
THE JOHNSON GAZETTE

<http://www.natick.k12.ma.us/schools/johnson/johnsonschoolindex.html>



99 South Main Street
Natick, MA
508-647-6600

Produced by the parents and teachers of the Johnson Elementary School

*February/March
2008*

*Building Our Future One
Student at a Time*

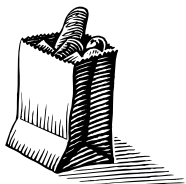
Important Dates to Remember

February 18 – 22	Vacation
March 6	Early release
March 12	Early release
March 21	No school
April 10	Early release

Food Pantry Collection: Thursday February 28th

Pasta, Rice, Canned Beans (Baked, Kidney etc.)

Thank you for generously helping those in need.



Principal's page

Dear Johnson School Families,

We celebrated the 100th day of school last week!

You should have received your child's Report of Student Progress in the mail (we opted to mail them this year to assure confidentiality) and have had the chance to respond. Teachers will be scheduling parent conferences in March to review learning goals for each student.

Our School Committee has been busy, busy, busy! In the past month, they have hired a new Superintendent of Schools, voted and presented a budget for the next fiscal year, and conducted the hoards of regular business that comes their way. We are excited to welcome Dr. Peter Sanchioni as our new Superintendent. He will officially start on July 1st, but has already begun making introductions and reviewing documents in our system. Dr. Sanchioni is currently the Superintendent of Schools in Millis, MA.

We are conducting registration appointments for our incoming kindergarten students (class of 2021) at the end of the month. To date, we have 48 students on our roster. Please pass the word if you know of any families with 5-year old children who have not been contacted by the school system (age 5 by August 31st).

We are excited to be getting new computers installed in each of our classrooms this week. Our elementary teachers district-wide have been working on an outdated operating system, which poses great frustration and inefficiency. While our district is working on a system-wide strategic plan to remedy our technology woes, we are attempting to expedite the process at Johnson through the use of some grant monies.

Thank you to our student group who took the initiative to make recommendations to the food service program to improve the quality of school breakfast lunch. A representative group of students: Elisha Beaudin, Sara Berg, Matthew Gastaldo, Emily Hawley, James McQuillen, Sheila McQuillen, Theresa Morley-McLaughlin, Robby Pini, Anna Rausch, and Natalie Soens, met with the Director of Food Service, Mr. Bob Burr, to offer some "quality control" suggestions. Mr. Burr who described their meeting as helpful and informative!

Please be courteous NOT to park in or block our neighbors' driveways during drop off or pick up times. A few neighbors on Floral Avenue, Waban Street and Pitts Street have expressed frustration at having their driveways used.

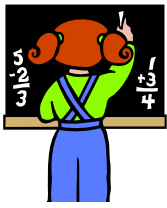
The very popular before-school breakfast program is intended for access by students who dine on breakfast, and not as an early drop off service... and please be attentive that no one should be arriving before 8AM.

Our second grade students will be mentored by the Walnut Hill School this spring! Beginning after the vacation week, a team of WH high school performing arts students will be coming to our school each week to cultivate drama skills and developing voice with our students. We anticipate a rich experience and will invite you to our culminating performance in the late spring.

Our fourth grade students were selected to participate in the national sample of students taking the Nation by participating in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which they took last week. Students were assessed in either: science, reading or mathematics. NAEP is given by the U.S. Department of Education and tells us what American students know and can do in key subject areas. It is the only ongoing nationally represented assessment that provides this valuable information. NAEP has been given in schools nationwide for more than 30 years. The results are published in a report called *The Nation's Report Card* which provides reliable student achievement information to educators, parents, and other citizens.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Dr. Brown



CLASSROOM NEWS

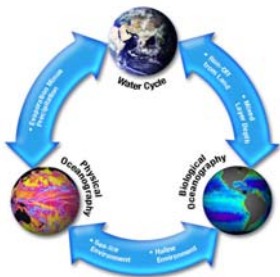
In the Spotlight

3rd Grade



In math, we are currently working on Landmarks in the Hundreds. The students are developing and sharing great strategies for using landmark numbers. A landmark number is a number that helps you know where you are in the number system therefore you can use it to solve problems. For example, knowing the factors of 100 helps you to learn the factors of 300. Within this study, students are able to work with the factors of 100 and relate it to money. They utilize their basic knowledge of 100 to generalize it to the value of money. For example, there are four 25's in 100 and there are four quarters in a dollar. As students work with landmark numbers they utilize them to solve addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division problems. Their knowledge expands as they move from the concrete -100 objects to the more abstract - How many 25's in 500.

Students are sharing the joy of reading in small groups where they receive personal reading instruction. Each group shares the same book while reading one-on-one with the teacher to work on his/her personal goals. These goals may include: fluency, expression, word attack strategies, or comprehension. Students share in discussion about their reading where they may be engaged in predicting, retelling, summarizing, making connections, finding evidence in the text (to support an opinion), etc. Writing to reading is a skill that is extended in third grade. Students may be engaged in story mapping, responding to questions about their reading, retelling, or summarizing.



Third grade has taken a break from their study of Social Studies to concentrate on the Water Cycle. Both classes have been engaged in experiments to bring to life the components of the water cycle: condensation, evaporation, precipitation, transpiration. Moving beyond the physical science we discussed the impact of the water cycle on our lives and vice versa. In addition, the students are expanding their concept of engineering and technology through hands-on activities.

The Third Grade Team

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2008

	Welcome Back from vacation!			buy Lunch Tickets		
24	25	26	27	28	29	1
			PTO 7:30 pm	buy Lunch Tickets EARLY RELEASE		
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			EARLY RELEASE	buy Lunch Tickets		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
				buy Lunch Tickets	NO SCHOOL	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
				buy Lunch Tickets		School Auction 7 - 11
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
				buy Lunch Tickets		
30	31					

PTO NEWS and Business



PTO Minutes

Meeting: February 6, 2008

Principal Report: Dr. Barbara Brown

- Budget: On February 4 at the Budget Hearing Meeting, a 43+ million budget was approved. This is based on the recommendation that the superintendent had made. In order to fund this budget, an override is needed.
- The override vote will take place on Tuesday, March 25. A flyer with the facts of the implication if this does not pass has been produced. More information is on the website: <http://www.yesfornatick.org>
- A new superintendent has been hired –Peter Sanchioni, formerly superintendent of the Millis Schools. He is extremely reputable and excited to be the superintendent for Natick.
- 100 Day of School: Celebrated on Wednesday, February 6.
- 4th graders (Johnson School was randomly chosen and only school in Natick) to be part of a National Assessment through the Department of Education. This was given on Wednesday, February 6.
- All Johnson Faculty are focusing on literacy during their in-house development day (the remainder of the half day) on Thursday, February 7.
- Incoming Kindergarten Class: Currently there are 46 incoming kindergarten students to Johnson which would require 2 classrooms if the numbers remain constant.
- 4th Grade Class Trip: Lion King in NYC.
- 2nd Grade: Will be part of the Walnut Hill Performing Arts Program that Grade 3 was a part of last year. This is a 10 week program for 1 hour per week and culminates in a performance in the late spring.
- Campbell Soup label donation. A former Johnson parent donated 100,000 Campbell Soup labels (which Aimee Murray and other Johnson volunteer parents) counted and organized to Johnson School. This will be enough to buy new computers.
- From Title 1 funds: New computers were ordered last November and are hopefully being installed next week at Johnson. There will be 1 new computer per classroom.

PTO Business: Robin Macblane

The sock-hop was a great community builder and a lot of fun. A big thank you to Maryellen Kaye for organizing a great event!

Open Positions for next year:

Co-president (see Robin Macblane or Kristin Brothers for details)

Treasurer (Kim Schmid has volunteered)

Wrapping Paper fundraiser: Need someone to organize for fall 2008. This is one of Johnson's big fundraisers. Please see Robin Macblane for details)

Fall Fun Fair: Need someone to organize for fall 2008. Please see Judy Oxford for more details –Judy has organized for the past 2 years.

School Auction: Need someone to lead this effort in 2009. Please speak to Robin Macblane or Kristin Brothers for details.

- Natick Bags on sale at \$10 each to fund the 4th grade field trip to New York City.
- There are Johnson t- shirts and magnets available for purchase.
- School Vacation. February 18th -23rd.
- Next PTO meeting- March 5th

Proposition 2 ½ Override Update: Kim Schmid

There is a strong effort by parent volunteers (and MORE are needed) organizing the “YES for Natick” vote for the override. We need all parents to get out and vote YES on March 25 –otherwise there will be massive cuts that will affect our school and town services. Kim did a wonderful job of informing the PTO participants what efforts are underway and where help is needed. This is an enormous effort with a short time frame to work in. VOLUNTEERS are NEEDED for the following:

- Join in! The campaign is poised to launch. We need help in all Precincts across town –with tasks from small one-time efforts to larger ongoing commitments. This Saturday February 9, we'll make our first big visual impact with 40 volunteers needed to hold signs and hand out volunteer sheets at highly visible areas throughout Natick. If you're interested in helping within your precinct at any level or with holding signs on Saturday, please contact Precinct Coordinator, Firkins Reed (reedbarr@rcn.com).

WE MUST ACT TOGETHER NOW!! You are the most important part of our efforts. Come get involved!

PTO NEWS and Business continued...

Proposition 2 ½ Override Update: Kim Schmid continued...

- Donate. If you haven't yet, and you can, please send a donation in any amount to:
Yes! For Natick c/o Kimberlee Schmid, Treasurer 4 Atherton St. Natick, MA 01760
Donations will allow us to print signs, create brochures and other critical educational materials to share with our fellow voters, and conduct mailings.
- Endorse us. Whether or not you can donate, please consider publicly endorsing our campaign. To do so, just fill out an endorsement sheet and send it in. You can find one online at:
<http://www.yesfornatick.org/files/yesfornatick.pdf>.

The real campaign begins with you! We are depending on your energy and willingness to help keep Natick safe and strong!

Please contact Kimberlee Schmid, Firkins Reed on how you plan to help.

- Lawn Sign coordinators are needed
- Fact sheets need to be distributed door to door throughout the town
- People needed to hold signs at visible street corners for 1.5 hour shifts over the next 6 weeks
- Telephone calls need to be made.

Johnson School Auction:

Saturday: March 29 from 7-11 p.m. at The Sherborn Community Center. A live auctioneer will be there for big ticket items. There will be a special table for the 4th grade class trip –all proceeds for this table will go directly to funding that event (The Lion King in NYC)

Volunteers are needed for:

- Soliciting merchants for donations
- Setting up the tables, balloons etc the day of the event
- People to do 1 hour shifts at the event at the table where tickets are sold and where prizes are cashed out.

Please contact Robin Macblane if you can help.

Committee Reports:

Treasurer Report: Glynn Hawley

The PTO continues to fund Cultural Arts.

Incoming funds \$889 (\$556 wrapping paper –on-line sales, \$288 –Sock Hop, \$45 –sale of T-Shirts at Fall Fun Fair)

Cultural Arts: Carrie Hladick & Susie Grant

Cultural Arts has been busy over the last few weeks.

Caroline Ingalls –Grade 3&4

Mother Goose –Grade 1

Andrew Green –Grades 2/4: Local poet –very inspiring and positive with the children. All children write a poem and he finds something positive in all of them.

An Alaskan author is coming in 3 weeks for an all school event. She won Disney Teacher of the Year and is a Physical Education Teacher in Alaska. Cultural Arts and Laura Pastana are working on the best way to utilize the day for the Johnson School students.

Pcc: Lisa Landon

Most of the PCC has been devoted to the Override. Dr. Keefe has been spending a lot of time with PCC reps on understanding what the lack of funding will mean –lack of response from the Town on things that Natick residents have come to expect. High School Update: Currently a committee is working on showing that if a new high school is built it is a school of the future and will still be a viable infrastructure in 2025. This is needed to get the next level of go ahead for proceeding with funding (getting 48 cents for every dollar spent on a new high school by the State)

PTO Meeting – Wednesday, March 5th @ 7:30pm, baby sitting available in the gym. A School committee member will be our guest speaker at the March meeting.

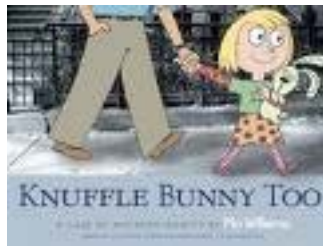
..from the Library

“And the Winner Is”.. Yes, the Caldecott and Newbery Awards were announced last month. What a great way to spend our first snow day, listening to the livefeed from the ALA meeting in Philadelphia.

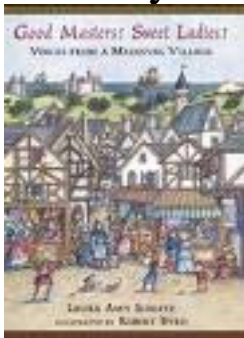
Caldecott winner:



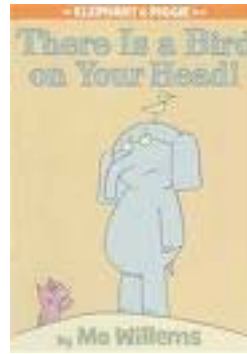
Caldecott Honors:



Newbery Winner:



Mo Willems of *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* fame won the Theodor Geisel award for best Reader book. *There is a Bird on Your Head* is the latest in Willems' Elephant and Piggie series, and it is a hit with all ages. Our aged technology here in the library does not allow students to access websites because most sites require FlashPlayer. If your child has access at home, we strongly recommend Mo Willems' website <http://www.mowillems.com/>



There are many characters to interact with as well as bios, bibliographies and print outs. Thanks to David (KB) for reminding us of this fun resource.

What's blooming in the library??? A Johnson Spring ritual has begun. Ask your

child....

Ah, February – so much activity!

Chinese New Year

This Next New Year (Wong), *Dim Sum for Everyone* (Lin), *The Story of Chopsticks* (Compestone) – with recipe!!

Groundhog Day

Groundhog Gets a Say (Swallow),

100 Acts of Kindness

Goodness Gorillas, *Tiny and Ernest*, *What Pets Teach Us*, *Best Friends: The true story of Owen and Mzee*, *Mama* (Winter)

Presidents Day

A. Lincoln and Me (Borden), *Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers* –All School Primary Vote – in Library February 5th!!

Black History Awareness

Henry's Freedom Box (Levine), *The Patchwork Path* (Stroud)

Many thanks to the "Usborne Books" families:

The Roberts, Basch/Reckerts, Johnsons, Ordways, Seiches, Stunkels, and Wises.

Your choices were superb and so popular with all students, that we have a reserve list for each one. Thank you so much.

Whew! Stay Tuned,

Mrs. Mangan and Mrs. Berg

Libraries

Are

Necessary

Gardens,

Unsurpassed

At

Growing

Excitement

*Necessary Gardens—JP Lewis

Deadline for APRIL Gazette Submissions Friday MARCH 14

All submissions via electronic format must be in MS Word or typed in the body of your email for cut/paste into the Gazette template.

Please send all electronic submissions to:

Dori Ross doriross@comcast.net 508-651-2478
Krista Whalen kristawhalen@rcn.com 508-650-9812

All other submissions can be dropped off in the box labeled Gazette in the office. Any questions feel free to contact us at the numbers above. Thank you for your continued support!

TOWN OF NATICK - OPEN POSITION Part-Time Volunteer Resource Coordinator

Natick Council on Aging is seeking a part-time (12-19 hours per week) volunteer resource coordinator. Recruitment, orientation, training, placement and supervision of over 200 volunteers. Bachelor's degree or equivalent and 2-3 years experience managing volunteers; database, spreadsheet and word experience a must; public relations and presentation experience a plus. Pay starts at \$12.00 per hour, flexible schedule, does not include benefits. Position description at Town Administrator or COA offices and online at www.natickma.gov.

Resume and/or Town of Natick application to Personnel Director, Town Hall, 13 East Central Street, Natick, MA 01760 or e-mail at Bdennis@natickma.org. Applications will be accepted until a suitable candidate is found. The Town of Natick is an Equal Opportunity Employer.