

Parliament Oak News for May 2010

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 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 and Snack Shack 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 28th 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 24th is Victoria Day. Schools will be closed that day.
- The grade 8 grads will be hosting a car wash on May 15 from 9:30—1:00 p.m. at Coldwell Financial Services on Mississauga Street

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/goeoyhome.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 second half of May and the first part 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, 2010.



Outdoor Classroom Plans

Plans for the Outdoor Classroom are in the final stages, thanks to the support of the Science and Environmental DSBN consultant Sean Hanna, Chris DiRaddo from Sassafras Farms, design suggestions from Mori Gardens, Laura Dominick, our school community and our ECO Team. We are awaiting approval from building planners and further funding before the hard work begins, hopefully this month.

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 **Outdoor Classroom**, which will provide a natural, fresh air setting for class activities. We have applied for five grants, and have received support from three of them, with two still pending. Through the diligent efforts of Laura and Stephen Dominick, we are receiving some of our most costly materials at little or no cost to us. This will mean a busy May and June while we firm up plans for the classroom with several consultants, and begin installation.

BADMINTON TEAM

The grades 7 and 8 have been practising their badminton skills through the month of April in preparation for the area 4 tournament on April 30th at Virgil School. Our Parliament Oak Team consists of 18 students, forming 9 mixed teams. Good luck in the tournament!

Students of the Month

JK/SK	Ronin Bradford, Katherine Abraham-Karras	3/4	James deBoer, Alex Gibson
JK/SK	Izabel Schiff-Malins	4/5	Freddy Gatta, Seth Woelke
1/2	Nikolas Karpetas, Clara DeMunnich	6/7	Tia Rollason, Hannah Marsala
2/3	Nick Simmonds, Rosie Tait	7/8	Levi Harper, Gabe Lupia

Young Authors in Action



On Tuesday April 20th our school hosted a Young Author's Day to celebrate the reading and writing the students have done in the current school year. In the morning students enjoyed rotating to classrooms and participating in mini workshops that focused on the writing process. In the afternoon, for a special treat, we invited Brian Cretney, author of Last in Line and Michael Wade, author of the And Then it Happened series to educate the kids on the makings of a published book.

From the moment Brian stepped into the library and Michael into the gym, up til the time they were signing their books, the kids were enthralled by them. Brian was able to entertain, motivate and create an interactive retell of his story, "Last in Line." He had students dress up characters from the story, they chimed in to familiar parts and by the end wanted to know everything about Brian Cretney. Then there was Michael, with this booming voice and Hercules muscles, had the kids laughing and already thinking of what pranks to pull on the teachers. Both presentations were not only enjoyed by the students, but the staff and parents also commented on how great their delivery was. Brian and Michael became the highlights of our Young Author's celebration.

To have kids fully experience the process of completing a story, we held a "**Be an Author**" contest. Students were asked to write an original story and submit it before the event. We were overwhelmed with joy of the response we received by our budding Parliament Oak authors. Our judges were amazed by the sophistication of content and the descriptive stories that were submitted. The judges all agreed that it was a tough decision to narrow their choices down to two per division. The winners are:

1st place

Sadie Williams - The Lost Crystal
Diego Sancho - The Day when Aliens Attacked
Lila Bata-Walsh - Fortunately

2nd place

Hunter Midgley - Black Bee Begins
Ben Batson-Feuer - Mission Not Possible
Megan Davies - The Tree of Secrets

Thanks again to the teachers for coordinating the workshops, the NDSS students who volunteered in the classrooms, Chapters for donating the \$25 gift card for the top 3 winners and to the parent volunteers who assisted in coordinating the event as well as helping out in the workshops.



MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL COMING TO PARLIAMENT OAK

On Thursday May 20th, Parliament Oak staff and students will be experiencing and enjoying the beauty of other cultures from around the world. In the morning students will rotate to classrooms that have been transformed into a region of the world where they will partake in a cultural craft or tradition. Students will then be treated to an international lunch buffet while watching a variety of cultural performances. We are asking families to contribute a cultural dish and to attach a card that includes a list of ingredients and origin. Please read the attached flyer and send back the bottom portion indicating what your family will be bringing on the day of the event.

Track and Field

Track and Field for students in grades 1-8 will be held on May 11th. 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, 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 26th at Oakes Park

From the Library...

7 members of the 2010 Parliament Oak Silver Birch Book Club have been chosen to attend the 5th Annual **DSBN Silver Birch Celebration** at Niagara College on Friday May 7th. They will join 700 students from 25 schools from the DSNB in workshops ranging from drama to dissection to creepy party foods, podcasting writer's workshops and more. Highlights of the day included addresses given by Helaine Becker, author of *The Insecto-files* and *Free the Children*. The students will end their day with an exciting show by Bob Cates of *Comedy in Motion*. 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.



Junior Basketball

The boys and girls basketball teams had a season of fun and lots of learning. Congratulations to the following team members who persevered through every game and demonstrated a great deal of sportsmanship. The girls team members are: Katie Caughill, Molly Bowron, Carrie Robinson, Emily Day, Bianca Lupia, Jessica Robinson, Olivia Davis, Cynthia Burrows, Katarina Martins, Victoria Beale, Rachel Bannerman, Kiara Nestor, Amy Hancock, Morgan Sherlock, Aila Simpson, Paige Tribe-Sherlock and Leah Parker. Thanks to Mrs. Caughill and Mrs. Burton for coaching. The boys team members are: Spencer McGuire, Michael Wilson, Cort Day, Marlow Davis, Rory Hellwig, Jake Eadie, Ross Sanders, Christoffer Huisman, Sean Papadimitriou, Justice Ball, Nathan Zalepa, Caleb McCarthy, Alex Gibson, James deBoer, Ben Simmonds, Max Schiff-Malins, Giorgios Angelakopoulos, and Josh Kuhn. Thanks goes out to Mr. Davis, Mr. Lapointe, Mrs. Pyle, Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Burton for coaching.

Farewells go out to Mrs. Walker and Mr. Coates. Mrs. Walker was a student teacher in Mrs. Pyle's class while Mr. Coates was in Mrs. Andrews class for the past six weeks. Both student teachers did an exceptional job in their classes. They will be missed by the students and staff of Parliament Oak School. We wish them well in their teaching careers.

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

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:

Keep 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!

SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWS

The countdown is on - **The Radically Hip '80's Party is this Saturday!** Council has assembled an amazing list of silent auction items (thank you to our very generous community!) and the music will be... "radical"! Tickets can be purchased at the door if you haven't already picked them up from school or Balance Fitness. See you there!

Our next exciting night is **Thursday, May 13** when Julie Christiansen will be speaking to the parents about "**Solving The Anger Puzzle**". This is part of our parent speaker series for 2009/2010, there is no charge for the talk and you are welcome to bring friends. Child care will be provided.

Parent council would like to thank Mrs. Hamdani for organizing a fantastic Young Authors Day last week...the kids had such a rewarding and enriching day. We appreciate all the effort and coordination this took.

Do you have any ideas for our Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grant proposal for the 2010/2011 school year? This program aims to bring parents into the schools and get them involved with the school community. Please send us any ideas you have by the middle of June.

The two year term for council co-chairs and community representative come to a close at the end of this year. If you are at all interested or know someone who is, please contact Mrs. Hadfield as soon as possible. This is an opportunity for you to be involved and impact your child(ren)'s school experience.

In May, we are honouring Mrs. Casement and Mrs. Hadfield for our staff appreciation program...please drop your comments in the box at the office.

Thanks and have a great May.

Your Parent Council