

# Principally Speaking . . .

**Pequannock Valley Middle School — Pompton Plains, New Jersey**  
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*"NJ School of Character"*

December 2008

Dear Parents/Guardians,

December is always a special month at PV School as we anticipate the joy of various holiday celebrations with family, friends, and colleagues. At this time of year, it is important for us to think of ways that we can help others who are less fortunate. Our eighth graders are beginning their research for "Take Action" projects where they will identify a cause or a societal issue. After learning more about the issue, they will create action plans to address that issue. Our students will depend on assistance from both school and community in their efforts to make a difference. They may need something as simple as a bit of encouragement or some complex technical information in order to reach their goals. I encourage you to provide whatever assistance you can to help them be successful in helping others by implementing their projects.

The Music Department will present Holiday Concerts on Tuesday, December 9 at 7 PM and 8 PM in the PV Gym. The 7 PM concert will include the Sixth Grade Band, the Orchestra, and Choir. The 8 PM concert will include the Seventh and Eighth Grade Bands. We hope you will be able to make this a part of your holiday celebration.

On Wednesday, December 17, our Home and School Association is hosting a Holiday Get-Together. This event gives us a chance to celebrate the good work done by the Home and School Association as we also celebrate the holiday season. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share. The Get-Together will be held in PV's Library Media Center at 7:00 PM. We hope you will be able to join us.

PV Yearbooks for the 2008-2009 School Year were on sale at the school during the end of November. If your child was not able to purchase a yearbook during the in-school sale, you will have another opportunity to purchase a yearbook using the company's online site starting in January. Books will be on sale through March when purchased online. We will get this information to you as soon as we receive it from Taylor Publishing. We cannot guarantee that extra copies will be available for sale at the end of the year so the only way to be sure you will get a yearbook is through the in-school sale or by buying one online.

Wishing you a joyous and meaningful holiday season, I remain,

Sincerely,

Dr. William H. Trusheim  
Principal

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# PEQUANNOCK VALLEY NEWS

DECEMBER 2008

## OBAMA Wins at PV Too!



*School Voting Booths on stage*

during the lunch periods. Our Tech teacher, Mr. Cerutti constructed voting booths which were set up on the cafeteria stage. All students had a chance to cast their votes in a manner similar to the real voting process (except that their ballots were paper ballots, not electronic.) Students and staff worked hard to make this happen. Our social studies teachers took the lead in planning this event. Their classroom activities definitely added meaning to the activity. Students had a chance to discuss the issues and make an informed decision. This was a positive learning experience for all.

This year's presidential election has drawn an exceptional amount of interest. Our students went to the polls on Wednesday, October 29 to participate in the 2008 Mock Election which was sponsored throughout the state of New Jersey by the NJ Principals and Supervisors Association, the NJ Bar Foundation, and....

The results were tabulated by grade, by school, and for all participating schools in the state. Our students had the chance to express their opinions on the election through a variety of classroom activities that helped them understand the issues as well as the candidates' positions on these issues. In our school, Barack Obama carried the election with 55% of the vote to McCain's 45%. Similar results were reported statewide.

Our students were truly excited to get the chance to participate in the mock election which took place during the lunch periods. Our Tech teacher, Mr. Cerutti constructed voting booths which were set up on the cafeteria stage. All students had a chance to cast their votes in a manner similar to the real voting process (except that their ballots were paper ballots, not electronic.) Students and staff worked hard to make this happen. Our social studies teachers took the lead in planning this event. Their classroom activities definitely added meaning to the activity. Students had a chance to discuss the issues and make an informed decision. This was a positive learning experience for all.



*Preparing campaign banners*



*Registering student voters*

## PV Students Participate in Mix-It-Up Day 2008

On November 13, PV School took part in a national event known as Mix-It-Up Day. More than 10,000 schools and 4 million students took part in this event across the country. The purpose of the day is to make students more aware of the social boundaries that exist in all schools and to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all students. Through the joint efforts of Peer Leaders and Student Council, the day ran smoothly. Students were assigned to different tables during their lunch period. A peer leader or student council member was assigned to each group and acted as a facilitator. Each grade level was asked to respond to different questions and work cooperatively to answer. The 6th graders were asked about their adjustment to middle school. Activities, clubs and sports were the 7th grade topic, while the 8th graders expressed their view relating to moving on to high school. Students were open and frank in their comments. All in all, it was a successful experience that will have a positive impact on the students of PV Middle School.

## PV Talent Shines During Fall Drama Showcase

On Friday, November 21, members of the PV School Drama Club presented their annual Fall Drama Showcase. The performance featured a variety of acts including singing, dancing, and acting. Students were primarily responsible for preparing their own material. The club prepared and produced several ensemble numbers which showed their acting skills. These included a mimed restaurant scene set to Beethoven's Fifth, a Monty Python inspired skit on one-upmanship, and a scene where inanimate objects gained the ability to talk. Congrats to our student performers and their directors!



*Drama Club takes final bows!*

## "ME to WE" Program Encourages Students to Take Action!



On November 24, two representatives of "Free the Children" - Katie and Michel - visited PV School to raise student awareness of world problems and to conduct a student leadership seminar. The day began with assembly programs outlining the experiences of the two speakers as well as the goals of the "Free the Children" movement. We, at PV School, have been involved with "Free the Children" for many years. Through a variety of service learning projects, we were able to raise enough money to build three schools in the remote Waslala Province of Nicaragua.



In recent years, our eighth grade "Take Action" projects have also sought to show that our students can make a difference in the world around them. This program served as an excellent kick-off to our "Take Action" program which begins in December. Twenty-five of our eighth graders were able to participate in a two-hour leadership workshop led by Katie and Michel. These students will be able to use what they learned as they research societal issues and create action plans which will address those issues. As result of this program, many of our students in all grades are now contemplating ways in which they can "Be the Change" to make the world a better place!

# PEQUANNOCK VALLEY NEWS

DECEMBER 2008

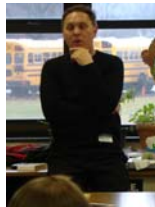
## ***Eighth Grade News...***

### ***Eighth Grade Students Explore a Variety of Opportunities Through Career Day***

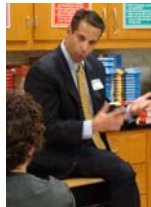
On November 25, the PV Guidance Department planned and presented "Career Day" for our eighth graders. By utilizing a wide range of local talent as career presenters, we were able to provide each of our eighth graders with three different career presentations ranging from Acting to Sports Marketing. Students had the opportunity to choose which workshops they would like to see and the Guidance staff created "Passports" with each student's room destinations on them. Our career presenters brought a wealth of experience to their presentations. We appreciate their willingness to share their expertise with our students.



*Architecture*



*Acting*



*Advertising*



*Baking*



*Design*



*Law*



*Police*



*Sports Marketing*

## ***Seventh Grade News...***

As the holidays approach, seventh grade is gearing up for a powerful second marking period. In Math Seven, life skills are being put to the test as students plan the painting of a room in their quest to learn about calculating area. In Pre-Algebra, students are having fun with shapes by discovering the properties of the shapes and how they relate to each other. In Social Studies, a trip down the Nile will help students to learn about the ancient civilization of Egypt. In Academic English classes, students are beginning to work on persuasive techniques for standardized test practice. While reading the novel, *Hatchet*, students are surfing the net to complete a webquest. In English Honors, a Survival competition is keeping students on their toes. In Photography class, students will be taking photos and learning to alter and manipulate their appearance using Photoshop software. In Video class, students will be finishing their documentary projects, and Computer classes are working on creating graphs and charts. Cell division and genetics are the focus in Science classes. Students will be creating their own monster family to test these timeless theories. Happy holidays!

## ***Sixth Grade News...***



*Grade 6 Science Lab*

***Hands-On Science*** - Sixth grade science students had a chance to do some lab observation and some critical thinking as they learned about various states of matter. Students had to decide, through observation, whether normal household items were solids, liquids, or gases. This exercise was not as easy as it might sound because of the choice of items. Some examples were shaving cream, seltzer, and a mixture of corn starch and water. This lab was successfully presented to students of all ability levels from Mr. Crosby's, Ms. Bergenfeld's, and Mrs. Marks' classes. They obviously enjoyed meeting the challenge!



*"What is this stuff?"*

### **Student Council Food Drive**

The Pequannock Valley Student Council recently held its annual holiday food drive. Students and staff donated about thirty shopping bags of non-perishable food items. The groceries were delivered to the St. Mary's Food Pantry in Pompton Lakes and will be used to supply local families during the holiday season. Thanks to all who contributed to this school-wide effort to help our neighbors in need.

### **Music Department Plans Holiday Concerts**

PV School will celebrate the holidays in music on Tuesday, December 9 with two concert programs in our gym. The first program will start at 7:00 PM and will feature the Sixth Grade Band, the Orchestra, and the Choir. The second concert will start at 8:00 PM and will feature the Seventh Grade Band and the Eighth Grade Band. We hope you will join us for these programs.

