



THE BLACKBIRD BUGLER

MR. THOMAS B. REARDON, PRINCIPAL

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER 2009

WELCOME BACK TO A NEW YEAR!

Welcome Back! I hope your summer has been enjoyable, and you found some time to relax and rejuvenate. We couldn't be happier to have you here, and are looking forward to a wonderful school year!

I am proud to author the first issue of the school year as your principal. I have spent the summer getting acclimated to the building and the community, and to say I'm excited to be here is truly an understatement. This is a phenomenal building, rich with great students, fantastic teachers, and a wealth of resources in the form of parent involvement. I look forward to working with you for this year and many years to

come.

Some of you might have noticed that I have added a new section to the Voorheesville Elementary School website in the form of a Principal's Corner. I will be updating this quite frequently with timely news, comments, and photos. Though the *Bugler* will continue to come out on the first Friday of each month, please check this portion of the website for up-to-date information (especially between issues). You can find this page at: <http://www.vcsdk12.org/EL/PrincipalsCorner.htm>. When an update is made, I will send this out via our School News Notifier System (SNN). If you haven't



signed up yet, I encourage you to do so. It's free, and allows you to receive important updates and announcements instantly. Please visit <http://snn.neric.org/vcsdk/index.cfm> for more information.

UPCOMING DATES OF INTEREST

- Sept. 11th—Welcome Back to School Assembly
- Sept. 16th—K-1 Open House at 6:30 pm.
- Sept. 17th—2-3 Open House 6:30 pm.
- Sept. 23rd—4-5 Open House 6:30 pm.
- Sept. 24th School Building Management Team 6:00 pm.
- Sept. 25th—Bike Ride for Missing & Exploited Children Caravan Arrival (8:50 am).



REMINDERS

School starts at 8:50 and ends at 3:00 pm. If your child is late, please bring them to the Main Office to sign in. If you are picking your child up prior to dismissal time, please come to the Main Office to sign them out. We will call for your child to meet you. When you are dropping your child off in the morning prior to the start of

school, please let them out before the bridge. Our staff will ensure that they cross the bridge and make it into school safely. If your child will not be at school by 8:50 am please alert the attendance office. (765-2382 ext. 514) Once attendance is done by the teachers indicating your child is absent, we will begin calling all numbers to ensure they are safe. Contacting us

prior will save you our phone call!

Lunch Information: Our school lunch is \$2.00. Milk can be purchased separately for \$0.40. Free and reduced meal applications, as well as more detailed menu information can be found on our website at: <http://www.vcsdk12.org/foodservice/foodservice.htm>.

Lunch/Recess:

Students have 22 minutes to eat lunch and 18 minutes to play. Students are outside for recess on most days, so please help your child plan and dress accordingly!



Dr. McCormick welcomes a student on their first day back.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Please use the following directory for your convenience:

Voorheesville Elementary School	765-2382
Thomas B. Reardon, Principal	
School Nurse:	
Colleen Bracket	765-2382 Ext. 506
Kid's Club Program (afterschool)	765-2043
Cindy Abelseth, Director	
Transportation Department:	
Mike Goyer	765-2382 Ext. 508
Priscilla Clark	765-2382 Ext. 521



All set and excited to be back!

IT'S A NEW YEAR WITH NEW FACES!

We have some new faces in the building!

Rebecca Zionts replaces Kelli Kniss, who will be greatly missed. Rebecca comes to us with over seven years in elementary education, most recently serving as a second grade long-term substitute at Pine Bush Elementary School (Guilderland CSD). Rebecca previously

taught third grade and half-day Kindergarten at Pine Bush, before taking some time off to raise her family.

Jessica Moehle was hired to work in Donna Fitzgerald's classroom and to push in to the Kindergarten classrooms. With a degree in physical education and in the process of pursuing a graduate degree, Jessica comes to us with

years of experience as a teaching assistant at Clover Patch, and will make a wonderful addition to our special education programming.

Katie O'Donnell will serve as our new librarian. Katie comes to us with experience as both an elementary and high school librarian; most recently coming to us from Guilderland High School.

NEW FACES CONTINUED



Ms. Zionts, Ms. O'Donnell, Miss Burch and Ms. Moehle

Katie is thrilled to return to the elementary school, and has spent a great deal of time this summer sprucing up our Library Media Center.

Sheila Guiry and Paige Woodruff will also be joining our cafeteria/recess staff. Sheila has been a bus driver for four years, and Paige has been a long-time

community member and has raised her 3 children in Voorheesville.

Ms. Burch has joined us this year as a Tech Aide both here and at the high school. You can find her in the computer lab.

As you pass them in the hall, please take the time to say hello and introduce yourself!

“September!” cries Daisy.
“Come one and all
for a harvest picnic to welcome fall.
What could be better,
as summer ends,
than feasting and dancing
with all our friends?
“Everything’s ready,
ripe and sweet.
There’s nothing to say,
except, “Let’s eat!”
And thank you, each,
for all you’ve done.”

excerpted from *Daisy’s Garden* by Mordicai Gerstein
(New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 1995)

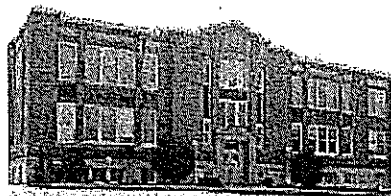
Author Mordicai Gerstein surely had the Blackbird Paradise Community Garden in mind as he penned these lines of “Daisy’s Garden.” Everything is indeed ripe and sweet in the garden: squash, cucumbers, herbs, cabbage, lettuce, beans, peas, and even tomatoes – despite the blight that destroyed so many of the tomato plants in the area. And, as we gather again with our friends and teachers to hit the books, the Garden Committee is busy planning a Harvest Festival for plenty of feasting and dancing. A heartfelt thank you goes to each and every one of you who has helped make the Blackbird Paradise such a success.

A steady supply of adult and child volunteers have tended the garden seven days a week for the entire summer. They kept the garden watered, harvested, free of weeds, and – with the help of 1,500 ladybugs and 1,000 green lacewings – free of insect pests. In addition to the great pride of maintaining Blackbird Paradise, these volunteers found their time at the garden to be a wonderful way to socialize with other community members. The volunteers were also invited to tour the Tawasentha Community Gardens. Volunteers are needed to help through October, so there is still plenty of time to get hands-on in the garden!

Speaking of community interaction, the reach of Blackbird Paradise extended to an international level. Visitors from near (Voorheesville, Bethlehem, Guiderland, and Albany) and far (Michigan, Texas, California, and even Greece) wandered through our garden, all expressing their delight and amazement. The Garden Committee is working on a guest sign-in book to capture future visitors’ comments and to serve as a reminder that the world is not such a big place after all. One small garden in Voorheesville can impact someone from across “the big pond!”

Locally, the impact of our community garden has been significant. The New Scotland Community Food Pantry was the recipient of much produce over the course of the summer, and now that school is back in session, Chef Tim Mulligan will be using fresh salad greens and other garden items in the cafeteria. Mrs. Fitzgerald’s summer program planted a pizza garden culminating in a pizza party on August 11. Catnip and lavender has been harvested, is now drying, and will be available to our students for assembling crafts during the winter. The Elementary School library is planning to devote a corner to the Garden Project where complete lesson plans utilizing the garden will be available as well books on gardening and cooking. To top it all off, we welcomed our new principal, Mr. Reardon, with a basketful full of fresh vegetables!

Parent Nights are Here!



This is your opportunity to get procedural and curricular information. Ask lots of questions, but remember it isn't the time for conferencing about your child. Certainly feel free to ask for a conference if you need one, and a convenient time will be worked out between you and the teacher. Starting times of presentations are staggered to avoid conflicts. Remember that parking is across the creek and will be very tight. St. Matthew's provides overflow parking. For those of you that have multiple children in varying grades, you only need to attend 1 general meeting as they will be the same for all grade levels. The agendas are as follows:

Wednesday, September 16th for Grade K and 1

6:30-6:50 General meeting for all K parents in the large gym
7:00-7:40 Kindergarten presentations in the small gym

7:05-7:25 General meeting for all first grade parents in the large gym
7:35-8:15 First grade presentations in individual classrooms

Also available:

Ms. Okoniewski, Ms. Lee, Ms. Herzog & Ms. Fitzgerald in Room 120
Dr. McCormick in Room 201 Ms. Hundemann (Speech) in Room 219
Coach McCormick in the Gym Mrs. Hotopp in Room 219

Thursday, September 17th for Grade 2 and 3

6:30-6:50 General meeting for all Grade 2 parents in the large gym
7:00-7:40 Grade 2 presentations in individual classrooms

7:05-7:25 General meeting for all Grade 3 parents in the large gym
7:35-8:15 Grade 3 presentations in individual classrooms

Ms. Farrell and Ms. Milano in the Computer Room
Ms. Luyckx (P.E.) in the Gym
Ms. Vitelli Art Room Ms. Wells Art Room
Ms. Hammes (Reading) Room 314 Ms. Hemming in Room 217
Ms. VanWie (Speech) in Room 217 Ms. Conroy in the Library

Wednesday, September 23rd for Grade 4 and 5

6:30-6:50 General meeting for all Grade 4 parents in the large gym
7:00-7:40 Grade 4 presentations in individual classrooms

7:05-7:25 General meeting for all Grade 5 parents in the large gym
7:35-8:15 Grade 5 presentations in individual classrooms

Ms. O'Donnell (Librarian) in the Library Ms. Taggart in Room 309