

# Parliament Oak News for May 2011

## *Special points of interest:*

- Thanks to all parents who call in their child's absence. We have an answering machine that is on 24 hours a day. If you know that your child is going to be away, please call the school and leave a message.
- Now that the nice weather is here and many students are riding their bikes to school, please be reminded that the law states that helmets are to be worn by anyone riding a bicycle. Bicycles, skateboards, scooters and rollerblades are to be walked on school property.
- Pizza Days are organized every other Wednesday. Thanks to Stone Road Grille for supplying us with approximately 10 trays of pizza bi-weekly.
- Milk cards sell for \$10.00 each.
- Lunch students are expected to remain on school property during lunch hour. If you give your child permission to leave the school grounds during lunch a written note from a parent/guardian must be given to the homeroom teacher indicating your permission.
- May 26th the staff at Parliament Oak will host a Volunteer Appreciation breakfast to thank all of the parents who volunteer in classrooms and around the school.
- May 23th is Victoria Day. Schools will be closed that day.
- The grade 8 grads will be hosting a car wash on June 4 from 9:30—1:00 p.m. Location to be determined.

## ***From the Principal's Desk...***

Your child can travel around the world, meeting interesting characters, and learning new things~all through the pages of books. Share the magic of nonfiction with these ideas. Activity books combine reading with fun things to do. After reading *Pyramids!* (Avery Hart, Paul Mantel), your youngster might make Egyptian drawings or build a lego pyramid. *The Remarkable Rainforest* (Toni Albert) shows him how to create an indoor rainforest or make a rainforest fruit shake. Where would your child like to visit? Nonfiction picture books introduce your child to real people and animals. Teach him about friendship and tolerance with *Owen & Mzee*, a tale of an orphaned baby hippo and a giant turtle (by Isabella and Craig Hatkoff). Or share the story of young Michael Jordan, *Salt in His Shoes*, written by his mother and sister. Your child will be inspired by the basketball star's determination ~ and she'll learn a lesson on handling bullies. A how-to book can teach your child a skill like doing magic tricks or juggling. Check out *101 Easy-to-Do Magic Tricks* by Bill Tarr or *Juggling: From Start to Star* (Dave, Dorothy & Ben Finnigan). Read the instructions together, and help your child pick one or two tricks to practice. Then, watch as he puts on a show for your family.

Here are some awesome websites to check out with your child(ren):

<http://www.earobics.com/gamegoo/goocyhome.html>

<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK>

## **WANT TO HELP YOUR CHILD IMPROVE THEIR LITERACY SKILLS AT HOME, BUT DON'T KNOW HOW???**

Premier Literacy has a comprehensive suite of digital reading and writing tools that the District School Board of Niagara has provided for students while in school. The *DSBN has now made these programs available for parents and students to use AT HOME.*

With this program, the computer will read web pages, email, homework and even read a book. The program will even convert documents into audio files so you can listen to them on MP3 players or IPODs. These tools are great for proofreading and editing homework and have features that help students study more efficiently and effectively.

If you are interested in this program, pick up a Quickstart Guide outside the office.

## **Grade 3 and 6 EQAO Assessment**

During the first two weeks of June, grades 3 and 6 students across Ontario will be participating in the EQAO assessment of reading, writing and mathematics. This assessment is designed to match the Ontario curriculum and is an important tool that educators can use to evaluate student achievement. The assessment is different than in previous

years. One noticeable difference is it is much shorter in length. Students will be involved in six one hour testing periods. Students will complete three test booklets: one mathematics booklet and two language booklets. Participating students will receive an Individual Student Report in early fall, 2011.



## ***Porter's Garden / Yard Revitalization***

On May 18th we will be designing a garden by the Outdoor Classroom in remembrance of Porter Simpson. The grade 2/3 class will be planting vegetables that are used in salsa, something Porter learned to make with his mom. On that day we will also be doing a yard/garden revitalization to make Parliament Oak look beautiful again. We are seeking community volunteers that day to help with the yard and Porter's Garden. If you are able to donate even an hour of your time please call Mrs. Ciazynski at 905.468.4253. We will then contact you closer to the date with specific details.

## Eco Team Update

The Eco Team has been hard at work in preparation for ECO-school Ontario certification for this year. Last year Parliament Oak was awarded Gold Status for our program. Once again, we are striving to improve the way we affect our environment and are trying to make a difference in the ecological footprint that we make. Grey bins are used for waste paper, GOOS bins are used for paper that is "Good On One Side" for printers and student work, blue bins for recycling, green bins for composting, glass bottles are returned, reading books swapped, empty printer cartridges collected, etc.. Our goal for this school year is to install an Inukshuk in our Outdoor Classroom. We have funds still available from our grants. This will mean a busy May and June while we firm up plans for the installation. We will also be assisting with the development with Porter's Garden. Please join us on May 18th for our yard revitalization. On that day we will also be designing a garden in remembrance of Porter Simpson.

### BADMINTON TEAM

The grades 7 and 8 have been practicing their badminton skills through the month of April in preparation for the Area 4 tournament that was held at Virgil School on April 29. Our Parliament Oak Team consists of 18 students, forming 9 mixed teams. They had a great day of some wins and losses. All panthers displayed great sportsmanship throughout the day!

## Students of the Month

JK/SK Annabelle Olsen,  
Katherine Abraham-Karras

JK/SK Izabel Schiff-Malins

Gr. 1 Kieran Kischuk

Gr.2/3 Maddie Caughill, Kyle Cofell

Gr. 3/4 Alex Gibson, Samuel Parker,  
Arnav Mehrotra

Gr. 5 Alice Woods, James deBoer

Gr. 6 Bianca Lupia, Annelise Perron

7/8 Gregg Walton,  
Katarina Martins



### Young Authors in Action

On Friday April 29th our school hosted a Young Author's Day to learn about what it takes to become an author as well as the process for different forms of writing. In the morning the primary students enjoyed an animated presentation by author Sharon Jennings followed by interactive workshops that included dramatic performances to writing their own recipes. Junior/Intermediate students also rotated to various workshops which included holding their own press conference; demonstrating the art of asking questions, to creating their own twisted fairy tales in a comic strip form. In the afternoon author Eric Walters mesmerized the students with his humour and his theatrical charm when describing the reasoning behind the plot of his novels. A special thank you goes to the volunteer presenters Steven Gallagher, Ruth Troughton, Jamie Williams, Briar Krieger and Bonnie Giampa for taking time out of their day to share their knowledge with our students. Another thank you goes to our community sponsors of the event: Bank of Montreal, RBC Bank, and the UPS Store as well as our Parliament Oak families for their monetary support. With the collaboration of staff, volunteers and families, Young Author's was a successful event that students enjoyed and will remember for years to come.

### MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL COMING TO PARLIAMENT OAK

Parliament Oak will be hosting its 3rd annual Multicultural Festival on June 15th, 2011. We welcome back Brock International students, who generously facilitate the various cultural workshops that students rotate to in the morning. Students will then be treated to an International buffet at 12:30 in the gym, followed by cultural performances at 2:00pm. We are asking families to contribute a cultural dish if they are able to. This event succeeds because of the amazing community involvement and we hope we can continue to depend on that support. In June a notice will go home where families can indicate what they will be contributing. Students are welcome to act as ambassadors of their culture, that day, by dressing in their traditional clothing.

### Parliament Oak School Council Update

Our next Parent Council Meeting will be Tuesday May 24th, 7 pm in the Staff Room. This will be the last official Council meeting of the school year. Anyone interested in joining Parent council is welcome to attend this meeting. Parent Council Chair, Secretary and Treasurer positions will be available for September 2011. If you are interested in these positions or in the work of Parent Council, please talk to Heather Davis or Mrs. Hadfield.

## Track and Field

Track and Field for students in grades 1-8 will be held on May 12th. We expect to start the events by 9:15 and complete them by 3:00. The 1500m and most high jump events will occur prior to May 11. Students should dress appropriately for the weather and, bring plenty of fluids. An information letter will be sent home with students closer to the date. Students who qualify will participate in the regional meet on May 18th at Oakes Park.

### *From the Library...*

11 members of the 2011 Parliament Oak Silver Birch Book Club have been chosen to attend the 6th Annual **DSBN Silver Birch Celebration** at School Support Services on Friday May 6th. They will join 400 students from the DSBN in workshops ranging from; Abracadabra to Chocolate Making, from Checkmate to the Chocolatey Case of the Costume Conspiracy, and from Steam-punked! to Minute to Winit. Highlights of the day include addresses given by author Helaine Becker (What's The Big Idea?) and storyteller, Dez Sargeant and Alex Kazam's Witty Magic Show. Congratulations to the readers who qualified to attend!

### Dress Code at Parliament Oak

With the warmer weather, please review our dress code with your child(ren) that is printed in the student organizer. Last week, classroom teachers reminded students of their responsibility to dress appropriately. Tops must be able to be tucked in and straps must be at least three fingers wide. Shorts length should be to the ends of finger tips and not frayed. No offensive or suggestive slogans or symbols should be printed on clothing worn to school. Hats, kerchiefs, sunglasses and other head coverings are not to be worn inside the school. Thank you for your cooperation.



## Ontario Heritage Fair

On Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> eight students from Parliament Oak travelled to Fort George and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Resource Centre to participate in the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual D.S.B.N. Ontario Heritage Fair. The representatives from Parliament Oak showcased their presentation skills and historical knowledge to a panel of judges and their peers. Their day was also filled with engaging workshops including a Canadian History Challenge, Métis Storytelling, Black History, Local History and the role of music in the War of 1812. Congratulations to our participants: Katie Caughill, Cierra Perron, Christopher Crocco, Annelise Perron, Victoria Crocco, Gregg Walton, Hannah Marsala and Will Cowling.

### 5 Tips to Help Your Child with Homework

Homework is an important part of learning. When you support your children's homework routine, you can help them do better at school. Here are some simple tips to help get the most out of their homework.

1. **A routine is good.** Homework can be habit forming and that's good news for you and your child. Work out a homework schedule and make sure children adhere to it. It won't be long before homework is complete without your getting involved.
2. **Practice makes perfect.** Repetition reinforces learning. That's why it's helpful to have kids practice reading, writing and math with you every day. Ten to 15 minutes a day can work wonders, whether reading a favourite book together, or helping measure ingredients in the kitchen.
3. **"How was your day?"** Every school day is an adventure. Kids will do and learn so much they'll be bursting to tell someone all about it. So take a few moments every day to chat about the school day—and be a good listener.
4. **Turn everyday activities into homework.** Teachers give homework and so can you. Include children in everyday tasks and assign activities such as searching newspapers, reading recipes, creating shopping lists, plotting out routes on a map, etc. Small activities can often teach big lessons.
5. **Encourage curiosity and questions.** Learning really begins when kids start asking questions. Who, what, where, when and why are magical words of discovery that make learning more interesting and fun. Give your children the confidence to ask for help if the homework is difficult or confusing.

### Be a Germ Stopper!

Did you know that when you sneeze, you spread more than 10,000 germs and bacteria up to 12 feet away? Not only that, but the particles travel at speeds of 100 feet per second! Serious respiratory illnesses like influenza, and whooping cough are spread by coughing or sneezing and unclean hands. To help stop the spread of germs, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands. The germs will become trapped in the fabric and prevents them from being spread to others. Put your used tissue in the waste basket immediately afterwards.

Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing with soap and running warm water or an alcohol-based hand rub.

Make stopping germs easy by keeping tissues handy. When you can't get to a sink, have hand sanitizer at the ready.

Be a role model: teach your children the proper way to cough and sneeze and we will all be healthier for it!

### Demystifying EQAO for Parents Thursday, May 19th, 2011 6—7:30 p.m. St. Davids Library

EQAO provides information to the public and to the education community about how students are developing in the essential skills of reading, writing and mathematics.

Join us for an interactive session that will walk parents through the assessment. You will leave with a better understanding of what your Grade 3 and 6 children will be soon be completing.

RSVP by calling 905-262-4533 or emailing

### Winners Day Camps ~ Summer 2011

Winners Day Camps will be offering camps this Summer to all children ages 3 - 12.

Summer Camp runs from July 4 - August 26, 2011.

Winners Day Camps is now located at the new Community Centre, 14 Anderson Lane.

Full day and half day camps available. Winners' is back with an experienced staff of certified school teachers and campers will participate in cooperative games, sports including floor hockey & soccer, arts & crafts, drama, water fun, special events and so much more!

All sessions are still open. Please call or email to register and be sure to check out our website for weekly themes and further information: <http://www3.sympatico.ca/winnersdaycamp>

Web Site: <http://www.winnersdaycamps.ca>

Call Jennifer Caughill: (905) 468-9408 We hope to see you!