Middle School Students Hold Storm of Generosity

Orchard Park Middle School students held a “Storm of Generosity” from September 25th – 29th to benefit schools effected by hurricanes; Harvey, Irma and Maria.

Throughout the week homerooms competed to raise the most money to benefit schools effected by the hurricanes. Students rallied around this cause and raised $3,000 in just one week!

Executive Council students; Nolan Watson, Mia Popp, Jeremiah Burnett, Bowen Slotman, Ryan Heraty and Ava Wawrzyniec originally came up with the idea to have a fundraiser to benefit schools impacted by hurricane Harvey at their retreat over the summer. From that point the idea evolved as Irma and Maria impacted Florida and Puerto Rico.

The Executive Council students planned and coordinated this effort with the help of advisors; Mrs. Kate Cullen, Mrs. Wendy Daniszewski and Mr. Dan Miller. The students created and posted flyers throughout the building, passed out envelopes to each homeroom, collected the envelopes from the homerooms and counted the funds that were raised. The students stayed after school on multiple occasions to make this fundraiser possible.

The students hope to make a positive impact on those who have been negatively effected by the hurricanes.

A few of the Executive Council members are pictured putting envelopes together to be distributed to homerooms before the fundraiser began.
Mrs. Tortorice’s students have been working on writing pieces all about Officer Craig Lehner. In third grade the class focuses on character traits, so after doing some research on the life and accomplishments of Officer Lehner, the class brainstormed a list of character traits that best described him both professionally and personally. The kids then wrote individual writing pieces about the character traits they felt represented him the best. The writing pieces turned out wonderfully.

The class planned to make a book out of them and send them to Officer Lehner’s police station. They are hoping his coworkers will share a copy of the book with his family as well.

One of the students thought that they should mention what the class was doing to the OP D.A.R.E. Officer, Kristen Mazur who works with Eggert fifth graders. She was so impressed that she offered to personally drive our “tribute books” down to Officer Lehner’s police station herself! The students put the finishing touches on their books before the Thanksgiving holiday and gave them to Officer Mazur to deliver.

Buffalo Police K9 Shield Visits Students at South Davis Elementary

On November 2nd, Fifth grade students at South Davis Elementary were invited to attend a Red Ribbon Week Presentation at Nativity given by the Orchard Park Police Department, the United States Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the Buffalo Office of the FBI, Department of Homeland Security’s Air and Marine Division and the Buffalo Police Department’s SWAT and K9 Divisions. Buffalo Police K9 Shield made a guest appearance and was able to come to South Davis Elementary after the presentation. At the presentation the fifth graders learned about the history of Red Ribbon Week, took part in interactive group presentations including D.A.R.E., they watched a helicopter land and saw equipment demonstrations from the marine, tactical, canine and investigative divisions.

At South Davis Buffalo Police K9 Shield and Officer Marshall visited Kindergarten through 2nd grade students in the Cafeteria and met with 3rd and 4th grade students in the library. Students were engrossed by Shield’s visit. Officer Marshall talked to the students about what a service dog does and the strong bond formed between the dog and its handler. The students had an opportunity to ask questions to find out more about Shield and other dogs like him.
The Orchard Park Central School District hosted its first annual Fun Walk in October. The walk promoted healthy activities for our students and community members. A number of local school districts have been working on the Healthy District Initiative. The initiative is to help districts provide healthy activities for district families and community members.

Dave Borodzik has been a pillar in the running community in Orchard Park and beyond for decades. He is the owner of a local business; Runner’s Roost. Our modified Cross Country team has visited his store for over 20 years. Dave spoke to the kids about the main gear in running; shoes.  He discussed the importance of good footwear, having running shoes (rather than other types of sneakers), injury prevention, shoe maintenance and answered any questions the students had.

This summer, Saturday, August 30, 2017 the Veterans Park Committee teamed up with the Orchard Park High School football teams to launch their joint fund raising program the Quaker card. This program has been a very successful fundraiser for the Orchard Park High School football program. This year, the Quaker Card supported two worthwhile organizations the football program and the Orchard Park Veterans Park Committee. On Friday October 13th Orchard Park Football presented the Orchard Park Veteran’s Memorial Park Committee with a Donation of over $2,000 towards the Memorial Park.

At the end of October Biology students participated in learning to operate Mr. VanDerwater’s hand-crank cider press. The activity connects agriculture, the ecology of food chains, cell biology, evolution by natural selection, plant reproduction and human history.

The Orchard Park Central School District hosted a Family Math Night on Wednesday, September 20th at Windom Elementary. Students and their families were welcome to come to see how we learn to love math and see it as a part of our daily lives. Guest teacher Kara Imm, a NYC based K-12 Math educator engaged the audience in activities and conversations to get everyone thinking about how we frame mathematics and how we can make sense of the math the students are learning.

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Quaker Marching Band Has a Great 2017 Season

The 2017 Quaker Marching Band season was extremely successful. QMB placed 3rd in the NYSFBC with a score of 87.5. The New York State Field Band Conference is the competitive circuit in which the Quaker Marching Band competes annually. Although it does not define their success as an organization, it allows each band to show growth. The NYSFBC is divided into 6 classes: Small School 3, Small School 2, and Small School 1 for districts that have a student population of 3,999 or less & Large School 3, Large School 2, and National Class for districts that have a student population of 4,000 or more. OPCSD falls into the large school categories. Within those categories, the bands are placed into an appropriate division based on past placements and success. The goal is to perform in the National Class. QMB won the National Class in 2007. Based on the accomplishments of the 2017 QMB students, winning the Large School 2 class and moving back up to the National Class is in the near future.

Aside from the successes experienced in the NYSFBC. Many of the current QMB members have also performed at the Buckeye Invitational, a band competition at the Ohio State University (QMB 2016) as well as the Magic Kingdom Disney Parade in Orlando, FL (QMB 2015). The Quaker Marching Band performs internationally each November at two Canada Parades, one in Niagara Falls where we are the premiere band, unit 104 of 105 to bring Santa into town and the Hamilton Parade where we are the opening act, kicking the parade off. Additional annual local performances include the OPCSD Opening Day Performance, the Memorial Day Parade, the 4th of July Parade and the Santa Claus Parade.

The students of The Quaker Marching Band and the Orchard Park Winter Guard commit to a rigorous schedule in order to remain successful locally, statewide, and internationally. The students understand that they represent themselves, their families, their music department, their community, and their school district every time they perform a single note. The Quaker Marching Band looks forward to continuing to perform at a high caliber and representing the Orchard Park Central School District in a positive way.

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Inclement Weather Procedures

At this time of year it is very important to be aware of our inclement weather procedures. The decision to close schools is not an easy one to make and often the decision needs to be made quickly and decisively and always in the best interest for the continued safety of our students and staff. We begin the decision process at 4:00 a.m. or sooner, depending on the weather and the forecast. With having more than fifty other locations that we transport students to (BOCES, private schools, special programs), a delayed start is usually not an option for a district our size.

Once the decision is made to close, radio and televisions stations are contacted, the district’s website is updated and the iConnect notification is sent out to parents. I would ask that parents take a few moments to sign into the Parent Portal and review their contact information to make sure that their contact information is up to date. For more information on the Parent Portal please visit our website www.opschools.org.

The Orchard Park Central School District covers approximately 50 square miles, and much of the area is hilly terrain shaped in a narrow band that stretches south. Because of the land formation, it is common to have varying weather at different ends of the district. So, even though school may not be closed, your decision to keep your child home is quite appropriate if the weather conditions around your home are a safety concern.

If weather turns bad during the school day, students will remain at school until the weather is clear enough to travel. Typically, we begin the dismissal process early, which allows the extra travel time needed in bad weather to get students home - close to the regular time. To increase the potential for older siblings to be home when the younger ones arrive, the dismissal sequence starts with high school students. Middle school dismissal follows, and elementary students are dismissed last. If parents or older siblings cannot be home for the returning youngsters, please make sure your child knows of an alternate place to go, like a specific friend or neighbor’s home.

Orchard Park Police Host Parent Information Night

The Orchard Park Police Department hosted a Parent Information Night in early December. The event was open to parents and guardians of all Orchard Park students. Police discussed Police Perceptions and Interactions, Internet and Social Media Safety, Electronic Cigarettes and answered questions from the parents in attendance. The event was well attended and the police are hoping to offer more events like this to the Orchard Park community in the future.

Images From Around the District

Eggert has some beautiful new platform risers to match it’s newly refinished stage! Thanks to district carpenters Dennis Collins and William Fahey. Cello students enjoying the new risers are: Madalyn Brown, Daniel Campbell and Cole Goldstein.

Mrs. Rupp’s class at Ellicott Elementary are pictured learning about Fire Safety with the Orchard Park Fire Department.

In September there was a reading invasion at Windom Elementary. Students, teachers and staff members throughout the building stopped what they were doing to take 30 minutes for everyone to read.
Veterans Day Around the District

Veterans Day was celebrated throughout the Orchard Park Central School District on November 9th. Veterans Day is a time to thank and honor all Veterans. These brave men and women have made great sacrifices to ensure and protect our freedoms; without their service we would not have the freedoms we currently enjoy and often take for granted.

A few of the Veterans who attended Ellicott Elementary’s Veterans Day Assembly performed a flag folding ceremony. They are pictured to the left folding the flag.

At Eggert Elementary second graders had a Veterans Day Assembly. Second grader Ben Addesa is holding one of the signs they displayed during their performance.

Windom Elementary held their annual Veterans Day breakfast followed by their Veterans Day assembly. Student Council students are pictured with a few of the Veterans in attendance at the breakfast.

At the South Davis Veterans Day assembly Veterans carried the flags into the assembly to kick things off!

Mrs. Karen O’Brien, English teacher at the Middle School invited her uncle to come in and speak to Polaris students on Veterans Day. He described his experience serving as a medic during WWII. Mrs. O’Brien is pictured to the left with her uncle and aunt, Nelson and Barbara Salem.

Upcoming Events

December
11-15…SD Charity Drive
12…MS 7th Grade Winter Concert, 6:45 p.m. & 8 p.m.
12…Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m.
14…EG/EL Holiday Concert, 7 p.m. at HS
18…STAP Comm Meeting, 7 p.m.
19…HS Holiday Concert, 7 p.m.
19…HS AOF Alumni Night, 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.
25-1…Winter Recess
28…Girls JV Basketball Tournament, 10 a.m.
28…Girls Varsity Basketball Tournament, 2 p.m.
29…Girls JV Basketball Tournament, 10 a.m.
29…Girls Varsity Basketball Tournament, 2 p.m.

January
3…EG PTO Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
4…WE PTO Meeting, 4 p.m.
4…EL PTO Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
4…SD PTO Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
6…ECMEA Elementary, JH, SH Jazz & JH Chorus Auditions
6…Winter Driver Education Registration, 8 a.m.
9…Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m.
10…MS PTO Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
13…ECMEA JH All-County Auditions
15…Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No School
16…EG Niagara Candy Sale Begins
16…WE Niagara Candy Sale Begins
17…HS Jazz Concert, 7 p.m.
18…MS 8th Grade Winter Concert, 7 p.m.
19…EL Chocolate Sale Begins
19…WE Winter Family Skate Night, 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.
20…ECMEA HS All-County Auditions
22…STAP HS All-County Auditions