almost complete, the 7’ x 7’ quilts will be donated to a homeless shelter in Poughkeepsie.

(Ms. Monzet’s students sewing squares together)
Ralph & Janet Capasso Scholarship

The WCT, in conjunction with the Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers, is offering three (3) $1500 scholarships to seniors presently enrolled in any public or private high school planning to attend college in the fall of 2008. To be eligible candidates must have a parent or legal guardian who is a member in good standing of the WCT.

The selection process for these awards will require the following:

- an application
- an essay
- a high school transcript
- one letter of recommendation
- a personal interview for the finalists.

Applications are available in the WCT office. Please call 227-5065 to request an application or pick it up directly. To be considered, applications must reach the WCT office no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, April 4, 2008.

Committee members are: Catherine Kim, Meri Piliouras, and Anchala Sobrin

Gayhead Elementary School Raises More than $30,000 for Jump Rope for Heart!

By: Christine Axtmann and Nicole Scalzo

Gayhead’s current total for Jump Rope for Heart (sponsored by AAPEHRD) is the most raised thus far. Physical Education Teachers Mark Piggot, Bridget Boccini, and Chrissy Axtmann have reported that, “Currently we are over $32,800.00 and still counting.”

Students in grades one through five participated during their Physical Education classes and helped raise money to support research and awareness for the American Heart Association. Last year, Gayhead Elementary School was awarded the Norm Scofield Award for the school with the most money raised per capita at the annual American Heart Association recognition breakfast.
Gayhead Elementary School Lends a Helping Hand

By: Mary Alice DiDiego and Nicole Scalzo

Mrs. Mary Alice DiDiego and Cathy Keller’s 5th grade classes at Gayhead initiated a school-wide collection for those who are victims of domestic violence.

They have collected canned goods, diapers, formula, children’s books, formula, toiletries, etc. They are also framing some of the children’s art work to hang up and will be working with Ms. Michelle Reye’s 2nd grade class in creating and framing butterfly art.

The classes have received donations of cribs, car seats and toys.

They are getting help from their lunch monitor, Kathleen Omara Adams, who is crocheting blankets in the colors of lavender, purple, and white, symbolizing breaking the silence of domestic violence.

Lights, Camera, Action!

By: Beth Green
WJHS News Rep

Laura Baldwin’s 7th grade English Language Arts honors students had the opportunity to create I-movies that featured scenes from The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain. After weeks of scripting, creating props and settings, and doing other important tasks of movie directors, students got to work on their cinematography skills in Wappingers Junior High’s library media center.

Once the students’ movies were complete, Baldwin and her students invited families and friends to come to a “Premiere Night” in the junior high’s auditorium, where all of the movies were shown on the “big screen” for everyone to enjoy on March 6th, 2008.

Students were awarded prizes based upon grades they had earned on quizzes from various sections of the novel, as well as awards for the movies they had created. There were also several prizes awarded for posters that students had made in order to “advertise” their movies throughout the school.

Students were overheard throughout the evening telling moviegoers about the process of creating movies for a class assignment, and how Miss Baldwin was SO cool for letting them do this kind of assignment!

What an exciting and different way to show knowledge about a book that was written over 120 years ago! Way to go, guys! We’ll be listening for your names to be called in a few years at the Academy Awards!

Reminder: prescription reimbursement claims must be postmarked by March 31st!
WJHS Students Send Cards to Veterans

By: Claudia Taschler
WJHS News Rep

Our schools are continually trying to establish a sense of community and compassion towards others with various projects throughout the year. At Wappingers Junior High School such a success was achieved by 7th grade students in November, 2007.

In October, Kathy Snowder, a special education teacher at Wappingers Junior High, received an email from a friend which evolved into a successful campaign to send recovering service men and women Christmas cards. As a result of this project, teachers, Kelly Barnum (mathematics), Rosellen Hardt (science), Paul Ibsen (social studies), and Melissa Wyant (English Language Arts) rallied their students from team 7-2 and sent 380 holiday cards to recovering soldiers at Walter Reed Medical Center.

Mrs. Zoeller’s 7th grade German classes as well as 6th grade students from the student council and the “Helping Hands Club” from Myers Corners also contributed. Snowder said, “The students made the cards in ELA class. Some were pre-printed but most were handmade. It was very interesting to see not only the enthusiasm of the students but the heart-felt messages they created.” Snowder added that the project became a real effort because sending them was the real challenge because the cards had to be sent first to the American Red Cross for security purposes. “After the holidays,” said Mrs. Snowder, “the students were asking if the soldiers got their cards. This showed me this was something that was important to them and not to be dismissed.”

Now Showing in the Van Wyck Junior High School Library Media Center:
“Picturing America”

By: Aileen Basuljevic

The “Picturing America” collection consists of 20 laminated, large-scale reproductions featuring examples of painting, sculpture, architecture, and the decorative arts and a 125-page resource booklet with information about the artwork featured in the collection. This collection was received as a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Olga Perlman, one of the art teachers at VWJHS, introduced the grant opportunity to Aileen Basuljevic, library media specialist at VWJHS several months ago and together they collaborated and received the grant to “promote the teaching, study and understanding of American art and history.” Students are able to view the reproductions as they visit the library and teachers are able to borrow the reproductions to utilize within their respective curriculum.

In the words of Bruce Cole, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, “our nation is not bound by common ties of blood, race or religion; instead, we are united by our devotion to shared ideals. Great American art can help us ensure these ideals are studied, passed on, and remembered.”

Hopefully, students, teachers and other visitors to the VWJHS library will be able to gain some new perspectives on American history by viewing the “Picturing America” collection. More information about “Picturing America” can be accessed by visiting http://www.neh.gov/.
Good News!

• Congratulations to **Kylene Paul** (MC-1st grade) and her husband Matthew, on the birth of their beautiful son, Brennan Matthew. Brennan weighed 7 lbs. 15 oz. and was 21” long.

• Congratulations to **Paula Pardonner** (MC) and her husband Bill as they welcome their new baby girl, Josette Delilah, into the world on August 21, 2007. Josette Delilah weighed 8 lbs. 11 oz.

• **Jodi Beck** (3rd) at Vassar Rd along with husband Dave and big sister MacKenzy welcomed 9lb 10oz., 21 1/2 inch, Aiden Riley to their family! Aiden was born February 21, 2008. Congratulations!

• Congratulations to **Lorraine Daley** (retired WCSD teacher & former V.P. Greivance) and **Terry Daley** (custodian & WFW member) on the marriage of their daughter Janelle Daley to Todd Mihan on Oct.12,2007. The ceremony took place at the Benmarl Winery in Marlboro, followed by wine tasting. The reception was held at Villa Barone Hilltop Manor, Mahopac. The happy couple honeymooned in St. Kitts and currently live in Hyde Park, NY.

Mark Your Calendar!

The WCT Recognition Dinner will take place on May 16, 2008 at Sinapi’s in Hopewell Junction. Be on the look out for your invitation
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