

# PATRIOT PRESS

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The Newsletter of Robert Morris School



## From the Desk of Dr. Goeke

With the December holidays quickly approaching, there are more and more opportunities for us to smell the season. Stores stock everything from candles to incense that can make us dream of apple pies, mint, and sugar cookies to evergreens and balsam firs. While that may get us in the spirit, here at school fragrance takes on a whole different meaning.

For middle school students, peer relationships take on monumental importance. This means hours on the phone, computer, or at social events. It also means hours of primping, preening, and spraying – of perfume, hairspray, deodorant, and cologne. While it's nice to smell good, too much of a good thing can be just that – too

much – and can impact the air quality in the hallways and classrooms.

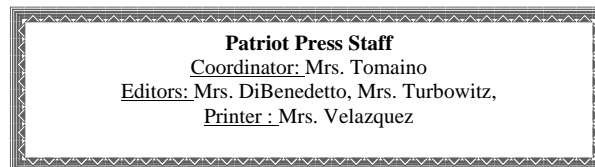
Michael Segal, MD, PHD writes on his webpage (<http://segal.org/asthma/>)

“Perfumes can be very potent in triggering asthma. A typical perfume contains tens to hundreds of volatile organic compounds. Such compounds were originally discovered in natural products such as flowers or fruits, but now most perfumes are manufactured from synthetic chemicals. Both naturally-produced and synthetically-produced perfumes release many volatile organic compounds, some of which can trigger asthma. The asthma risk is present regardless of whether the compounds were produced naturally or

synthetically.”

While fragrances may a harmless enough way to continue smelling sweet while at school, in addition to having the potential to trigger asthma attacks, fragrances can trigger other reactions, such as headaches. Spraying these scents in the hallways can also result in eye irritations. For these reasons, we'd like to remind the students to leave all of their fragrances at home to keep our air quality high and our sensitivities at bay.

And as for those holiday scents, may they make this season of hope and joy brighter for each of you.



READING CONNECTIONS FROM MRS. D’ALESSANDRO  
**Parent Resources to Support Reading Comprehension**  
**Strategies for Expanding Meaning**

<b>Inferring</b>	<b>Definition:</b> To arrive at a decision or opinion by reasoning from known facts or evidence.	<b>Readers need to:</b> Go beyond the literal meaning of a text to derive what is not there, but is implied.	<b>Helps readers learn to:</b> Construct thoughts about how characters behave, think, or react, or how the plot unfolds. Understands what is not stated but is implied.
<b>Summarizing</b>	<b>Definition:</b> To present the substance or general idea in brief form.	<b>Readers need to:</b> Put together information from the text and from personal, world, and text knowledge to create new understanding.	<b>Helps readers learn to:</b> Relate important ideas to each other. Deepen understanding of ideas and concepts by integrating new and prior knowledge and understanding “lived through” experiences from the text with personal experiences.
<b>Synthesizing</b>	<b>Definition:</b> To bring together parts or elements to form a whole.	<b>Readers need to:</b> Put together information from the text and from personal knowledge to create new understanding.	<b>Helps readers learn to:</b> Relate important ideas to each other. Expand personal understanding by incorporating “lived through” experiences from the text with personal experiences.

Talking about books and reading DAILY at home is an important part of your child’s expanded learning. Reading with comprehension is more than being able to answer simple, factual questions about a passage that has been read. It is important that parents can support the processes of INFERRING, SYNTHESIZING, ANALYZING and CRITIQUING at home. *Above information paraphrased from guiding Readers and Writers by Fountas and Pinnell, What Really Matters for Struggling Readers by Allington*

**What’s Happening in First Grade!**

First graders just finished a science unit called ***Air and Weather***. During this unit, the students became familiar with instruments used by meteorologists to monitor air and weather conditions. The students observed how moving air interacts with objects and

how weather changes over time. Students blew bubbles and made kites to observe the direction of the wind. The first graders learned the three main types of clouds: cirrus, cumulous, and stratus.

In social studies, the students learned how the Pilgrims and Native Americans worked together

to create the colony of Plymouth and to celebrate their friendship during a three-day Thanksgiving feast. The first grade students recreated this event by having their own Thanksgiving Feast. They made cornbread and butter and dressed as Pilgrims and Native Americans. Everyone had a great time!

### **News from the Preschool**

The children enjoyed their Thanksgiving Feast with the children in pre-k and kindergarten. The children helped make popcorn. They used their senses as they watched, heard and smelled the popcorn pop. In addition, they touched the popcorn and tasted it after it popped.

We began our unit on the five senses. The first sense that was highlighted was sight. The children participated in many activities involving their sight. They sorted objects by size, shape and color and used their eyes to

match objects to pictures. In addition, they used their eyes to observe which objects float or which ones sink when they are put in water. After our unit on tools and construction workers, the children will explore with their ears, hands, mouth and nose.

During the month of December, our dramatic play and block center turned into a construction site. The children can role play being a carpenter, plumber, painter and electrician. Tools, tool belts, hard hats, work gloves and goggles will assist the children in their role playing. The block corner has an

assortment of construction vehicles. In the table toy center, construction puzzles and new manipulatives have been added. The science center has activities for the children to experiment with using their sense of sight and sound. In the literacy center, the children can look at and listen to a variety of holiday stories. The children will keep busy in the art center with a large variety of holiday projects.

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### **Pre-Kindergarten Tour The Kitchen**

Mrs. Miller's Pre- K classes visited the school's kitchen in November. Gloria, the cafeteria manager gave the children a complete tour and showed them the big industrial size refrigerators, stoves, sinks and pot and pans. The most interesting thing for the class was the huge

walk-in freezer!

The children had been learning about restaurants this month in their classroom. The Pre-K students had three types of restaurants in the classroom: a pizza parlor, a fancy gourmet restaurant and a fast food drive- thru. Students were able to play different roles such as chef,

waiter, waitress, dishwasher, receptionist and customers. It was a fun learning experience.



**The Colonel Educates on  
Terrorism  
By Maria Barros &  
Alejandra Cortes**

Mrs. Bochner's 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes were visited by Colonel Arthur DeRuve (Mrs. Bochner's father), who came in to educate us about the War on Terrorism.

On the tenth anniversary of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center, Mrs. Bochner had a special program. She showed us a very informative video concerning the events that occurred on that tragic day. We had much discussion, and asked questions such as, "Why would anyone want to



do this to the United States of America?"

Colonel DeRuve has a very good understanding of past wars and educated us as to how we became the country we are today. He discussed our current "War

on Terrorism", which we continue to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Students were then allowed to ask questions. The visit was spectacular and we hope that Colonel DeRuve comes back to visit Robert

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**Surprise Historians Visit  
South Bound Brook  
By Samantha Duh, Heather  
Huszar**

Mrs. Bochner's 8<sup>th</sup> grade social studies classes were treated to a history of South Bound Brook by surprise guests, Mr. Ed McLaughlin and Mr. Dennis Quinlan. The special visit had been arranged by Ms. Asher in honor of American Education Week.

Mr. McLaughlin, who our middle school gym is named after, was a physical education teacher here at Robert Morris School for 41 years. Mr. Quinlan (Mrs. Quinlan's husband and Mrs. Lober's father) is a councilman in South Bound Brook and is a former student of Mr. McLaughlin. Both men shared very interesting



stories of their time in Robert Morris School as well as their love for South Bound Brook. They made comparisons of how things were back then compared to how they are now. We were amazed. Articles were passed out concerning our town's

history. We are very grateful for their visit. We learned so much and they gave all of us a new perspective on the town we live in.

Thank you to Mrs. Bochner, Ms. Asher, and our visitors Mr. McLaughlin and Mr. Quinlan. We hope they

## Important Dates to Remember December 2011

December 9	Market Day 6:30 p.m.
December 13-15	Holiday Gift Shop
December 14	Winter Concert 7:00 p.m. McLaughlin Gymnasium
December 16	Winter Buffet Dinner Dance - Grades 6-8
December 23	$\frac{1}{2}$ day session - 12:48 dismissal
Dec. 24-Jan.2	Winter Recess
January 3	Classes Resume

