



# Tri-Town Topics

## A Publication of the Tri-Town Schools

Our Mission is to Inspire and Enable All Students to Think,  
to Learn, to Achieve and to Care.

Issue 40 - December 2008

### Junior High Musicians Share the Spirit of the Season

by Angie Vaughn, ORR JHS Chorus Director

On Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, the Junior High School Auditorium was the place to be for wonderful “sounds of the season”! The audience packed the room and enjoyed an evening of beautiful music from the very talented Old Rochester Regional Junior High students.

The concert began with selections from the Concert Band under the direction of Mr. Jim Farmer. In addition to performances of several holiday standards the crowd was entertained by “The Grinch” himself – Miguel Ortiz, while the band played “*You’re A Mean One, Mr. Grinch!*”

The JHS Chorus, directed by Mrs. Angie Vaughn and accompanied by Mrs. Michelle Gordon, performed next. From the once-again famous *Chipmunk Song* to the classic Andy Williams favorite *Most Wonderful Time of the Year*, the chorus sang with the spirit of the season in their hearts. Featured chorus members included Kristin Nasciemento, Eric Schroeder, and Lee Estes.

The final group to perform was the JHS Jazz Ensemble also under the direction of Mr. Farmer. Several students had the opportunity to “show their chops” as soloists in the Horace Silver standard *Sister Sadie*. And the Jazz Band closed the evening with *Let it Snow!*

As always, Mr. Farmer and Mrs. Vaughn were delighted with the outstanding presentation given by these hard-working young musicians. BRAVO! and HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!!

### Rochester Memorial School Celebrates All Families

by Christine McDonagh, School Adjustment Counselor

November is National Adoption Awareness Month. Throughout the month of November, students and staff at Rochester Memorial School learned many interesting facts and statistics about adoption and families. Information was shared by various students in grades 1-6 during the

morning announcements and through a student created display case. Facts that were shared included the definition of adoption, the numbers of children adopted annually, where most adopted children come from, famous people who were adopted. Students in several classrooms were treated to stories and discussions about families and adoption. Activities were done that helped students to think about people within their own families who have helped them to become the people they are today. The month’s events culminated in a family celebration on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. This event was attended by approximately 15 students and their families. The event included teacher, student, and parent speakers sharing their own adoption experiences. Sixth grade students read poems on adoption and foster care. Guest speakers from Adoption Journeys shared information with families on how their program may be helpful to families as their adopted children grow. The event was an opportunity for families of adopted children to meet and talk with one another. Thank you to all of the students, families, and staff who helped make this event memorable.

### A Seussically Successful Show!

by Pearl Carter, Grade 8, ORR Junior High School

Where can you find problem-free places like Solla Sollew or “a place that is tidy and totally clean” like a planet called Who? For two nights, November 12 and 13, at 7:00 p.m. you could have found it all on the stage of Old Rochester Regional Junior High School. However, while you were engrossed in the magic of the stage, the students who were performing were possibly thinking “This is it, all I have worked for, all of the teamwork I have learned, it all comes down to this. Just smile and sing”.

This year Mrs. Vaughn, head of the drama club, was happy to present *Seussical, Jr.*, a wonderfully wacky musical that weaves together a number of favorite Dr. Seuss stories and characters. Horton the elephant, The Cat in the Hat, The Sour Kangaroo, and Miss Gertrude McFuzz are just a few of those you would have met along the way.

Horton was played by Justin Smilan. Donning a grey body suit and creative trunk and mask, this kid really

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played the part! The Cat in the Hat played by Lee Estes is a character we all know and love. This time he's back and more mischievous than ever, adding spice to some of the characters included in the show (Dr. Dake, for example). He was a bundle of energy on stage and showed no fear as he performed for the crowd. "Twas a Sour Kangaroo!" was Nikki Enos's opening line as she belted out the presentation of her character in the song "Biggest Blame Fool" where most of the cast are introduced. This sassy, brassy kangaroo told it like it was when she let Horton know that she, and the rest of the Jungle, disliked the newfound dust. Last, and with a tail that *is* the least, was Gertrude McFuzz played by Colleen Packard. She is Horton's next door neighbor and after seeing how thoughtful and caring Horton is she falls madly in love with him. Sadly, Gertrude only has one feather on her tail and she decides herself that she needs more to impress him.

All in all, the creative story line, the wonderful parts and costumes, as well as the melodic songs blew away the crowd every night while it was all performed by middle school students. I must say that I will not be surprised when the children perform a different play with the same awe inspiring results next year. Well done, kids!

### **Colleen Sinnott Named Superintendent's Award Winner**

by Bill Cooper

At the December 9 meeting of the Old Rochester Regional School Committee, Colleen Sinnott of Mattapoisett was recognized with the awarding of the Superintendent's certificate for 2008-09. The award made annually is presented to the senior class student with the highest grade point average at the end of the junior year. The winner must also have an outstanding record with respect to school involvement and citizenship as reported by the High School guidance department and the school principal.

Ms. Sinnott proved to be a very strong candidate for the 2008-09 award. At the end of her junior year her GPA stood at 4.547, ranking her first in a class of 158 students. Colleen's transcript through her first three years of high school includes 22 course grades: 20 A's and 2 A-'s. Her course schedule for all four years of high school has been a.) very full and b.) very challenging (AP and honors in all possible choices). Additionally, the report of ORR guidance officials concerning Colleen's involvement in the school community indicates that she continues to be an active participant and leader in many school activities, most notably athletics where she is a varsity performer in both field hockey and basketball.

In receiving the award from the ORR Superintendent, William Cooper, on December 9, Ms. Sinnott expressed

appreciation for the opportunities offered at Old Rochester and told the School Committee members that her post ORR plans included pre-med study in her undergraduate years.

### **ORR Music Students to Attend District Festival**

The music teachers of the Old Rochester School District (Jim Farmer, Angie Vaughn, and Amanda Fillio) are very proud to announce that several students will represent ORR at the annual Southeast District Junior Music Festival. The junior festival features outstanding music students in grades 7 through 9 from throughout southeastern Massachusetts. It will take place at Attleboro High School in early March.

Students are accepted to the festival by audition only and spend many hours outside of school in preparation. Congratulations are in order for these very talented young musicians.

Violinists - Laura Eklund, Violet Foulk  
Trombonist - Regina Kaplan  
Jazz-Alto Saxophonist - Michael Bliss  
Vocalists - Nicole Enos, Mikayla Florio, Alicia LaRock, and Tess Roiter



Jim Farmer, Director of the ORR Junior High School Band, announces the winners for Districts at the Christmas Concert on December 11

### **Teacher Visits from Thailand**

by Bill Cooper

The area AFS teacher/student exchange program representatives, Elizabeth Leatham of Marion and Susan Thomas of Quincy, met recently with John Amaral, Principal at ORR High School, Kevin Brogioli, Principal at ORR Junior High School, Jane McCarthy, Marion SC Chairperson, and Superintendent Bill Cooper, to introduce Mr. Kasem Yangning a 32 year-old visiting teacher from Thailand. Mr. Yangning will be staying for the balance of the school year with Mr. and Mrs. Hartley at 585 Front Street in Marion. His visit for the remainder of the school year will be divided in rough proportions: ORR and SU 55 elementary schools = 40%; Apponequet and Lakeville-Freetown Schools = 40% ( Mrs. Hartley is a teacher at Apponequet ); and Tabor Academy = 20%. Ms Leatham

will serve as Mr. Yangning's mentor during the six remaining months. He began his visit to our schools as an observer in the JHS on December 15, 2008. As time passes, the opportunity for Mr. Yangning to offer ORR and SU 55 students opportunities to learn about Thailand will be developed. He presented a list of topics that will surely provoke some interest (Thai elephants, Thai masks and much more).

In Thailand Mr. Yangning teaches English in a grades 7-12 magnet school specializing in math and science and will, in all likelihood, be department chairman in his school next year.



(left to right) Susan Thomas (AFS Mass Bay Visiting Teacher Coordinator), Kasem "Arboo" Yangning, Elizabeth Leatham (AFS Mass Bay Volunteer Coordinator)

## Rochester Memorial Building Project Gathers Steam

by Steve Shiraka, District Facilities Manager

The efforts to address the severe overcrowding problem at Rochester Memorial School are moving along. The proposed project has gained the endorsement of the Massachusetts School Building Assistance Board (MSBA). The MSBA, after responding favorably to the RMS Statement of Interest submitted by the school administration guided by Sharon Hartley, School Committee Chair, has authorized the RMS Building Committee, under the leadership of Chairman Arne Johnson, to receive proposals for and award a contract to PMA Services for project management and their assistance in the hiring of an architectural firm to finish the next step in the process, which is the project feasibility study.

At a special town meeting on October 20, 2008, voters overwhelmingly approved the appropriation of approximately \$360,000 dollars, 50% of which is refundable to the town by the MSBA, for the hiring of the project management firm and an architectural firm to carry out the feasibility study.

The building committee and project manager are now in the process of refining the proposal request that will be advertised for the hiring of an architect for the proposed project.

Once the feasibility study is finished and approved by the MSBA, the school and building committees will have an estimate of what the renovation/expansion project will cost the taxpayers of Rochester. Kudos to all who have worked to get the proposed project to this critical point!

## Giant Globe Visits Rochester Memorial School

by Susan Keane, Grade 6 Teacher at RMS

The giant globe balloon visited RMS in September. Sue Keane's 6th graders acted as greeters and guides to enable most of the school to take part in visiting the virtual world. The PTO sponsored this visit. Professors from Bridgewater State College and Map Lady Rosalie Sokol facilitated this adventure.



Rochester Memorial 6<sup>th</sup> grade students with the Giant Globe (front left to right) Patrick Sullivan, Jonathan Perreira, Sam York, Samantha Edwards, Norman L'Heureux, Katie Colwell, Rebekah Avila, Ashley Pacheco, and Abbey Bentz (back left to right) Mrs. Keane, Justin Resendes, Sarah Rogers, Ellie Sullivan, Nathan Pires, Ralph Gifford, Levi Hartley, Jennifer Aguiar, Tucker Mendonca, Ryan Manning, Eric St. John and Dylan Galipeau

## Mission to Liberia Celebration

by Susan Keane, Grade 6 Teacher at RMS

A Mission to Liberia celebration was held at Old Rochester Regional Junior High School in October to celebrate the success of a book drive that was held last year at Rochester Memorial School.

Sue Keane's 6th graders collected thousands of gently used books. These books were sent to Liberia and given to children who had never owned a book before in their lives. Mike Cambra, former Rochester Memorial teacher, established this charity after meeting Joseph, a Liberian refugee. The Glorious Lamps musical group had the students dancing in the aisles.

## FY 10 Budget Proposals in Draft Form

by Bill Cooper

The finance/budget sub-committees of the four Tri-Town School Committees are considering budget proposals for the 2009-2010 school year developed in draft

form by the administrative staffers responsible to the different districts.

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Realizing the need to be mindful of the shrinking economy and poor prospects of much good news on local, state or national financial fronts in the foreseeable future, the FY 10 budget proposals are conservative.

Throughout January, February and early March there will be numerous efforts involving school officials, town officials and citizens in each town to develop budget proposals that will be supportive of the Tri-Town public school mission and also gain passage at the annual town meetings in May and June.

The budget meeting schedule as of December 15 is as follows:

January 12 – Draft approved budgets (all 4) by School Committee – Finance/Budget Sub-committees. Set for review by full School Committees (all 4 districts) in January

February 2 – 3 table meeting (hearing for officials)

March\* 3 – ORR Public Hearing

March 10 – ORR School Committee vote on FY 10 proposal

\*Elementary Budget Hearings

March 9 – Mattapoissett

March 18 – Marion

March 19 – Rochester

Elementary Budgets will be voted by respective School Committees on these same dates if there is not a substantial controversy emerging from the hearing.

## February and April Vacation Video Camps at ORCTV

Kimberly Miot, Executive Director,  
Old Rochester Community Television

ORCTV is offering two video production camps to Tri-Town youth. These camps will run during the weeks of February and April vacation. Participants will learn digital camcorders, editing and studio production.

The cost is \$100 per child per session, ages 12-15. Price includes snacks, t-shirt and annual membership. For more information or to register, please contact ORCTV at 508-748-1600 or [www.orctv.org](http://www.orctv.org). Space is limited.

### February Session

Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 19<sup>th</sup> 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

### April Session

Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup> 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

We will also be offering summer expanded camps (July and August, 2 weeks each). Call to inquire or reserve a slot.

## ***The Man Who Came to Dinner . . . a Scrumptious Performance!***

by Paul Sardinha, Drama Production Advisor

Much, MUCH thanks to Helen Blake and her terrific group of costume ladies! Everybody looked wonderful!

All the Drama Club parents of FORD. The lobby, tickets, refreshments . . . all looked great!

As for the tech crew . . . you were the best! You students really pulled together on this one! The set came out beautifully and the props worked very well.

The actors were constantly professional.

It was an extremely successful production and, once again, the students of ORR made a little more than 1,000 people very, VERY happy!!



Exceptional acting, top-notch set design and remarkable costumes provided a brilliant combination in the ORR High School drama production, directed by Paul Sardinha. Performers (left to right) Jillian Zucco, Grant Patton and Koby Williamson

## **Bulldog Bones**

by Kendall Nelson, Class of 2009, *Paw Prints* Sports Editor

With the chilly winter season come some hot sports teams at Old Rochester Regional. With winter athletics in full swing, the girls' and boys' track teams have had their first meet against Apponequet at the New Bedford Voc-Tech indoor track. Both girls and boys dominated the meet. The boys had the talent of top runners Alex Goodman (sprinter) and Dana Dourdeville (distance). Newcomer Zach Choquette proved himself in the field events, placing second in high jump. The girls' team won, scoring 79 points to Apponequet's 10. The girls easily swept the 50 dash with sprinters Shannon O'Donoghue, Kathryn Vicino, and Destiny Kirker. Shot put was also a

success as the girls swept with star Freshman Ryann Monteiro coming in first.

Every tri-town sports fan looks forward to the Old Rochester hockey games played at Tabor Academy. The boys have yet to play their first real match, but the star players are certainly well known around school. Seniors Brennan Goguen, Jon MacDougall, and Tommy Haverty plan to dominate the ice. Junior Gage Silva also shows promise, expected to help his team skate their way to success.

The Boys' Basketball team will host Dighton-Rehoboth on Tuesday, December 16, in their first game of the year. The boys have had two scrimmages against Westport and Coyle-Cassidy. Westport was a success and Coyle more of an obstacle, but the boys got the chance to play all together before their first real competition. There is a chance that the boys will have to play without key forward John Coucci after an ankle injury during practice this past Sunday.

The Girls' Basketball team also looks forward to their first game away at Dighton-Rehoboth. The girls have speed along the perimeter with guards Michelle Franklin, Gretchen Bobola, and Brittany Lees. The girls are stacked underneath with senior Colleen Sinnott and talented sophomore Sarah Coucci. This game certainly won't be a cakewalk considering the girls will be matched up against star inside player Mary Nwachukwu of DR. The senior has a full ride to Boston College and is ranked high up in the state. The ORR girls should not be underestimated, as they have they have both the experience and the potential to have a successful season.

As the winter season had just begun, sports fans should look forward to many exciting and competitive matches.



ORR Winter Sports Captains (front left to right) Gretchen Bobola, Brittany Lees, Meghan Murphy (back left to right) Tyler Frantz, Brennan Goguen, Tommy Morss, John MacDougall, Colleen Sinnott, Shannon O'Donoghue, Alyson Wall

## Rochester Memorial 6<sup>th</sup> Graders Attend Geography Fair

by Susan Keane, Grade 6 Teacher at RMS

The Geography Fair was held at Bridgewater State College on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Sue Keane's 6<sup>th</sup> graders entered their project: Mapping the Americas. They won three awards: Best Presentation, Best Maps and Most Creative.



Rochester Memorial 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who attended the Geography Fair (kneeling left to right) Ashley Pacheco, Ellie Sullivan, Abbey Bentz, Rebekah Avila (middle row left to right) Tucker Mendonca, Ralph Gifford, Gene Robidoux, Ryan Manning, Katie Colwell, Norman L'Heureux (back row left to right) Jennifer Aquiar, Sam York, Levi Hartley, Jonathan Perreira, Ben Mimoso, Sarah Rogers

## Life After ORR

by Mack Williamson, Class of 2008  
The New School for Jazz and  
Contemporary Music, Class of 2012

College? What is that?

Starting over. That is exactly what college was and is for me. I came to my new home at the end of the summer and haven't looked back. I mean, I visited my parent's place once or twice but my home is New York City. Obviously, that is quite a statement. I am a first semester freshman at an expensive school in an expensive city studying for a degree that literally means nothing. I wouldn't trade this for anything.

School is school and I study music - finally. I am in a cultural mecca and the jazz capital of the world and I couldn't be happier. I see a great show almost every weekend, depending on how my wallet feels, and I walk around my school with legends of jazz that I have only heard on recordings. It's a trip.

One of the hardest challenges I have found in this first semester was keeping contact with friends from home. For a while I attempted to keep in touch until the workload wore away at my time. Work absorbs us all and sometimes the seemingly "easiest thing" turns out to be the hardest. I'm sure that all of the class of 2008 would agree that a break and a fresh start was needed.

Being in the jazz capital of the world, problems for a music major may arise. I am currently surrounded by the most avant-garde and contemporary music and I am quite

overwhelmed. I came to this city with a good idea of what style and scene of the current (and sadly diminishing) jazz

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movement I wanted to be a part of. I was wrong. I am completely disoriented and cannot see the light at the end of the tunnel.

So here I am, sitting underneath my lofted bed, the night before this "assignment" is due, in the dark, listening to what most of you might call "noise", waiting for a phone call to confirm that a friend will not be going to see Pharaoh Sanders at the Iridium with me tonight (big surprise), thinking about the next week of finals and how I can fit practice time and studying in between classes, shows, eating, sleeping, and most of all procrastinating. I wouldn't trade this for anything.



Mack Williamson, ORR Class of 2008

## Meet David Lee

by Teresa Dall, Journalism Teacher, Advisor to *Paw Prints*

*Paw Prints*, the Old Rochester Regional High School school newspaper, has just sent this year's third issue to print on deadline. The major factor in getting each of the three issues out on time is David Lee, an ORR junior and the *Paw Prints* Layout Editor. David came to the Journalism class at the start of this year, having transferred to ORRHS from Upper Cape midway through last year. As students applied for positions on the newspaper staff, David said, "I know something about layout design. Could I do layout for the newspaper?" I was delighted, since our former layout designer and editor had graduated last year.

David has risen to the task and far surpassed expectations – his and mine. He quickly taught himself the *InDesign3* layout application and went to work. His dedication, responsibility and tireless efforts have produced three attractive issues, and he is learning new tricks and capabilities every day. In addition, David has truly become a leader in the class. Students on the staff admire David for his hard work and expertise, as well as his devotion to the paper. He takes pride in his work and the work of other staff members. The class consistently looks to David for guidance and inspiration.

David has also become the liaison between *Paw Prints* and *The Wanderer*, the local newspaper that so generously arranges for and pays for our printing through their

company. David also works with Sue Wheeler on tech support for *Paw Prints* and is, as well, our ever-enthusiastic PR man – always looking to improve and promote the newspaper. *Paw Prints* is fortunate to have such a skilled and conscientious Layout Editor. David will have a fine portfolio of work to demonstrate his skills. *Paw Prints* looks forward to having David on the staff another year in his 2009-2010 senior year.



*Paw Prints* Layout Editor, David Lee, and Sue Wheeler hard at work

## Professional Development Corner

by Jane Macdonald

### The Basics of Differentiated Instruction

In the current *Edutopia* column, Ellen Moir, director of the New Teacher Center at the University of California/Santa Cruz, responds to a teacher's question about how to meet the needs of her multi-level group of fifth graders. "I find myself teaching to the middle and having a difficult time engaging the lower- and higher-level students," says the teacher. Moir suggests the following:

- *Find out a lot about your students.* Use good assessments, surveys, and queries to students' parents and former teachers to get insights into kids' academic and language levels, learning styles, interests, likes and dislikes, and home situations. It's vital to have as much information as possible to differentiate instruction.

- *Differentiate what you teach.* Assign topics and projects based on students' interests and proclivities so as to increase engagement while covering essential curriculum content.

- *Differentiate how you teach.* Scaffold the depth and complexity of lessons so that students can understand and apply knowledge in ways that make sense to them. For example, some students may do better discussing or debating a book; others may learn best doing PowerPoint presentations for classmates; and others may learn best manipulating objects or piecing things together.

- *Differentiate how students demonstrate mastery.* Give students options in how you check on whether

students have absorbed what's been taught. "Oral and written tests are not the only means for assessing student learning," says Moir. You might use portfolios, rubrics, journals, reports, essays, projects, and other assignments and grading systems."

• *Differentiate the learning environment.* "How you arrange your classroom – whether the desks are in rows or groups or learning centers – sets the tone for both teaching and learning," says Moir.

"Individualize Your Instruction" by Ellen Moir in *Edutopia*, October/November 2008

## Personnel Transitions

We welcome the following new staff members to our school district:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
<u>ORR Senior High School</u>	
Stacie Torres	Long Term Sub Math Department
<u>Rochester Memorial School</u>	
Kimberly Palker	Long Term Sub Grade 1
<u>Sippican School</u>	
Jodi Richards-Auld	Lunchroom Assistant

The following staff member is leaving her position:

<u>Sippican School</u>	
Michelle Mortimer	Paraprofessional
Effective 1/9/09	

## District Seeking Donation of Used Washing Machine and Electric Dryer

If anyone has or knows of someone who has a used washer and dryer that is in fairly good condition the Old Rochester District Maintenance Department would be very interested in obtaining them.

If available, please contact Bill Garcia at (508) 758-3745, ext. 1529.

Thank You,  
Steve Shiraka, District Facilities Management

## Wanted: School Programming

by Debbie Stinson, HS TV Production Teacher

We are looking for school programming from the ORR School District: classroom lessons, guest speakers, sports, school events & activities, etc. Please share the wonderful things going on in this school district with the community.

Programming will air on Ch. 18 – the new Ed TV Channel for the Tri-Town. Teachers, students, parents, if

you have taped school events or would like to learn how, please contact: Debbie Stinson and Lee Shionis at ORRHS 508-758-3745. Email: [dstinson@orr.mec.edu](mailto:dstinson@orr.mec.edu) [lshionis@orr.mec.edu](mailto:lshionis@orr.mec.edu). Formats for programming: mini dv or DVD.

## Newsletter Information

Anyone wishing to get a notice or message to all employees and school committee members of the four districts at one time is welcome to insert such in the monthly bulletin via e-mail to Jennifer Carreiro at [jcarreiro@orr.mec.edu](mailto:jcarreiro@orr.mec.edu)



*We have reached the almost midway mark in the 2008-09 school year and the longest vacation break that we will enjoy during the term. During this quite serious time in the nation there seems to be less inclination for levity, but there is a definite need for some rest and relaxation.*

*The first semester work of staff and students has been first rate at all levels throughout the six ORR-SU 55 schools. Some time away from the study routine has been well earned by all.*

*Have a safe and enjoyable vacation.*

*Bill Cooper*