

A May Note from the Principal

April seemed to go by very quickly due in part to the Spring Break at the end of the month. However, there were a few notable events in April. Early in the month, we had our second Scholastic Book Fair. As always, it was quite successful. Thank you to all of our volunteers that helped during the week and to the teachers that helped with setting up and taking down the Book Fair. That same week we also had our annual Fun with Science Night (STEM). Many of our students and their parents completed a number of interesting experiments and activities. It was a fun evening for all that attended! Thank you to the teachers and other volunteers for helping make the night successful!

Later in the month, we had our fifth set of Character Education Assemblies celebrating the trait, *Fairness*. As always, it provided a wonderful opportunity to recognize a number of students for their positive behavior and accomplishments. In addition, the students from Mrs. Deso's, Mrs. Jevons/Ms. Fisher's, Mr. Liszewski's, Mr. Darrah/Mrs. Sousa's, Ms. Thomas', and Mrs. Baumeister/Mrs. Gillin's classes performed and presented at the assembly. The boys and girls did an outstanding job! To close out the school year, we will be focused on the trait, *Citizenship*.

On Thursday, April 18th, local author and historian, Bobbie Reno, came to our school to share the story of Edmonia Lewis who was born right here in Rensselaer, and became a world-famous African American sculptor despite facing many challenges in her life! Ms. Reno read the story to the students in grades 3-6 and then spent time answering many questions about Edmonia and her sculptures. Ms. Reno even spent time signing some books for students that ordered one, as well as several more that were donated through the generosity of community partners such as Friends of the Rensselaer Public Library, Gerald O'Neil Post #1683, and the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Gerald O'Neil Post #1683, as well as a few private donors. Thank you to everyone for helping us share the story of Edmonia with our students! We appreciate Ms. Reno spending her valuable time with us.

Finally, I would like to provide an update on two programs we took part in the past few months. As I shared in a previous newsletter, our school community was able to raise over \$3,500 for the Ronald McDonald House. Each student that participated will be receiving a certificate and a ticket for the aquarium. Some students will receive a blinking ball, and I will be raffling off some other prizes later this month. Once again, thank you for taking part in this wonderful cause. In addition, our school took part in the Pick a Reading Partner program. We had just under a 100 students participate. The students that participated will be attending a celebration next week. Students will be selected to throw pies at Mr. Kardash, Mr. Ferrone, Mayor Mooney, and me. It should be quite an experience!

Upcoming Important Dates and Events

May 1st and 2nd	NYS Math Assessment (Grades 4-6)
May 6th and 7th	NYS Math Assessment (Grade 3)
May 6th – 10th	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 7th	Faculty Meeting at 2:50
May 17th	SNAP Assembly at 1:15 in the Auditorium
May 21st	District-Wide Art Show 5:30-7:00
May 22nd – 31st	Grade 4 Science Performance Test
May 23 – May 28th	No School – Please note that the district did not use any of the allotted 3 days for school closings resulting in an addition 3 days off.
May 31st	Grade 1 Play for the Students – 9:00 a.m. Grade 1 Play for Parents and Guests – 1:00 p.m.

Please be aware that Field Day will be the first week in June on the 6th with the rain date being the 7th. Information about Field Day will go home as the date approaches. Please contact the school if you have any questions. As always, thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey M. Palmer
Principal

VR's Vision: *Our school is a safe and caring community where students learn to think critically, grow socially, and develop a love of learning that will last a lifetime. We will be polite, work hard, and have fun as we SHOW PRIDE at Van Rensselaer Elementary School.*