

# December 2011 Happenings at Parliament Oak



## From the Principal's Desk...

One week ago the Parliament Oak community mourned the death of our grade 1/2 teacher Marnie Masson. Miss Masson was a teacher at Parliament Oak School for six years. During that time she was known for her kind and caring nature with our youngest students. Her dedication to her students was admired and appreciated by the parents, staff and myself. Miss Masson was very passionate about her career and the students she worked with. She did everything with 100 percent dedication. Teaching was her passion. Miss Masson was a magnificent contributor to our community in making a difference in the lives of our children. She will be missed by all who knew her. In the spring we will have a celebration of Miss Masson's career for the students, staff and families of the Parliament Oak community.

## Holiday Celebrations

You'll want to mark the afternoon or the evening of Tuesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> on the calendar ~ that's the night of our musical *Elvis and His Elves Get All Shook Up: A Holiday Adventure*. Order forms for tickets will be sent home closer to the date. Please join us for a great family gathering.



## Christmas Break Dismissal

Friday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> is a regular school day with the usual dismissal time of 3:15 PM. School reopens on Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 8:45 AM. Happy Holidays!

## Students of the Month

Our November Students of the Month were:

JK/SK Annika J., Hannah B.

Gr. 1/2 Dawson K., Kieran K.

Gr. 2/3 Paige H., Rachel A.

Gr. 4/5 Nick S., Keith M.

Gr. 5F Isabel F.

Gr. 5/6 Molly B., James D.

Gr. 7F Ryanne A., Nicole A.

Gr. 7/8 Kiara N.

Our character trait for the month of December is caring.

## Student Parliament's "Giving is Good" Campaign

Once again the community of Parliament Oak School will be making a brighter Holiday Season for families in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

From December 5 until December 15<sup>th</sup>, we will be collecting Canadian Tire money. Representatives from the Student Council will use this money to purchase toys which will be donated to Newark Neighbours. Each class will have a container to put Canadian Tire Money into. Thanks so much for your support!



## Student Parliament has the Spirit

This holiday season we will be showing our spirit by encouraging our peers to participate in the following Spirit Days:

December 21<sup>st</sup> is Santa Hat Day

December 22<sup>nd</sup> is Dress as a Christmas Tree Day

December 23<sup>rd</sup> is P.J. Day

On December 23<sup>rd</sup> there will be a dance for grades 6-8 and a movie for grades 1-5.

## Spelling Bee Competition

Parliament Oak held its first spelling bee on November 30<sup>th</sup> in our gym. Congratulations to the following students in grades 1-3 who participated: Graham M., Brendan G., Ella B., Nathan W., Alison K., and Jamieson R. Nathan W. was the winner of the Primary Spelling Bee. The following students participated in the Junior/Intermediate Spelling Bee: Beth D., Sadie W., Kaylee J., Machara C., Arnav M., Edwin C., Ben B-F., Varun M., Kiara N., and Hannah M. Congratulations to Sadie who will represent Parliament Oak in the DSBN Spelling Bee on December 8.

## Eco Club Bake Sale

Thank you to all the parents and students who supported the Bake Sale on November 17, either by baking or by purchasing! We made \$189.35 which will be used for Eco initiatives this year, such as the Recycle Fashion Show for Earth Day in April, and in the beautification of the front of the school in the spring. A special thank you to the Walkers for supplying the fabulous pumpkin tarts and for the ECO Team who stayed after school to sell the goodies. Thanks also to Stephanie Tribe for cleaning up at the end of the sale.



## Junior Volleyball

The junior girls are doing a wonderful job this year with their skill development. They are presently in second place, and won all four games against E.I. McCulley on November 23 for the start of the playoffs. Excellent team playing girls!

The Boys Volleyball team also were successful in making it to the playoffs. They advanced to the semi finals and will play Maywood on December 1.

## Parent Council News

We are happy to announce that we were successful in receiving another Pro Grant of \$1,000 this year which allows us to hold the Parent Community Conference early next year. Mr. Robinson, representing Parliament Oak, met to brainstorm with our partner schools of St.

Davids and Crossroads to develop topics that are important to you as parents of elementary school students. The first planning meeting was on November 28th, 6 pm at St. Davids. Your involvement in helping us create a successful and relevant conference is critical! Please consider if you can donate some of your time to help make this happen. Contact either Mrs. Hadfield or any member of the School Council to volunteer. Thanks to Ross Robinson for being the first parent to volunteer to sit on this committee (please help him start a trend!).

Parliament Oak will be participating in the NOTL Christmas parade again this year. Mrs. Robinson will be organizing a cheerleading squad and we look forward to demonstrating our Parliament Oak panther pride and enthusiasm on December 10th.

## NOTL Santa Claus Parade

Mark December 10 on the calendar as the annual NOTL Santa Claus Parade. The grade 8 students will be raising funds for their graduation by supervising parking in our field (weather permitting). We are looking for some parent volunteers to assist with the organizing and selling of donuts and hot chocolate in front of the school during the first part of the parade. This has traditionally been a great profit making endeavour for the school. If you are able to help out in any way that morning please contact Mrs. Hadfield.

## Indoor Shoes

With winter coming and students wearing boots, it is important, for safety reasons, that students have indoor shoes to wear at school!

## Snowballs

Snowballs are dangerous and students are reminded of our "Throw No Snow" policy. Students throwing snowballs will receive a letter to parents and further consequences at school. Please remind your children of the dangers of throwing snowballs or playing in ditches and on snow banks as they walk to and from school.



## Secondary School Open Houses

Eden.....	January 16th.....	7:00 PM
Governor Simcoe.....	January 18th.....	6:30 PM
Kernahan Park.....	January 16 <sup>th</sup> .....	6:30 PM
Laura Secord.....	January 16th.....	6:30 PM

## Thank you to...

- Carrie R. and Emilie D. who gathered donations for Parliament Oak School from our neighbours.
- the Robinson and DeMunnich families for being the first to donate to our Tree of Knowledge Campaign.
- all parents who have volunteered in classrooms, in the library, on out-of-school excursions, and with sports.
- all staff who have provided extra-curricular sports, clubs and leadership opportunities for Parliament Oak students in Term 1.
- the great student secretaries who help Mrs. Ciazynski daily.



- Multi thanks to Mrs. Godwin for conducting outstanding art classes with students in Grades 1 to 8.
- Many thanks to Mrs. Crocco who has decorated the walls of our school all year.
- Mrs. Lapointe and Mrs. Simmonds for keeping our library organized and for helping in our school wherever they are needed.
- The Johnson's who keep the pizza coming every two weeks.
- Mrs. Robinson who will choreograph our cheerleaders for the NOTL Santa Claus Parade.
- Thank you to the Walker family for the pumpkins they donated for each class to decorate at Hallowe'en as well as for the pumpkins for the Eco Raffle. The Walker's also provided the apples for the grade 5/6 art lesson on the "Transition of an Apple" which was very much appreciated.

## Winter's Here !

Please dress children appropriately for the weather and Listen to the radio stations. They will announce any bus changes and school closings. **Please do not call the school!** Keep our phone lines open!



**Please be aware that arrival after 8:25 a.m.** will ensure supervision of students by staff on the school yard. Arrival prior to 8:25 means students will be alone on the playground. During inclement weather, students will be admitted at 8:25 a.m.

## Parliament Oak Tree of Knowledge

In September 2011, Parliament Oak School welcomed its students to a renovated building with many improvements. Parliament Oak is both an educational and community hub as children, parents, staff and community members gather to learn, share and grow together.

All necessities for learning are provided to our staff and students but we hope to offer additional opportunities for our children to grow educationally (technological resources, athletic and arts support) and physically (i.e. playground equipment). We are also working at building community spirit within our school (gym mural). Acquisition of these "extras" will require fundraising, and we hope, the continued generous support of our community. The Parliament Oak Tree of Knowledge is a program designed to honour donors for their support of our school. The benefit to children will be immeasurable as they experience enhanced educational opportunities as a direct result of caring businesses and people like you. For any donation over \$100, donors will receive a tax receipt and a 3-4 inch engraved metallic "leaf" will be added to our beautiful tree display in the hallway of the school leading to the classrooms to serve as a lasting reminder of your generosity and support.

Cheques should be made payable to the District School Board of Niagara. Please write Parliament Oak Public School on the front of your cheque in the memo line. Your tax receipt will be sent to you directly from the DSBN. An installment / pledge plan is available. Questions? Call 905.468.4253 for more details.

Monetary gifts of any amount are gratefully accepted, and tax receipts are available for all donations of \$20.00 or more.

## News from the Art Room by Mrs. Godwin

We are seeing more and more colour starting to appear in the Art Room these days (do YOU know where it is?). Grade 1/2's did some crazy socks (ideas for all you knitters out there, just in time for Christmas gifting), and Mme. Guido's grade 5 class and the 7/8's are experimenting with Op art. Op stands for OPTICAL, so take a look and let your eyes get 'wowed' with some of the images in the Art Room. The grade 2/3's tackled some cityscapes (soon to be posted), and you may recognize some Toronto or NOTL landmarks in silhouette there. I love the great HOT colours they used for their skies! The grade 4/5's demonstrated tremendous concentration to draw from observation the shells, skulls, and seedpods we dragged in for them. Sharpie markers rule! Next? Some luscious complementary colours to complete.

What's coming up in December? More Op art, snakes, some Christmas preparations, AND ...

**ART CHALLENGE 2011:** Sam Parker was the winner of the first Art Challenge (there was a sign up in the Art Room - but now we are getting SERIOUS), so here goes: every 2 weeks there will be a new Art Challenge posted somewhere in the Art Room, so LOOK FOR IT. Any student can enter, and the results will be judged by Mrs. Godwin and an independent and unnamed individual. (Hmmm. Mysterious) Entries will be displayed, and the winner of each challenge will receive a prize. So get yourself to the Art Room, check it out, and let's get creative!!

**ART CLUB:** during the months of December and January, I will be available during two of the breaks each week to do some extra art/craft projects with anyone interested. Listen to your daily announcements for details. If there are any parents who would like to come help with that, you are welcome. Just let me know by leaving a message at the school.

(By the way, the Art Room is located in the NE corner of the school, next to the computer lab.)

**Art IS happening!**

## Is Your Child Going to be Absent?

Please call the school office when your child will be absent. An answering machine is available 24 hours a day.

With winter coming and cold and flu season upon us please review the following guidelines when deciding whether you should send your child to school. Do not send them to school if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

1. A temperature of more than 100 degrees
2. Nausea or vomiting
3. Stomachache
4. Diarrhea
5. Pale or flushed face
6. Persistent cough
7. Headache
8. Earache
9. Thick yellowish discharge from the nose
10. Sore throat
11. Rash or infection of the skin
12. Red or pink eyes

13. Loss of energy or decrease in activity

If your child has any of these symptoms when it is time

for school, it is best that he/she stay home until they are symptom free for 24 hours.

Practicing regular hand washing and teaching children to "cover their cough" are great ways to prevent the spread of illness.

## Supporting Your Child With Reading at Home

**When reading a book for pleasure or for information, chances are you will come to a word or two you are unsure of.** You probably will use the accuracy strategy of cross checking without even thinking about it, because it is second nature to you as a reader to read accurately. Accuracy is not second nature to children learning to read. It is something that needs to be taught using a variety of strategies.

It is important to slow readers down when they come to a word they don't know and teach them to apply the strategy of cross checking so they are able to fix the meaning and not just skip the word. Cross checking requires a person to constantly think and monitor meaning. It is a strategy for ensuring the words and pictures read make sense and match the letters on a page.

**HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD WITH THIS STRATEGY AT HOME?**

1. Listen to your child read. When they come to a word they are unsure of, remind them to cross check. Ask:

- Does the word you are reading match the picture or letters written? (they cross their right arm over their body)
- Does it sound right? (their left arm crosses over their body making an X)
- Does it make sense? (both arms come down with hands pointing to the ground)

Doing physical movements with each question helps children to remember the questions.

2. If your child is having difficulty with this strategy at home, break down the process:

- Have them stop reading when meaning breaks down.
- Tell them to look at the letters and say the sounds or look for word chunks in words.
- Remind them to use the pictures to help.

3. To make your child aware of using this strategy, give them a piece of paper and tell them to make a tally mark each time they use the cross checking strategy.

Thank you for your continued support at home!

On behalf of the staff of  
Parliament Oak School we wish our  
Parliament Oak community a  
happy and safe holiday season.  
We look forward to seeing  
everyone on Monday, January 9,  
2012!

