

Tioga Hills Elementary School

"Tidbits"



Vestal Central School District

APRIL 2009

How connected are you to your school?

As we begin the push toward the end of the year with Open House coming on April 1 (kindergarten through third grade) and April 2 (fourth and fifth grade), we would like you to reflect on a few questions that we will be collecting at Open House. Please take a few moments of your time to complete the flyer on page 2 and bring it with you to Open House. A collection box will be placed in the lobby.



Our goal is to provide your son or daughter with a collection of experiences that inspire him/her to reach his/her full potential. Your input and suggestions are extremely valuable to us as we plan for the future and continue to improve the education and services we offer to your family.

GRADE 2 OTIS LENNON ASSESSMENT

The Otis Lennon Assessments will be given to second-grade students at Tioga Hills on April 22 and 23.

Some tips for test taking:

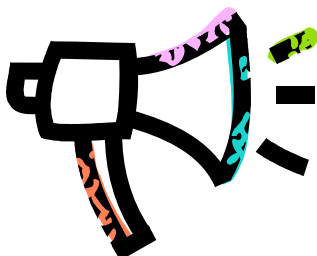
Avoid having your children out of school for appointments on test days, if possible.

See that your children get to bed early on the nights before testing and start off the test day with a good breakfast.

Try to avoid being rushed or late to school on test days.

GRADE 4 NEW YORK STATE SCIENCE TEST

The New York State Science tests will be given this year at Tioga Hills on April 28 and 29.



April Closings / Holidays

There will be NO SCHOOL

April 9 - April 17

Enjoy your spring break!

1. Have we communicated the vision of the school? (Y/N) What is it?

2. Have we clearly explained the expectations and educational goals of each grade level? (Y/N)_____
3. How accessible are your child's teachers?

4. How accessible are the guidance counselor, psychologist and principal?

5. Do you feel like a vital part of our school?

6. What character traits are expected throughout the entire school?

7. What can we do to increase parent involvement and participation?

8. Does your son or daughter love to come to school? If so, why? If not, what aspects of our programming are creating a barrier for him/her?

COUNSELORS CORNER

The counseling office continues to be a center of activity through spring.

Our Banana Splits program is very busy and looking forward to our end-of-the-year "Splits" party in June.

Fifth-grade students and parents - our next step in the transition process will be my visits to classrooms to provide information on middle school. This will give students the opportunity to ask many questions in their safe and familiar classroom environment. Please brainstorm questions with your youngster. The classroom lessons will take place in late April and early May.

Tioga Hills is scheduled to visit the Middle School on Monday, May 11, 2009. Please watch for permission slips from your child's teacher.

Save this date:

Monday, May 13, 2009 at 7 p.m.

**Welcome to Middle School
Orientation for Parents**

During the months of April and May, I will be visiting kindergarten through fifth-grade classrooms to teach personal safety and abuse prevention skills. The topics include stranger-danger, physical and sexual abuse prevention, and self-respect. These lessons will take place in one to two thirty-minute periods. As school counselors, we are mandated by New York State Commissioner's Regulations to provide this instruction.

Please feel free to call me with any questions. I welcome partnering with you to benefit our children.

Rhonda Ruhm
School Counselor



CONGRATULATIONS!

**CONGRATULATIONS
TO
NATHAN BAHR**

Nathan Bahr won a ticket to see a Binghamton Senators game. The students had an opportunity to put their name in for a drawing during their lunch. Enjoy the game Nathan, and Go Senators!

**A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM
THE HEALTH OFFICE**

Dr. Piller will be here on March 25 to begin school physicals.

A cartoon illustration of a doctor with a white headband and a white lab coat, holding a clipboard with a checklist. The doctor is smiling.

BOOK DRIVE

Dear Parents,

If you haven't already heard I have recently started a program called "Getting Books Into the Hands of Children" for my Girl Scout Silver Award project. This program gives away books to anyone who wants one. The logic behind this project is that kids are more likely to read if they have a variety of books at home. It's going very well so far. We've given away over 550 books. But, we are running low, so we are

having a *BOOK DRIVE*. Please consider donating new or gently used books. There are boxes in Room 112 to collect all donations. Part of these donated books will be separated into a new program called "1,000 Book Club." The "1,000 Book Club" is being sponsored by the Tioga Hills PTA, and it will reach out to pre-school students. Thanks for helping support both my program,



"Getting Books Into the Hands of Children" and the new "1,000 Book Club" with your book donations.

Sincerely,
Sarah Wiltshire



NYS Dept. of Health State-wide Turnoff Week

The New York State Department of Health and the Center for SCREEN-TIME Awareness invite our school community to participate in the third State-wide Turnoff Week, April 20 - April 27.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children over the age of two limit their screen time to no more than one to two hours per day. Excessive screen time, particularly television, has an adverse impact on children and their families.

Turnoff Week is a great opportunity for school staff, PTA representatives, community libraries or other youth-oriented programs or organizations to work with children and their families to find fun, active alternatives to hours in front of a screen.

For information, contact the Center for SCREEN-TIME Awareness at www.screentime.org.



JUMP ROPE FOR HEART EVENT AT TIOGA HILLS A SUCCESS

Students at Tioga Hills jumped all over heart disease and stroke by participating in "Jump Rope For Heart." The students raised \$2376.64 for the American Heart Association and helped celebrate the 30th anniversary of the fund raising event. Donations raised during the "Jump Rope For Heart" event help fund research to fight heart disease and stroke and also support the American Heart Association's public and professional education programs. Heart disease is the No. 1 killer in America and stroke is No. 3.

"Jump Rope For Heart" is a program that promotes physical fitness and heart health through the fun activity of jumping rope. It is co-sponsored by the American Heart Association and the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

The average heart beats 100,000 times each day. One of the best ways to take care of your heart is to make exercise a regular part of your everyday life. "Jump Rope For Heart" teaches students how exercise benefits the heart and shows students that volunteering can be fun

and beneficial to the whole community. They learn how they can make a difference by providing important community service and having a great time at this fun-filled event.

The physical education teachers would like to thank everyone who participated and donated money. We are very proud of all the students who participated in this event. Our school is joining the fight against our nation's number 1 and number 3 killers - heart disease and stroke.



The 2009 "A Night of T.H.E. Stars" Talent Show was awesome. With over 40 acts performed, our students certainly proved that our school is loaded with talent.

"Thank you" to the performers for their creativity, talent and courage. You were great! A special thanks to the fifth-grade student volunteers who, when asked to help, came to the call with an overwhelming response. And last, but certainly not least, a BIG thank you to the following parents who jumped in without hesitation to help where they could: Craig Stoel, Janet Niedopytalksi, Jeff Stockwin, Celeste Stockwin, Anna Maria Benjo, Pam Washburn and Shawn Sprague.

Thanks again to everyone involved, students and adults alike, for making this such a rewarding event to take part in.



Pam Washburn and Debi Luker
2009 POTK Chairpersons

Morning Program Newsletter

March 2009



March brought to us a month of celebrating literacy and learning about "problem solving" in Morning Program. We kicked off the month with Mrs. Ruhm talking to us about "problem-solving," and the strategies we can use when we have a small problem. She showed us a video about Kelso (our problem solving frog).

On the 11th, we had a local author come in to talk to us about the steps to writing a book and getting it published. Mrs. Ellen Sanna (Mr. Sanna's wife) joined us and talked about the books she has written and showed us some really cool pictures. In keeping with the literacy theme, Mrs. MacDonald joined us to talk about our school's Publishing Center. We talked about all the different things we could publish, how they do it, where the Publishing Center is and the times that it is open.

We celebrated Mrs. Elsbree's class on the 17th. They taught us about Reader's Theatre and then did a presentation on the story "*Stone Soup*." Way to go Mrs. Elsbree's class, you were very theatrical.

The 19th brought on our second special program of the month, thanks to the PTA. Johnny Only came in to put on a special program about the importance of reading. He taught us new songs and dances to celebrate books. We wrapped up the month on the 26th as each class came prepared to discuss their favorite books... ask your child what their class' favorite was.

Morning Program is looking forward to celebrating Going Green in the month of April.

PTA NEWS

Can you believe spring is just around the corner? After a long, cold winter, it's time to think about some of the fun activities we have planned for the remainder of the year.

Please mark your calendars with all of these upcoming PTA events:

*****A CHANGE *** Tuesday, May 11 - PTA General Membership Meeting: 6 - 7 p.m. at the Vestal Middle School prior to "Meet the Candidates" Night.**

Tuesday, May 19 - Special Interest Fair/VOTE/Ice Cream Social: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. in the Gymnasium and Cafeteria.

Are you interested in joining a **PTA committee** next year? It's that time of year again. We are looking for volunteers to join us next year as committee chairs or co-chairpersons. Please give Kim Pilarchik 625-3735, Celeste Stockwin 625-3065, or Karen McKercher 786-5424 a call if you are interested. We have a great group of moms and dads working together. **Come join us and get to know someone new.**

At our March PTA Meeting, the PTA proposed and approved the purchase of a projector and cabinet for a Virtual Field Trip/Distance Learning Program as well as funds to be provided to assist with the establishment of the "1000 Book Club." We are excited by the opportunities that these programs and purchases will provide our students in the near future.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Many thanks to Celeste Stockwin, Kim Pilarchik and all of their volunteers for putting together a wonderful selection of After-School Programs for the children. These sessions are always enjoyed by the children.

Cultural Arts: NUKPORFE AFRICAN DANCE AND DRUMMING ENSEMBLE



Two performances of African music and culture were presented by the Binghamton University Nukporfe Dance-Drumming Ensemble led by Profs. James Burns and Pierrette Aboadji on Monday, March 16, at Tioga Hills Elementary School.

The presentation included dances performed by a full ensemble of drummers and dancers. Prof. Burns introduced each dance, including its meaning, history and ethnic origins. African dance-drumming typically juxtaposes several art forms together including storytelling, pantomime, oral history and community wisdom. It was an excellent way to introduce authentic African culture to students who may have little understanding of modern Africa. The final dance was an open dance, where everyone participated. **To view a portion of the performance go to the following Web site:**

<http://www.newschannel34.com/default.aspx>

PARP

PARP had a VERY EXCITING month! On Tuesday, March 10th, Newschannel 34 caught up with the Express during March in "The Kingdom of Readalot" to focus on Mrs. Mastrogiovanni's first-grade class for their "Classroom of the Day" series. Students listened "Snippets: A Gathering of Poems, Pictures and Possibilities" by Charlotte Zolotow. March was National Poetry Month, which tied into the month's theme, plus the first-grade students were using the books being read that month as inspiration for writing their own free-verse poetry. Congratulations to Aaron Tebo and Tayli Wrighter on their fantastic interviews.

Pictures from the news story were posted on the school district's website and an article will also be featured in the district's June newsletter so be sure to watch for it.



The Reading Express is ready for its last stop so Suit Up and Catch the Reading Wave! Grab something fun to read and let's Book It

to the Beach. Find your favorite hat and wear it to school on April 24 - Beach Hat Day. And for our final contest, complete our Ocean Word Puzzle with your reading partner for a chance to win a PARP prize. Finally, to celebrate our great year of PARP, join us at the Beach Party Dance on May 8.



Book Fair: Thank you to all of our great volunteers who helped out at our Spring Book Fair and to all of our students, parents and teachers who purchased books. The Fair was a great success and the profits will support next year's PARP program.

CONTEST Classrooms also completed the last contest. Classes were asked to make as many words as possible from "Booking into the Future" (February's PARP theme). Together, Tioga Hills came up with over 630 words. The class that created the most words in each grade were treated to an ice cream party...

Congratulations to students from Mrs. Waterman's class (K), Mrs. Mastrogiovanni's class (1st), Miss Janik's class (2nd), Mrs. Williams (3rd), Mrs. Wanck's class (4th) and Mrs. Gilliland's class (5th).

Thank you to Johnny Only who performed "A Reading Explosion" to students in K - 3 on March 19.



Relay for Life: Once again, Tioga Hills will be participating in the Relay for Life Coin Bottle program. During the first two weeks of May, bottles will be placed in each classroom and we will be collecting silver

coins (nickels, dimes and quarters) to support the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life so start saving that change. Last year, Tioga Hills collected more money than any other elementary school - let's see if we can do it again. If you have any questions, contact Amy MacDonald at 754-1960 or amylynn@stny.rr.com.



Tioga Hills will hold its annual **Special Interest Fair on Tuesday, May 19**, from 6:30 - 8:30p.m. in the school gym. Each student is encouraged, but not required to participate in this important learning experience. Student projects are to be completed at home independent of the classroom. We are asking you to assist your child in preparing his/her project. We encourage students to select a topic that is of interest to them. The project may be based on any subject matter (i.e. art, literature, history, mathematics, etc.). It does not have to be science-based. Several Web sites can be found to help with ideas. Registration forms will come home in the Friday Folders in April. We hope your child will consider participating. Please contact Maureen Suter 625-5330 if you should have any questions - thank you.

COMING SOON...

The Tioga Hills 1000 Book Club"

Thanks to the support of our Tioga Hills PTA and the efforts of Mr. Maslin and several faculty and staff members, we will soon be launching the Tioga Hills "1000 Book Club." A "books in a bag" lending program designed for our newest and future Tioga Hills students. Our goal is to fill 130 bags with 10 books each and challenge future Tioga Hills students to read 1000 books before they enter kindergarten. We need your help to reach this goal. As part of the effort to "Get Books in the

Hands of Children," we welcome your donations of gently used board books, picture books and other books for early readers. So, please, gather those books your children have outgrown or no longer use and send them in. New books are also welcome and appreciated. Thank you and stay tuned for more information on this wonderful early literacy program. Any questions, please contact Amy Labosky (625-4562) or Celeste Stockwin (625-3065).

If you have any questions about the PTA, or need more information about upcoming events, please do not hesitate to give us a call.

*Robin Tableman, President
Kim Pilarchik, Vice President*



LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU....

At Open House on April 1, 2009, for Grades K - 3 at 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. and April 2 for Grades 4 - 5 at 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.