



GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

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"Academic Excellence Since 1923"

Friday, March 13, 2015



Thoughts for the week

By Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster



Community celebration remains one of the most important parts of the life of any community. Within the ethos of a group structure, the importance of coming together to rejoice in the accomplishments, successes and the future of that community can never be underestimated. In fact, it is so important, that we perform these rituals within our own lives on a regular basis. When we celebrate a birthday or a holiday, we are engaging in a group reaffirmation of our identity, our values and our future.

Next week, the Upper School will stage its Spirit Week. This consists of six periods, spread over three days, in which the Upper School community celebrates its identity through games and competitions. A similar event takes place when the Lower School has its Field Day, in which children engage in games and activities that reinforce their identity as a group. Yet within the group celebration there is always the recognition of the individual's role within that community.

In two weeks, the Garden School community will come together at the Annual Gala. This is an important moment in the life of the school not only because of the fundraising aspect of the event but, more importantly, because of the community celebration of our past, of those individuals who have helped create that past and of our future. A Gala creates a moment of togetherness, of the communal endorsement our values, of our mission and indeed of our existence.

This kind of celebration recognizes the achievements and the legacy of the past, while at the same time supporting the present and ensuring the future. As a group of individuals who make up the community of the Garden School, we together affirm the value of our identity and of the role we have played, currently play and will play in the education of our children. When a community comes together to celebrate both the collective and the individuals within the community, they are in reality creating the future.

Please purchase your Annual Gala tickets, your raffle tickets and/or make your donations of items to be auctioned or financial contributions to the fund. And, join me on March 27th in celebrating our 92nd year and those who have helped make it possible.



DATES TO REMEMBER:

- **Monday, March 16 – Thursday, March 19: Rainbow Week** for Lower Division
- **Monday, March 16 – Thursday, March 19: Spirit Week** for Upper Division
- **Friday, March 20: School Closed for Faculty Workshop Day**
- **Friday, March 27: Garden School Gala at Terrace On The Park**
- **Monday, March 30: Practice PSAT for Grades 8, 9 and 10**
- **Wednesday, April 1: Marking Period 3 Ends**
- **Thursday, April 2 – Friday, April 10: School Closed for Spring Break**
- **Monday, April 13 : School Resumes**
- **Thursday, April 16: Report Cards Distributed**
- **Friday, April 17: Report Cards Returned**

Please return your enrollment agreement ASAP

The deadline for returning enrollment agreements is today, Friday, March 13th. If you have not already returned your agreement, note that your child's place in the school has not been secured for next year. In addition, the school cannot adequately plan for next year as we remain unclear on enrollment. Even if you are not in a position to return the agreement at this time and so secure your child's spot for next year, it is at least imperative that you inform the school of your intent to enroll or not. Contact the Front Office as soon as possible regarding your plans and make every effort to return your agreement early next week. Thank you!

Gala Raffle Tickets on Sale Now!

The Gala Raffle has begun! We have some great prizes to win and only 100 tickets at \$50 each (3 for \$100!) will be sold per item! So, support Garden and be a winner!

Tickets are available at school by credit card or check or by calling the school (718) 335-6363.

Prizes a great looking, high end Movado men's watch and an elegant and eye-catching Tiffany's leather tote bag...





News from the Gala

Hello everyone, the Gala is right around the corner, Friday, March 27th at Terrace On The Park.

We are honoring two members of our school community, **Eileen Reyes**, Dean of N-K and a member of the Early Childhood Faculty along with **Lisa Sohmer**, Director of College Counseling and Upper Division Coordinator. We will also be honoring **Hope and George Alexiou**, Alumni Parents, in memory of Melina Alexiou '96.

Please come join us as we celebrate the Garden School Community.

This celebration is made possible by donations from all of us. Be it donations of time, items for our Silent and Live Auction, donations of wine for our Wall of Wine, a purchase of a Journal Ad, ticket purchases, or becoming a sponsor by making a donation to Garden.

The **Wall of Wine** is back for a 4th year. We are able, through donations, to put together a collection of wines valued at over \$1,000. Please help us with this year's collection. Help put together our sought after instant Wine Cellar.

Participate in the Auction by making a donation of a gift. We are amazed with the selections from past years. Theater tickets, sports tickets, gift certificates to restaurants, salons, hotels, fitness centers, use your imagination! Our signature gift baskets will be back and we will be happy to take donations to fill them.

Tickets are on sale and tables are filling up, so please send back your response cards or go to our website www.gardenschool/gala to purchase tickets online. Can't come? **Buy a ticket for a teacher!**



Volunteer your time on Gala Night. Email us if you would like more information.

Sponsor donations are welcome, send Garden a check!

Don't forget that participation in the Gala will earn points for your class towards the Pool/Pizza party.

Lets's make this the best party ever. The DJ is waiting to get us all out on the dance floor!

The Gala Committee



English for Nursery

By: Joanne Vogel (Nursery Teacher)

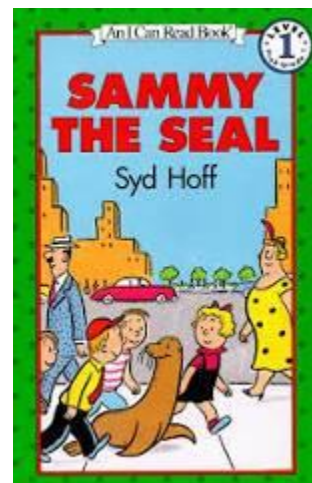
"Is your/my child reading yet?" Parents often ask this question, and it can be answered in a myriad of ways, since reading and early literacy is a process.

Nursery children begin by recognizing books and stories read to them; they can often read the story without looking at the pages. They enjoy rhyming words and sing-song patterns. They love cloth books and board books. They enjoy the voices of familiar people reading along with them.

Then, children begin to recognize letters, and that connected letters make words and names, words make sentences, and then stories....and READING.

This week, children are becoming familiar with "S", reading their "S" books, finding words beginning with "S" and pointing out "S" words in other books and songs. They are reading...and the more opportunities for storytime, the better the reading experience. Our favorites this week were *My Ss Book* and *Sammy the Seal*.

Parents can enjoy the reading experience. Set aside time each day to read to/with your child, and let your child read to/with you. Seize everyday moments to enjoy the world of letters, words, and stories. Indeed, yes your/my child is reading!



English for Pre-K

By: Eileen Reyes (Pre-K Teacher)

The Pre-Kindergarten class has been doing an author study on Dr. Seuss this month. This includes actively engaging the students in group reading activities with the purpose of noticing rhyming words. Each Dr. Seuss book read proved to be a rhyming adventure that encouraged the children to think analytically while using their critical thinking skills. These fun books peak the children's curiosity by having entertaining illustrations all while engaging them in language play. The alliterative language is a creative way to increase vocabulary, recognize sound patterns as well as teach rhyme and pronunciation of words. With prompting and support the class was able to retell the details of the texts by reenacting parts of each book.

This inspired us to cook green eggs and ham in our cooking class. With the book in hand, we were able to recite the exact words from the story while tasting the green eggs and ham for the first time. Mostly everyone decided that they did in fact like green eggs and ham.





English for Kindergarten

By: Kristen Ahlfeld (Kindergarten Teacher)

In language arts this week, the children continue to learn letters of the alphabet. The students identify, write and practice sounds through brainstorming, listening center activities, phonic workbooks, sign language and reinforcing homework.

Our literature books this week have connected our social studies and science disciplines. The class is exploring the Celtic cultures of Scotland and Ireland through a variety of literature books from books purchased in the respective countries. Our adventures have taken us to meet Nessie the Loch Ness Monster, mischievous leprechauns, beautiful rainbows and other legendary creatures. The children have decorated the classroom to reflect their new knowledge. They are enjoying the magical, mythical tour.

Science for Grades 1 to 3

By: Andrew Rahman (Science Teacher)

This week natural resources and their use as renewable energy had been the focus for the students of first, second and third grade. As growing scientists they were given the chance to experience some ways we can use the sun, wind, and waterfalls to better our lives without hurting our planet.

In order to harness the power of these non-exhaustible resources we used our interchangeable renewable energy generating machines. . As soon as the winter's chill abated we harnessed the energy provided by the different resources to create electricity, detected and measured by the machines many different sensors.

Solar panels were tested inside and outside of the classroom to find peak performance for energy conversion. Being able to locate where the wind would blow was key to activating the windmills. Water pressure from the classroom faucet was used to simulate the energy required to spin our mini-turbine into generating electricity.



Foreign Language for Grades 4 to 6

By: Gabriel Gomis (Foreign Language Teacher)

The 4th grade French have been learning food vocabulary. We practiced ordering food in French. They also played a few games that help them to retain the vocabulary and enhance their dialogue skills. This coming week, they will enjoy a fine lunch in room 22. They will bring French food, they will order in French and share with their classmates and teachers. Some of the students will take on the roles of waiters and waitresses in order to support conversation and vocabulary use.



French 5 students have been learning vocabulary relative to utensil and housing. They all described their bedroom using new expressions. We played "seven up" in French and "corner games" to help them retained the words and expressions learned in class.

French 6 students have been doing spelling . They did this past week a dictation, a common orthographic exercise in French-speaking countries. They write down sentences they hear from a native speaking. It helps strengthen their hearing comprehension skills. We also used the adjectives learned previously to describe different people with a focus stressing their age and their physical appearances.

History for Grade 7

By: Richard Kruczek (History Teacher)

"What's so civil about war, anyway?" This line, written by the poet laureate of Sunset Boulevard, Axl Rose, has haunted me since I first heard it over twenty years ago.

Now that we have finished the Civil War period, I can honestly say that it guided my teaching of the subject. Not to say that we had a group Guns 'N' Roses listening party, but in the sense that I attempted to make the students realize that this was a gory, brutal, dehumanizing epoch in our nation's history. We watched an awful lot of video on the topic, in an effort to "blow the dust" off of the subject and see it for what it was. Over 600,000 men died, more than half due to disease, and many thousands more were left without limbs. As they healed, our nation tried to, as well.

In the next period, Reconstruction, we'll see just how that was done - and rather unsuccessfully, like those who had to carry the physical and emotional scars of battle for the rest of their lives.

History for Grade 8

By: Sarah O'Sullivan (History Teacher)

You may just hear the name "Malala" as you walk by eighth graders in the hallways. I have never seen students so engulfed in a book as the autobiography "I am Malala". These scholars were amazed at the bravery presented by this young girl who spoke out against the Taliban in Pakistan. She miraculously survived a bullet wound to the head, and despite this, continued to speak out for education for boys and girls.

Her book provided the perfect platform for discussions on education, Islam, and Pakistani culture. Many classes were buzzing with questions and thought provoking comments. All students were amazed at her courage and ability to speak at such a young age to many impressive world leaders. Many realized how education can transform a society. It was the perfect bridge from our unit on Southern Asia to our next unit of the Middle East.



Writing for Grade 9

By: James Pigman (English Department Chair)

“It was a dark and stormy English class when suddenly....” Thus embarked the ninth graders on their current project: create a mystery, detective story of two or three pages over the next week. We began with the model of “Miss Fisher’s Mystery Stories,” a feature of Channel 21’s programming. The protagonist is Phrynne, a dressed-to-the-nines Australian woman who helps out her pal on the police force. They watched the episode “Unusual Habits” which involved kidnapping and corruption in an Australian town. Students noted the characteristics of sense of humor, deduction, suspense, dialogue, and the nasty villains who perpetrated the crimes.

Each student has been given a foreign coin and told to integrate that coin into the action of the story. They by this stage have set the crime, the villain, the detective, plotted the action, and set some dialogue. The class was rarin’ to go after seeing the Miss Fisher example. What a wonderfully motivated and energetic group of writers! Watch this space to find out if it was Colonel Mustard with the pipe in the library!

Art for Grade 10

By: Tiina Prio (Art Teacher)

The Chinese Art Students have finished their study of bamboo and the symbolism behind it. They have decided that the Chinese calligraphy artist was phenomenally talented and had perfected his skill for countless years.

The Chinese Art students are now beginning their study of the Terracotta Warriors and the reasons why they were created. Each warrior has a different face and clothing. They were individuals. National Geographic states that, “They found not one, but thousands of clay soldiers, each with unique facial expressions and positioned according to rank. And though largely gray today, patches of paint hint at once brightly colored clothes. Further excavations have revealed swords, arrow tips, and other weapons, many in pristine condition.”



The students will now have the opportunity to create a warrior out of ceramics, with armor, hair and armaments. This will dry, get fired, get painted and fired again. I’m looking forward to all the great work.

Physical Education for Grades 11 and 12

By: Flance Dervishi (Athletics Director)

The juniors and seniors are finishing up their Wiffleball unit and prepping for our spring sports which includes Softball and Baseball. A brief introduction to Wiffleball: Two teams of 7 or more players each shall play the game. Base runners must remain at their base until the batter hits the ball. Pitchers must pitch from behind the three-point lines on the court. Each batter will have 4 pitches to hit the ball. A ball caught off the wall or ceiling is an out. Wiffleball is very similar to Baseball or Softball. It has been a very successful unit; all teams are striving to win the game and they are working



very well as unit. We're going to finish Wiffleball by next week as SPIRIT week will be a huge event for the Garden school kids. We are all looking forward to it.

News About the Redesigned SAT

By: Lisa Sohmer (Director of College Counseling and Upper Division Coordinator)

As you may have heard, a redesigned SAT will be administered starting in March 2016. To prepare students for the change, a redesigned PSAT will be offered in October 2015.

Materials and practice questions for the redesigned SAT are available through the College Board at www.deliveringopportunity.org and also at www.khanacademy.org. Like many of our independent school peers, we are seeking additional ways to help students prepare for the new tests.

On Monday, March 30, all students in grades 8, 9 and 10 will take a practice redesigned PSAT at school. The test is provided free of charge by Kaplan, Inc. and results will be provided to families later this spring.

Students who are currently in grades 9 and 10 will take the redesigned PSAT in October 2015. We have decided to offer the practice test to the 8th graders even though they won't take their first PSAT until 2016 since doing so aligns with our college preparatory mission and is a first step for the 8th grade to take in becoming part of Garden's high school community.

Professional Development

By: Stella Stenos (ELA Teacher)

When we think of professional development we usually think about attending a conference and working with experts in our given field. As teachers, we wouldn't think about having students lead the discussions...but maybe we should! On Sunday, March 8th, I had the pleasure of attending the 25th anniversary National History Day at the Museum of the City of New York. The day included a top rate display of student history research and projects.

Representing Garden School as a judge, I was able to view student made documentaries. The theme for the history contest was legendary figures. Student from grade 7-12 were eligible for the contest which stressed both historical research and writing. In seeing the documentaries, visual displays, and research papers I could not but help and make the connection with the projects and what our own stellar history department does!

Garden students have history/social studies every day! Many teachers voiced disappointment at not having a consistent time in their schedules for historical study! At Garden, we nurture the study of history because we understand its role within the context of academia and understanding the world. In judging work from other schools, it reinforced how important writing and research skills are in our community. History teachers guide students in learning how to locate viable source of information, how to assess that information, and thread it into their historical writing. Teachers often require students to rely on non-internet sources because we understand that finding the right book or article is part of the process.

So, while we can learn so much from other professionals-we can learn just as much from listening to students whose lives we impact every day!



Building Essays

By: Stella Stenos (ELA Teacher)

This week, the ELA Writing class focused on explanatory essays. We had a writing prompt about how older and younger generations influence each other. During each class session, we built different parts of the essay. We worked on the introduction, body, and conclusion individually. This allowed students to see each part and develop it as fully as possible. Students also had the chance to revise their work at least twice during the week. We discussed examples as a group and students had their own time to conference with their teacher on their own.

This week long essay project allowed the students to share their ideas but to also focus on their own writing skills and utilize all the grammatical content they spent months acquiring!

Garden School International Night

By: Augustin Melara (International Club Faculty Representative)

Last Friday, Garden School celebrated its rich ethnic and cultural diversity by hosting a, "Street-Fair" type event in the Gymnasium. It was a festive atmosphere with delicacies from many countries around the world such as, China, Colombia, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Senegal, Spain, and, of course, the United States. In addition, there were games and crafts for the children in attendance to the rhythm of world music, including a live performance by Michael Vascones ('16) and our Music teacher, Mr. Heineman.

The members of International and Diversity Clubs would like to express their gratitude to all the parents, students, teachers, administrators, and maintenance personnel who made International Night a successful and enjoyable event!



Enjoy this video of the Garden School International Night

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ulqefbbS3U>

Enjoy this video of the Early Childhood Chinese New Year Dragon Parade

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTt5BFscHLs>



MORE News From the Gala



HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD'S CLASS WIN

A POOL/PIZZA PARTY OR ICE CREAM PARTY???

Please support the **2015 Garden Gala on March 27th** by contributing in any of the ways listed below and you could win a pool/pizza or ice cream party for your class!

One upper school and one lower school class with the highest percentage of Gala participation **will win a pool and pizza party during the school day!**

Second place will also be rewarded with an ice cream party.

Why a percentage? A class with 10 students has the same odds as a class with 36 students.

How can you help your class win?

Points are awarded like this:

CLASS POINTS = WORTH 10 PTS EACH

- 1- JOURNAL CLOSED! Time is running out! Still time to...
- 2- Create/put together a **themed basket** as a class to be featured in the silent auction. Be creative and have fun! (See next page for basket ideas.) Or....pool together funds as a class for an item of higher value, like an iPad mini for the silent auction.
- 3- Your class can **purchase a single \$125 ticket to the Gala for your teacher** or any Garden teacher. Your class can send a teacher out for a night of fun!

INDIVIDUAL POINTS = WORTH 1 PT EACH

- 1- JOURNAL CLOSED! Time is running out! Still time to...
- 2- **Purchase a ticket to the Gala.** Each ticket is worth one point. This includes purchasing a ticket for a teacher as an individual.
- 3- **Donate an item** to the Live or Silent Auction.
- 4- **Make a donation** to the Gala of \$10 or more.

The winners will be announced the week after the Gala. In the event of a tie, the class that sold/purchased the most journal ads will be the final winner.

Class journal ads and individual journal ads will count equally in the tie breaker.

All donations must meet deadline requirements. Please go to the Garden Gala website for more information on deadlines for the different types of donations, <http://www.gardenschool.org/gala> or email us at gala@gardenschool.org.

