Clinton Courier

A Publication of the Clinton Parent Teacher Association Issue 9. May 2009

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

According to a French proverb, April showers bring forth May flowers. They are indeed beautiful, but along with the rebirth of nature we experience a plethora of other "spring things" such as allergies, bug bites, spring colds, mud, grass stains, spring cleaning, as well as district and state testing. Along with the not-so-welcome spring things, we do get to enjoy spring sports, warm days and nights, nature in all its glory, being outdoors, planting gardens, the school fair, and the beginning of our end-of-year field trips and celebratory activities.

As we begin our end-of-year events, there sometimes comes a collective sigh from many thinking that testing is complete therefore school is finished. I am here to remind you that this school year is not over yet. We still have a lot of work to do to get our Clinton kids ready for next year. They will still be learning new concepts, completing homework and projects, and vigorously reading. So, thank you for keeping your expectations as high as ours.

Speaking of next year, a tremendous amount of work has already begun to plan for a smooth transition. One of our biggest tasks is to create class lists for next year's classes. It is a very arduous task, takes a lot of time, and must be completed by the teachers who have very specific criteria to follow ensuring the fairest classes for next year. With this in mind, I ask that if you feel the need to speak with your child's current teacher or me about next year, you should share what type of teacher your child would be successful with. Please do not ask any teacher or me for a teacher by name.

Finally, to all our Clinton parents, guardians, and staff who love, care for, adore, enjoy, and inspire our Clinton kids every day, I wish you a joyous Mother's Day filled with breakfast in bed, heartfelt drawings and poems, and an unlimited supply of hugs and dark chocolate.

A Mother's Love

Your arms were always open when I needed a hug. Your heart understood when I needed a friend. Your gentle eyes were stern when I needed a lesson. Your strength and love has guided me and gave me wings to fly.

— Sarah Malin

Enjoy your special day, Patty

MAY-AT-A-GLANCE

MAI-AI-A-GLANCE	
ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH	
TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK	
TEACHER APPRECIATION LUNCH, 3 PM	
PLANT SALE PICK-UP DAY	
TEACHERS' BOOK FAIR PREVIEW LUNCH, 11:15 AM-1:15 PM	
CLINTON SPRING FAIR	
SPRING SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR	
KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION, 9-11 AM	
PTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, 7:15 PM	
LOCOMANIA, 1 PM (GRADES 2, 3, 5, GORDON & ACCURSO) & 2 PM (GRADES K, 1, & 4)	
SCHOOL CLOSED, MEMORIAL DAY MEMORIAL DAY PARADE, 8:15 AM, COLUMBIA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PARKING LOT	
GENERAL PTA MEETING, 7:15 PM	
COMING IN JUNE	
CARIBBEAN HERITAGE MONTH	
FIELD DAY (RAIN DATE JUNE 5 th)	
SCHOOL PRIDE DAY	



PTA BOARD 2008-09

President

Cecelia Cancellaro 973-763-1730 ccancellaro@verizon.net

First Vice President

Karen Betheil
973-762-3474 kbetheil@verizon.net

Vice Presidents

Fundraising

Rosanna McCrear 973-763-9588 rosanna@mccrear.com

Assistant, Alanna Muñoz

973-762-1797 alannamunoz@metaplan.com

Cultural Arts

Jackie Lahey 973-313-9757 jaclahey@aol.com

Public Relations

Deb Yohannan

973-761-4055 deb1105@optimum.net

Membership

Erica Dussman 973-763-1717 solutionstosavor@earthlink.net

<u>Treasurer</u>

Kim Kushmerick

Recording Secretary

Jung Lee Masters

Corresponding Secretary

Robyn Birdsong-Frazier

Clinton Courier

Editor, Liz Herring

973-378-3099 echerring@verizon.net

Cultural Heritage Month Coordinator

Tricia Bloom

ESL Liaison

Sandra Tomlinson

Members-at-Large

Patty O'Connell Liz Salituri

President Emeritus

Leah Gomberg

Teacher Representatives

Meta Johnson (mjohnson@somsd.k12.nj.us) Susan Froelich (sfroelich@somsd.k12.nj.us) Jill Fox (jfox@somsd.k12.nj.us)

Principal

Patricia O'Neill 973-378-7686/poneill@somsd.k12.nj.us

Assistant to the Principal

Ann Bodnar

973-378-7686/abodnar@somsd.k12.nj.us

FROM THE PTA PRESIDENT

Every month is a green month at Clinton School, but April was even greener than usual! Our first Earth Day Hat Parade was a grand success and we thank Patty O'Neill for starting this tradition when she was on staff at Jefferson School and bringing it with her to Clinton. Led by art teacher **Christine Tischio** and music teacher **Rebecca Martin**, students made hats and musical instruments out of recycled materials and proudly displayed their creations during a parade on the Clinton School grounds on Earth Day.

April also marks the month that we began collecting lots and lots of recyclables to build our Clinton School Memorial Day Parade float! This major project is well underway thanks to the leadership of PTA Board member **Jackie Lahey**, three of our very creative and ambitious parents, **Heather Kern**, **Jeremy Moss**, and **Melissa Healey**, and a host of other volunteers who have come forward with garage space, trucks, and various other must-have items for building floats, including the **Goodman-Merel** Family and the **Dussman** Family. Not only will we have the only float in the Memorial Day Parade, but we will have one that is made out of 100% recycled materials. Heather Kern and Jackie Lahey shared the design with us at April's PTA meeting and it promises to be amazing. Please join us as we build the float and plan on marching with us on Memorial Day. Details are on page 4.

Thanks to **Nancy Friedman** we will also be starting a new recycling initiative (hard plastic bottle caps) in connection with Aveda. Watch for news of this toward the end of the school year. Thanks must also go to the **Reiss-Zachara** family, who work very hard all year long to keep our juice pouch recycling efforts running smoothly and to the **Deutsch-Dornfeld** family for coming up with the idea to have a spring plant sale that supports Clinton and a local nursery, while making our world a little greener in the process.

A very big thank you must also be delivered to our amazing students. Their awareness and conviction are what makes all of these initiatives so successful, and the zeal with which they recycle and conserve is inspiring!

Clinton's bold commitment to our environment has become an integral part of who we are and how we think about the world and these efforts have not gone unnoticed. Clinton and our very green principal, **Patty O'Neill**, were featured in a story in *The Local* (a local NY Times website/blog) this past month, and the story was reprinted in the New Jersey section of the Sunday *New York Times* a week later. *The Local* also reprinted, in full, an article about Clinton's green initiatives by fourth graders **Jamie B.** and **Ruby Z.** from our first student newspaper, the *Clinton Kids Connection*.

Kudos to all who continue to make our school, and our world, a little greener every day.

Cecelia

PTA MEETING: MIDDLE SCHOOL TRANSITION

Please join us for our next PTA meeting on Thursday, May 28th, at 7:15 pm.

Principal Kirk Smith of South Orange Middle School will talk about the transition to 6th grade and will answer your questions. You'll also get to hear from last year's student government president Hannah Gibbons about the middle school experience. HSA President Karen Hilton will also be on hand.

The nominees for our 2009-2010 PTA Board will be confirmed during this meeting.

Babysitting will be provided for children aged 4 and above.

CLASSROOM NEWS

Classroom News provides a wonderful opportunity for everyone in the Clinton community to learn about all the innovative and inspiring activities that engage students during the school day. Thank you to all those who've been sending in reports; they are very much appreciated. If you would like to have your child's classroom experiences included in next month's *Courier*, send an email to Bob Hugel at bhugel@scholastic.com.

Third Grade The entire third grade celebrated Earth Day by going to see the Disney movie "Earth." The third graders are also working on their inventions for the Invention Convention coming up at the end of the month.

Fifth Grade To celebrate Earth Day, the fifth grade participated in the school's Parade of Recyclable Hats. Students put together unique and creative designs. They would like to thank art teacher Ms. Tischio for her amazing support with this project.

The fifth graders worked hard on their science projects for the annual fifth grade science fair. Their impressive efforts were on view at the fair, which took place in the cafeteria on May 1st.

THE RENAISSANCE FAIR IS COMING!

Here ye, here ye! The Clinton School Renaissance Fair will take place on **Saturday**, **May 16th**, **11 am–3 pm**, on the Clinton School grounds. It's an event not to be missed, so mark your calendars now!

Get ready for a fun-filled day! You can make costume crafts including hats, wands, capes, pouches, and more or enjoy the Lady of Aquataine Dunk Tank, High Striker, Inflatable Rides, Face Painting, Fortune Teller, Prizes, Fayre Play Games, DJ Tunes from the Musique Forte, Jugglers, and much more! Visit the Troll's Tavern for lunch and snacks—expanded menu includes BBQ chicken, hot dogs, burgers, pizza, salad, and lots more! Plus our all-new Confection Cauldron has cotton candy and ice cream! Be sure to visit Merlin's Mystical Maze, which will be open all day long and is free! There will also be Free Chess Play all day! Special Events include a Renaissance Costume Processional at 1 pm and a Human Chess Game from 1:10 – 2 pm.

Of course with so many great activities we'll need lots of volunteers. Can you help with set-up, break-down, or just cover a booth for an hour? Please contact Leah Gomberg at ldgomberg@verizon.net or 973-275-0927 or Deb Yohannan at deb1105@optimum.net or 973-761-4055. Thanks in advance for your support!

Avoid the lines and get a price break by getting tickets in advance. You can save \$5 by purchasing 50-Ticket Family Value Packs for \$20! Send the form below along with your check in an envelope marked "Fair Advance Tickets" to school with your child. Tickets will be waiting for you at the ticket booth on the day of the fair. Please make your check payable to Clinton School PTA and please include your phone number on the check.

Name:	Telephone:
Number of Value Packs:	
Child's Name:	Teacher:

HILTON BRANCH LIBRARY

1

The Hilton Branch Library will be celebrating its 50th birthday with a day-long line-up of events on Saturday, May 30th. Come for live music, food from your favorite restaurants, crafts, a dance demo, contests, prizes, and fun for the whole family.

Clinton kindergarten teacher Kathy Shelffo was one of several district teachers awarded a 2009 Michelle T. Riecke Teaching Fellowship for her professional development experience this summer. Next year she and the other Riecke fellows will present workshops for their school colleagues to bring the materials and strategies they acquired at these training programs to more classrooms in the district. Congratulations, Mrs. Shelffo!

SUPPLY KITS FOR NEXT YEAR

It's hard to believe that it's time to think about school supplies for next year, but it is! The pre-packed school supply kits will be put together using specific school supply lists provided by Clinton teachers. The company we use—School Kidz USA—features quality products like Crayola, Prang, and Staples at competitive prices. There are many advantages to getting your back-toschool supplies this way including not having to spend time shopping and not having to pay taxes on the supplies. Order forms for each grade will be sent home in backpacks shortly. This will be your only chance to order the kits (deadline is June 12th), which will be available for pick up the day before the first day of school and the morning of the first day of school. If you have questions, please contact Leah Gomberg at 973-275-0927 or ldgomberg@verizon.net.

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Many thanks to the students and families who helped us create a vibrant Clinton family tree for the Family Heritage display in April: Sofija and Laila G. and family, Allison P. and family, Scott and Lance M. and family, and Maura D. and family.

May is Asian Heritage Month so check out the new display in the display case. We will have another raffle at the end of the month. Students entering the raffle: please write both your first and last name on the raffle form. Thank you.—*Tricia Bloom*

FIELD DAY IS COMING SOON!

Get your sneakers on and get ready to have fun at this year's field day, scheduled for **June 3**rd (rain date June 5th). More information will be sent home in backpacks later this month, but if you'd like to lend a hand in the festivities, please email Jeff Lehman at jlehman@somsd.k12.nj.us.

GET READY FOR LOCOMANIA!

The Clinton PTA, in collaboration with our awesome physical education teachers, **Mr. Jeff Lehman** and **Ms. Jordyn Freede**, is proud to announce a fun new fitness fundraiser—**LocoMania!**

On Thursday, May 21st at 1 pm (Grades 2, 3, Gordon, Accurso & 5) and at 2 pm (Grades K, 1, & 4), all Clinton students will spend fifty minutes skipping, hopping, galloping, and dancing on the Underhill Field Track led by Mr. Lehman and Ms. Freede. Music will be provided by Clinton Dad and resident DJ Jeremy Moss. The Electric Slide, the Hokey Pokey, the Cha Cha Slide, and YMCA are just a few of the fun dances they'll do. Students will be learning these dances during their physical education classes in the weeks leading up to the event, so they'll be eager to show off their moves!

Pledge sheets will be sent home the week of May 4th and students can ask family, friends, and neighbors to sponsor them (either through a flat rate pledge or by pledging a particular amount for the three 15 minute segments). One hundred percent of the profits will go to Clinton School. All students will participate in the event, whether or not they seek pledges. Pledge forms and payment must be sent to school by **June 1**st.

We will also be taking our annual **Rainbow Photo** that day, so please have your child dressed in the color requested for their grade. See list below:

Grade 5 & Gordon & Accurso - red

Grade 4 - orange

Grade 3 – yellow

Grade 2 - green

Grade 1 - blue

Kindergarten - purple

If you can volunteer to hand out water, keep things organized, and cheer on our great kids, please contact **Leah Gomberg** (**ldgomberg@verizon.net or 973-275-0927**). We need lots of help to keep things running smoothly!

LIGHTS! CAMERA! BOOK FAIR!

The **Spring Scholastic Book Fair** kicks off at the Clinton Renaissance Fair on **May 16**th and runs through **May 22**nd. It's a great opportunity to stock up on summer reading. We're always looking for extras on the book fair set, extra help that is, whether it's setting up, decorating, supplying refreshments for the teachers' preview luncheon, working during the fair, or packing up. So if you can spare a few hours to volunteer, please contact Liz Herring at 973-378-3099 or echerring@verizon.net.

Many thanks to **Geralyn's Art Studio** for its support of the Around the World in 80 Minutes show.

Thanks also go to **County-to-County Landscaping** for lending a trailer to use for the Clinton School float and to **MGM Properties**, owned by Clinton's Goodman-Merel family, for lending their truck to pull the float.

MARCH WITH CLINTON IN THE MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

Thank you so much for all your donations of recycled items for the Clinton float. The response to our request has been overwhelming! We now have enough of most materials, but we still need the following items: **used, clean aluminum foil, soda cans, and blue plastic bags.** There's a drop-off bin inside Clinton's front entrance, or you can bring your donations to Erica and Mike Dussman's house, 16 Highland Avenue. Thank you!

We have four float-building days scheduled. If you would like to participate in one or more, please email Jackie Lahey at jaclahey@aol.com. On **Saturday**, **May 9**, **10 am to 12 noon**, we will be meeting at two places:

At Jeremy Moss's house, 10 Beach Street, we will construct the foundation of the float elements. Bring your tools, but *not* your kids, to this building session.

At Erica and Mike Dussman's house, 16 Highland Avenue, we will sort and clean the recycled items as well as cut bags into usable sizes. Adults and children are welcome. Please bring scissors.

The other work days will take place at the Dussman's house. We will decorate and put the finishing touches on the float. All are welcome!

Sunday, May 17, 1 - 4 pm Saturday, May 23, 10 am – 3 pm Sunday, May 24, 10 am - ?

Please plan to march in the parade, Monday, May 25. The Clinton contingent will assemble at the Columbia High School Student Parking Lot at 8:15 am. Every child must be accompanied by an adult. Every child is encouraged to march in costume, either as an item that Clinton recycles (ink cartridge, cell phone, juice pouch, etc.), or in a costume made of recycled materials. Prizes will be awarded for the most creative costumes! If you cannot march in costume, please wear a Clinton T-shirt or a red shirt. For more information, please contact Jackie Lahey at 973-313-9757 or jaclahey@aol.com.

PLANT SALE PICK UP

If you ordered plants from the Clinton PTA's Spring Plant Sale, you can pick up your orders on **Friday, May 8th**, **between 3 and 4 pm and 5 and 6 pm.** Plants must be picked up that day or they will be unattended for the weekend. If you are not able to pick up your plants at these times please contact Liz Deutsch at deutsch2001@verizon.net. The pick up area is tentatively scheduled to be the Cafe (the far end of the cafeteria). We will notify you if that changes.

AMAZING ASSEMBLY IN MAY

The Signature Project, a multi-faceted digital tapestry, is coming to Clinton Thursday, May 14, for performances at 1 and 2 pm. Its core is a huge 76x36-foot mural layered with hidden secrets. One layer is composed entirely of individual signatures, while other layers are revealed by using x-rays, magnetic fields, or ultraviolet lights. A live performance brings the mural to life, with artist Patrick Dunning ingeniously weaving stories and images in the great tradition of Irish artists. A unique, exhilarating tapestry blending art and technology, the live performance of The Signature Project also offers the opportunity for audience members to join over 300,000 people whose signatures already comprise the fabric of this monumental art work. Thanks again to the PTA for funding another awesome assembly. —Jackie Lahey

THE CLINTON GREEN

Did you know that you could lower your amount of garbage by up to 24 percent by simply starting a compost pile in your backyard? This means saving yourself money if you live in Maplewood, where we can opt for the one-can (instead of twocan) garbage pickup service.

Compost is organic material made from yard trimmings and food residuals that you build in your backyard. You can buy compost bins of all kinds, from the very high end Mantis ComposT-Twin, at a whopping \$500, to the very low end types of recycled plastic composters, at about \$80 each. Or, you can make an outdoor bin area yourself with some 2x4's and chicken wire; see how on www.bluegrassgardens.com. Skeptical? Here is some myth-busting about composting:

- 1. **It smells.** No, once the new food scraps are turned under, the pile smells like good clean earth.
- 2. **It's hard to make.** No, you can do absolutely nothing with your pile, and it will still turn to compost eventually.
- 3. **It takes time**. Yes, it does, but not *your* time! You can let it sit and stew; it will wait for you.
- 4. **It attracts vermin.** No, unless you already have a large colony of vermin, in which case, it's better to find out now rather than later.

What to put in? Any food scraps (vegetables, fruits, eggshells, coffee) but no animal fats (meat, fish, dairy) and any yard trimmings with no diseases, insects, weed seeds, or pesticides.

One easy guideline is to make layers of "green" and "brown" things to speed up the breakdown process. "Green" things are high in nitrogen (food scraps, grass clippings, plant trimmings); "brown" things are high in carbon (leaves, paper, hay, paper towel rolls). Another guideline is to turn over your pile with a pitchfork (or spin it in a barrel) about once a week so that, again, the pile will break down faster.

Once the compost is "cooked," it then becomes *humus*, or new soil. Many gardeners call it "black gold" because it is like heavenly manna for plants. Spread it underneath trees and shrubs in early spring, and sift it onto lawns during your fall seeding. It works wonders! —*Clare Payton*

BOX TOPS CLIPPERS

We collected \$90 worth of Box Tops in April! Great job! Keep on clipping! Please do not forget to write your child's name, grade, and teacher on the envelope or baggie so we can include them in the *Courier*. Any questions, contact Stephanie Mose at stephdog45@yahoo.com.

Kindergarten: Cosmas-Sylvie S., Grace U., Cole L.,

Kirah T., Jenna W. Shelffo- Ben B.

Swan- Tess B.

1st Grade: Cutrufello- Lila Z., Juliana Y.

Johnson- Ava L., Isabel W., Nate W.

Marr- Brian J.

Motz- Caroline L., Wyatt A., Kayla H.

2nd Grade: Froelich- Isabelle H., Joaquin T.,

Miranda L.

Hall- Ceci M.

Poutre- Mateo F., Josh R. Banks- Jayson B., Isaiah J.

Izzolino- Nickolas M., Christina R.

Kent- Roshaua H.

Pomares- James C., Valerie T.

4th Grade: Gordon- Richard M.

Johnson- Matthew H., Olivia H.

Power- Scott M., Nathan A.

5th Grade: Ceccaci- Alaina B., Zachary J.,

Christian M.

Kirkland- **Socrates M.** Fleming- **Dalila R.**

READATHON A BIG SUCCESS!

Clinton's first-ever Readathon was a great success. Thanks to our dedicated student readers, who **read 25,000 hours** during the 3-week program, we collected **\$2,500** to buy new books for the Clinton School Library. Sharon Edelberg, our librarian, is thrilled that she can place some very big book orders in the coming months. All the new editions will be on the shelves when school begins in September, and they will each carry a sticker inside that says the books were purchased with funds from Clinton School's First Readathon. Three lucky participants won gift cards to Words Bookstore in Maplewood Village (Emily H. in kindergarten, Ethan M. in 1st grade, and Josh R. in 2nd grade). Thanks to everyone for reading so much and for supporting our wonderful school library.

PTA BOARD NOMINATIONS

The PTA Board Nominating Committee (Nancy Friedman, Leah Gomberg, and Lorraine Storch) is delighted to announce the nominees for open slots on the 2009-2010 PTA Board. Below is a list of the open positions and the people who will fill them. The nominees will be confirmed at the general PTA meeting on May 28th.

President: Karen Betheil (who moves into the presidency after serving one year as vice president)

Vice President: Jung Lee Masters

Member-at-Large: Liz Salituri (returning)

Member-at-Large: Leah Gomberg

Vice President of Membership: Erica Dussman (returning)

Corresponding Secretary: Keli Tianga Recording Secretary: Elizabeth Aaron

GIVE THE GIFT THAT GIVES BACK TO OUR SCHOOLS

When considering how to express your thanks at the end of the year to a teacher, why not choose the one that teachers prefer over all other gifts: *simple words of appreciation* conveyed in a card. For a donation of just \$5 (or more!) each, SOMEF will create attractive thank you cards with your child's personal message printed inside, and deliver them to their recipients at their schools by June 19. Your donation promotes innovation in our schools, because tribute proceeds support **SOMEF Teacher Grants**, awarded in the fall for special classroom projects proposed by teachers in all nine schools. Honor Your Teacher tributes also make **excellent class gifts!** Find order forms in backpacks, at schools at www.somef.org, or by calling 973-762-3758. Pay by check or donations of \$50 or more can be made via PayPal on the website. **Place your order by June 8, 2009!**



Janet Walentiny's Bookmaking Workshop



A 5 day creative workshop in which an original story is transformed into an art book.

- · Ages 8 and up
- Utilize storyboarding for story development
- · Work with traditional and non-traditional art materials
- · Apply a variety of book-binding techniques
- · Includes a "Reading/Reception at the completion

Sessions scheduled for July and August 2009

For more information contact Janet Walentiny:

Phone: 973-275-0422 Email: walentinyj2@gmail.com

PAC UPDATE

Bathrooms We are very disappointed that some of our students are not respecting school bathrooms. This is especially a problem among boys right now at Clinton School. We are working with Temco, our custodial services company, to see that bathrooms are checked for cleanliness every half hour. This summer, the district plans to make bathroom steam cleaning, painting, and overall maintenance a project for the whole district. However, no amount of work on our part can eliminate this problem completely if students continue to abuse school property when they use our school bathrooms. Please remind your students to treat school bathrooms as neatly as they would at home. Also, remind your older students that their behavior serves as a guide for younger students who see them at school every day.

<u>Cafeteria</u> Some of our children are so excited to see their friends from other classes at lunch that they are forgetting to eat their lunch and have to rush through at the end of lunch in order to finish their food. Please remind your students to eat first, then join their friends to catch up! <u>Indoor Recess</u> Spring showers brought us May flowers and lots of indoor recess days. Remember that we try to rotate students through the auditorium, the gym when possible, and games in the classroom. We are always happy to see parents who can help out at recess to give children a chance to stretch and run a little.

<u>Throughout Building</u> Please continue talking to your children about being respectful of others. If a student is bullied or has a concern, they should speak to a teacher immediately. Mrs. Rollo, our social worker, continues to have class meetings where these issues are discussed.



FREE ELECTRICAL SAFETY INSPECTION
PLUS 10 % OFF YOUR NEXT ELECTRICAL JOB

MGM Properties Inc. – Electrical Contractor 468 Irvington Ave., South Orange, NJ 07079 973-763-2095 (O) or visit us at

www.mgmproperties.com

Please mention CLINTON DISCOUNT when you call for an appointment (This business is owned by a Clinton Family)