



# GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

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"Academic Excellence Since 1923"

Friday, November 7, 2014

## *Thoughts for the week*

*By Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster*



This week, I will be attending the Heads of School Conference in Mohonk, New York, starting on Wednesday afternoon and continuing until Friday afternoon. Each year, the Heads of independent schools gather to discuss the most pressing issues within our educational community. The goal of this conference is to explore the issues and then develop solutions to help each of our schools. The problems are universal; the solutions are individual to each school.

Among the topics for this year's conference are the following:

\***Personal Computer, Personal Thinking.** This session will explore how to use technology in ways that are creative rather than simply computational and administrative. There will be another workshop that takes this question even further as the issues of classroom makeovers in the face of the glitz of technology needs to grow into a viable and deeper understanding of this new medium.

\***Addressing the Challenges of the Global Achievement Gap.** Here, the focus will be on preparing our students to face the challenges of what has become a global economy, a global information model and, in fact, a global culture. This is a topic that has grown in importance for each school as we plan educational programs for the future.

\***The Partnership Paradigm.** This workshop will examine the model of a school in relation to its community. Here, we will examine how a school can 'partner' with its community to create an environment in which schools provide service opportunities for students with the goal of community sustainability always in mind.

\* **Understanding Everyday Youth Practices.** For this session, we will examine the everyday life of the student, from issues of privacy to bullying. There has been a national discussion of bullying over the past ten years; however, there has been little discussion of student privacy. This workshop will explore these issues in relationship to each other.

\* **The Finnish Lesson.** Recently a great deal of excitement has been generated by the educational model from Finland. This model has been predicted to be a force for change within the global educational community. One key idea is 'restorative discipline' as an approach to student issues.

I have attended these conferences for most of the years that I have been Head of School and have always come away with ideas for Garden. What is particularly intriguing about this meeting is the attention that will be given to the practical application of these discussions to our individual schools. A conference that provides ideas and then the means to implement those ideas is precisely where I want to be.



## **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

- **Wednesday, November 12 : GS General Assembly, Gymnasium, 7:00 PM (See below)**
- **Thursday, November 13 : Report Cards Distributed**
- **Friday, November 14 : Report Cards Returned with Conference Request Forms**
- **Wednesday, November 19 : Grades 1 – 12 Parent/Teacher Conferences, 3 – 8 :30 PM**
- **Thursday, November 20 : Morgan Library trip for Grades 9 and 10**
- **Friday, November 21 : Thanksgiving Feast for Lunch (PLEASE NOTE NEW DATE)**
- **Wednesday, November 26 : Bake Sale for Fitness Club**
- **Thursday - Friday, November 27 – 28 : School Closed for Thanksgiving Break**
- **Saturday, December 6 : Merit Exam at 9 AM for Grades 5 to 10**
- **Monday, December 8 – Wednesday, December 10 : Holiday Boutique Sale**
- **Friday, December 12 : Pasta Night (5 :15 – 7 PM or 7 :30 – 9PM)**
- **Friday, December 19 : Noon Dismissal / Lower Division Show at 9 AM / Upper Division Winter Trip**
- **Monday, December 22 – Friday, January 2 : School Closed for Winter Break**

**NEXT WEEK!**

### **Garden School General Assembly**

**Wednesday, November 12th, 2014 7:00 PM**

*Building on Success*

*Investing in our Future*

The Garden School Board of Trustees and Headmaster , Dr. Richard Marotta, invite you to the General Assembly to be held **NEXT WEEK** on Wednesday, November 12 at 7:00pm in the Garden School Gymnasium. Wine, cheese and crudités will be served.

The Board's intention is to be accessible and to keep parents informed as we all invest in the future of our school and our students. The General Assembly is your opportunity to hear about the school, our successes and plans moving forward. In effect, this is a "State of The School" address and, as Board President, I look forward to presenting the school's current financial status, plans for long-term building projects, the upcoming re-accreditation process and the focus of the long-range strategic plan. Along with Dr. Marotta, we will then answer any questions that you may have.

Please join me for this very special and important evening in the life of our school as we share information on issues of importance to your school community.

*Arthur Gruen, Ph.D.*

*President, Garden Board of Trustees*

### **IMPORTANT SAVE THE DATE!**

The Garden School Gala will take place on Friday March 27, 2015 at Terrace on the Park





## 2014 Annual Fund



### Support Garden School's Mission Make a gift to the Annual Fund today.

(Please participate to the best of your ability. No gift too big or too small.)

As you know, similar to all independent schools, Garden's tuition does not cover the entire cost of educating your child. Every year, the school depends on fundraising, and in particular every current parent's participation in the Annual Fund, to support the successful implementation of Garden School's mission.

### [Donate Now](#)

#### Parent participation in last year's Annual Fund helped Garden School to:

- Hire a Director of Outreach/Marketing, Jim Gaines, to support sustainable enrollment goals.
- Install a security gate in front, fully enclosing the campus.
- Renovate the main hall bathrooms.
- Rebuild PK and K rooms creating an Early Childhood Center.
- Offer UPK to the Jackson Heights Community by enlarging our campus with a Universal PK Center located on 78th Street and Northern Boulevard.

Our goal is 100% participation within the Garden Community. Our Board of Trustees has demonstrated its leadership by already achieving that goal with gifts and pledges totaling over \$10,000. It is in the spirit of 100% participation in support of the promise of Garden School's Mission that we ask you to follow the example of the Trustees and to make a donation to the Annual Fund and help us reach this goal.

Please join me in celebrating our school and in supporting its mission to educate our students to the highest of academic, social and personal standards.

Sincerely,

Richard Marotta, Ph.D.  
Headmaster  
Parent, Current Grandparent

Arthur Gruen, Ph.D. '66  
President, Board of Trustees

### [Donate Now](#)



## College Counseling News

**By: Lisa Sohmer (Director of College Counseling)**

When the calendar turns to November, it means it's time for "College Night for Juniors," an in-depth overview of the college process for Garden School's 11<sup>th</sup> graders and their parents and guardians.

The annual meeting is designed to provide students and families with the information that will be needed to apply to college next year and a roadmap of the steps they will take to get ready, including academic work, activities, standardized testing, essay writing, interviews and much, much more. The Juniors and their families will come together again in February for "Winter College Night" to hear from a panel of admissions directors and begin preparations for their individual family conferences.

As always the focus was on making the most of the academic offerings and extensive opportunities that are the hallmarks of a Garden education. Recent alumni often report that it has been their academic preparedness and the experiences that they had in high school that led to easy transitions to college and success in their Freshman years and beyond.

With 30 colleges having visited Garden School this fall, that part of the process is complete. Now, the seniors are hard at work completing and filing applications. Several seniors submitted Early Action applications on November 1 and are already waiting for decisions for those colleges, and everyone will be ready for the next round of January 1 deadlines.



Jeffrey Silber, Class of '14

## Garden Outreach News

**By: Jim Gaines (Director of Outreach)**

Many Garden parents and community members *think* that they have "liked" **Garden School on Facebook**. But, there is an unofficial page out there and chances are you have liked the wrong page. [Click here](#) for the OFFICIAL page, and you'll be better in touch with what is happening in school.

The **Garden School Merit Scholarship Exam and Open House** is coming up on December 6. This is an opportunity for students from Garden School or elsewhere who are *currently* in Grades 5 to 9 to sit for an exam to determine their eligibility to receive a Merit Scholarship. All students MUST be pre-registered by December 4th to sit this exam. For more information and to download pre-registration forms, please [click here](#).

Garden School will be represented at the **Long Island City Trade Show** and we invite all Garden community members to this event. [Follow this link](#) for more information.



Finally, many thanks to Garden alum parents, Evie and Steve McKenna, and all Garden families who came out to march with Garden in this year's **Jackson Heights Children's Halloween Parade!** We had so much fun!



Thank you to Ariana, Kay and Merna (and Anthony!) for helping prep the Halloween Parade candy. Some of it even made it in the bags!







## **Music for Early Childhood**

**By: Thomas Heineman (Music Teacher)**

Students in Nursery are singing an ever expanding collection of songs in music class, including recently added tunes such as 'She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain,' 'Miss Mary Mack,' and 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat.' They also enjoy moving to songs such as 'Down on Grandpa's Farm' or marching with 'The Ants Go Marching.'

To celebrate Halloween they recited the poem '5 Little Goblins' (based on 'Five Little Monkeys'). Pre-K was engaged in Halloween activities, as well, such as performing a circle game to the song 'Hi Ho for Halloween' (an adaptation of 'The Farmer in the Dell'). Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten students created ghost figures with scarves and then moved them to Mussorgsky's *Night on Bald Mountain* to try and follow the movement of the principle melody and mood of the piece. Kindergarteners even created their own words and acted out Halloween characters and actions to the song 'If You're a Ghost And You Know It' (based on 'If You're Happy And You Know It'). They also learned 'O Jack-O-Lantern,' a song for the Unicef organization taken from the beautiful melody of the German song, 'O Tannenbaum.' Students were taught about the work carried out by the Unicef organization and thought about the importance of giving to children in need.

This week, Kindergarten students began learning 'Over the Hills and Through the Woods,' a song for Thanksgiving. They did motions for a portion of the song, including some sign language that Mrs. Ahfeld, their Kindergarten teacher, taught them. They read a book 'Over the River: A Turkey's Tale' and pretended to march through deep snow toward Grandmother's house (as in the song), before racing ahead after picking up the tantalizing smell from Grandma's cooking. The class was working on feeling the beat and recognizing changes in tempo (fast vs. slow). They also incorporated wrist bells in the song to really feel the Holiday spirit.



## **Halloween for Grades 1 to 3**

**By: Jacquelyn Renner, Stephanie Parker and Nilla Ingravallo (Grade 1, 2 and 3 Teachers)**

Flying bats, brewing potions and haunted houses took over the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade floor. During this community building event, the students traveled between the classrooms in blended groups (three grades working together as a group) to study Word Problems, Science and Language Arts with a Halloween twist!

Ms. Renner led a Science lesson on the anatomy of bats. The students compared bat wings to human hands. The students were surprised to learn that bats also have five fingers! The students participated in an experiment where they covered their hands with plastic to feel the resistance that helps bats fly. The students flapped their wings in imitation of a bat's flight. The students drew and labeled diagrams comparing their hands to bat wings. They wrote observations based on their investigation.





Mrs. Parker led a Writing activity where the students created their own potions. Each blended group was led by a third grader. The groups created potions for invisibility, strength and freezing powers. They students worked together to brainstorm a list of ingredients. "I liked working with Luigi and Sophia. We talked about which ingredients should go into our water potion" said third grader Daniel V. They also sequenced the steps to making their potions using the terms "First, Then, Next and Last". The students came together to share their writing pieces and to compliment one another.



Ms. Ingravallo led a Mathematics Halloween word problem activity. The students reviewed the elements of a word problem (facts and question). They also discussed problem solving strategies in order to select a type of problem to write. Then, we brainstormed Halloween concepts and words that they could include in their problems. After this discussion and modeling, they each wrote their own on pumpkins and haunted houses templates. To end the activity, the students shared and solved the word problems.



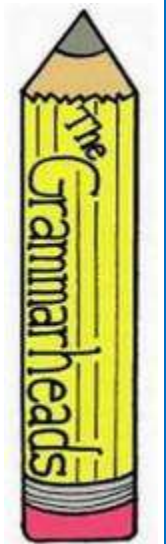
This collaborative activity gave the third graders the opportunity to be leaders. It allowed the first and second graders the chance to strengthen their teamwork skills. We were impressed with their ability to communicate within their groups. The students enjoyed working with their past, present and future teachers. This community building activity will be the first of many!

## **English for Grade 4**

**By: Phillip D'Anna (Grades 4 and 6 Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher)**

The fourth grade has been hard at work these past few weeks! In language arts, we have just finished our class novel, *The Flunking of Joshua T. Bates*. The class made astute observations about how Joshua matured as a result of his repeating third grade. Together as a class we were able to encapsulate these observations in a four paragraph essay, the first of many we will write. It was a wonderful display of critical thinking to see how each student was able to elicit details from the novel that explained *how* Joshua matured. The class came to understand that Joshua's initial struggle ultimately resulted in his mastery of content and personal growth.

Currently, we have begun our short grammar unit focused on subjects and predicates. The need to study this topic comes at a time when fourth grade writing skills are being developed and shaped into longer essays. Learning that each sentence has at least two parts is an integral part of formulating complete sentences that express a thought. To help the class understand terms like "subject" and "predicate", we listened to a song called "No Fragments" by an educational group called *The Grammarheads*. As their teacher, I was so proud to watch the students follow along with their lyrics and even begin to sing along after hearing it only once or twice! I felt as though they had really connected with the subject matter and were able to better explain the concepts being taught.





Additionally, the fourth grade will be heading to New York City for a social studies field trip to the Museum of the City of New York. There they will explore the heritage and history of our great city. We look forward to this great opportunity and anticipate an outstanding time for all!

## ***English for Grade 5***

***By: Sarah Smith (Grade 5 Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher)***

If one notices young spies in the hallway, no need to worry, it's just the fifth grade acting like Harriet from the novel *Harriet the Spy*. This timeless novel illustrates the trials and tribulations of an adolescent girl in the upper east side of Manhattan. As we read the novel, we have discussed how Harriet has reacted to problems and then relate that to situations these young learners face every day. As a class we created strategies for conquering daily problems.



Another theme in the book is forgiveness. Students thought about what it means to forgive and how difficult it is. They realized how important this virtue is when dealing with their peers and their family.

Lastly, we looked at how outside forces can cause a person to change. Many saw this a positive outcome of growing up. We examined how people and events in life can cause an individual to change.

*Harriet the Spy* is a perfect example of how children's literature can be used as tool for not only developing reading comprehension skills, vocabulary development, and analytical writing skills but also for developing a socially aware adolescent.

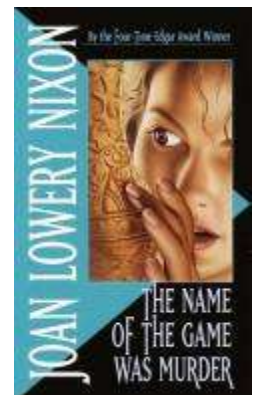
## ***English for Grade 6***

***By: Phillip D'Anna (Grades 4 and 6 Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher)***

The sixth grade has been making great progress. As a group they have been developing a keen sense of responsibility, very often coming to class ready to work with excitement and inquisitiveness. In language arts, we have been studying the usage of all different types of nouns and the rules governing them.

In conjunction with our grammar study, we have also begun developing narrative writing. Each student in our class brings an element of curiosity and imagination to their writing; with those elements comes a unique ability to synthesize a creative story from nothing more than a "seed idea", the small shell from which our thoughts grow. I am eager to see how the students, over the course of the next week, take their ideas and shape them to tell a vibrant and descriptive story.

In addition to narrative stories, the sixth grade will be starting their second novel, *The Name of the Game Was Murder* by Joan Lowery Nixon. This murder mystery novel features an aspiring young writer – Samantha Burns - who ventures to her uncle's private island. There she hopes to gain insights about how to become a novelist, but when her uncle is suddenly murdered Samantha and





the other guests must investigate the crime! In the upcoming weeks, the sixth grade will investigate this murder to find the culprit and see how this event will change Samantha Burns forever.

## ***Science for Grade 7***

***By: Marlene Dapice (Science Department Chair)***

Students in Life Science have learned about biologically important molecules belonging to the following classes: carbohydrates, lipids, proteins, and nucleic acids.

Each student was assigned a particular molecule and was asked to research its chemical formula, structural formula, which class of molecules it belongs to, and its function(s) in living things. To help visualize these molecules and gain an appreciation of how their individual atoms are joined together, each student will construct a 3-D model.



Their project will culminate in a presentation in class, where they will discuss their findings and answer questions about their molecule proffered by their classmates. The models will be on display in room 31 at the conclusion of the presentations.

## ***Science for Grade 8***

***By: John Hale (Science Teacher)***

The 8th grade is in the middle of their investigation of Organic Chemistry. This chapter is designed to help foster the students' understanding of how their life choices can have short term and long term affects. The students have begun a discussion about proper diets and a breakdown of normal diets used by people. They will break down each diet with the pros and cons of each.

Next week, they will work on the computer to help analyze their own diet and see if it meets healthy standards. To finish up this chapter, the students will research the diets of other cultures and see how they compare to the American diet.

## ***History for Grade 9***

***By: Marcia Elkind (History and Science Teacher)***

Why do we read? For most of us the answer is pleasure. Commuters pass the time on the train immersed in a good book. Rainy days were made for curling up with a book.

Children feel empowered when they learn to read as this skill opens up whole new worlds to them. In school, we read to learn information, acquire facts, get exposure to ideas from different times and places. In an English class, the goals are focused on comprehension and analysis, criticism and evaluation. But it should still be pleasant, not a chore.

So often I have been asked why we read Shakespeare in every grade, 7 - 10, and offer an elective for grades 11 and 12 where we read only his plays. Shakespeare's language seems foreign to us. Kids say, "Why doesn't he speak English?!" or, after I explain a bit of text, "Well, why didn't he just say that?!" One goal for tenth grade English students is to develop the confidence to read Shakespeare on their own. We begin that process by reading together in class. Every bit of text is read aloud, students taking on the varying roles. By reading aloud they practice saying the words, finding the





cadences of iambic pentameter, and making sense of the language once they learn to "read to the punctuation." As we move through the five acts, students begin to see the theme more and more clearly and understand how Shakespeare uses imagery to enhance his themes. Words and phrases relating to blood, clothing, and darkness begin to be associated with the "big idea" that is the underlying and controlling theme of the play.

By the end of the play, some six weeks after we begin, every student should know what the play is about and feel it was fun to read. We must do a pretty good job of it, because the elective for juniors and seniors is always a full and vibrant class, one students chose because they feel they can read and understand the text and that Shakespeare tells great stories.

## ***History for Grade 10***

***By: Richard Grusky (History Department Chair)***

True to our philosophy as stated in our mission statement, the Garden School sophomore class in Advanced Placement History has been investigating responsibly the race of man in his society. We have completed our investigation of humanism as was resurrected in the Renaissance and pushed it much further.

Institutions of time honored dimensions have been examined in the time of the Reformation. The spirit of absolutism, so long in existence, was examined in the first age of Revolution, the seventeenth century.

We now look to the emergence of big government with the reign of Louis XIV, looking to the positive and negative elements of both method and goal.

Until we meet again... Happy Questioning.

## ***Foreign Language for Grades 11 and 12***

***By: Agustin Melara (Foreign Language Department Chair)***

As we approach the end of the first quarter, students in Spanish IV/AP will be assessed on their knowledge of irregular verbs in Spanish. Students often assert that Spanish is difficult to learn because of its inconsistencies—not realizing that English is just as difficult. For example, why do we say in English: "I took," (instead of, "I taked?"), "I saw," (not: "I seed?"), "I bought," (not: "I buyed?").

There are similar circumstances in Spanish, whether it is in the present tense or in the preterit. Ultimately, the goal is that each student is familiar with the proper forms of verb conjugations so that they may apply them correctly in every day conversations and situations.

In literature, students in Spanish IV/AP are quickly approaching the end of, *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* while their counterparts in French IV are closely analyzing and interpreting the final chapters of, *Le Petit Prince*.



## GARDEN SCHOOL SWEATSHIRTS FOR SALE!

### Parents, Family & Friends!

The PTA is selling these terrific hooded sweatshirts that everyone is going to want! Show your Garden School spirit and help support Garden and the PTA in building a strong community. The funds collected go to support school community enrichment activities including movie night for our Lower Division, Senior Prom, and much much more. So, share this link with family members, friends and everyone that you know, and consider them as a thoughtful Holiday gift for a current Garden School student, faculty member and/or alum to support and show school spirit.



These sweatshirts are \$35.00 and there are youth – adult sizes available. The campaign will only run until November 26th and then close so get your order in ASAP!

After the campaign closes the shirts will be shipped within 2 weeks. Please go to the link below to order and thank you for enriching Garden School community life!

**Order your Sweatshirts here!** <http://www.booster.com/gardenschool>

## GARDEN SCHOOL YEARBOOK

Dear Parents and Students,

Just a friendly reminder to get your Garden School 2014/15 Yearbook order in! Also, did you know that you can have your very own dedication pages? Please open the attachments to see examples of dedications and friendship pages. Your pages will be printed in every yearbook!

Students can also design pages and share the costs with the friends, teammates etc.!

To order click [http://www.jostens.com/apps/store/productDetail/1054215/Garden-School/Yearbook/2014082404164079370/CATALOG\\_SHOP/YB\\_BOOKS/All-Color-Yearbook/2014082404164082370/](http://www.jostens.com/apps/store/productDetail/1054215/Garden-School/Yearbook/2014082404164079370/CATALOG_SHOP/YB_BOOKS/All-Color-Yearbook/2014082404164082370/)

by the November 30th deadline.

Order today, time and space are limited!

Thank you!

Garden PTA

