



Okte Elementary School

1581 Crescent Road, Clifton Park, NY 12065

**PTA Newsletter
February 2009**

Well it's definitely winter here in the great Northeast. We hope all of your children have enjoyed playing out in the snow although we're sure you adults have had enough shoveling and snow blowing.

There has been a lot going on at school this past month. We hope that your children are taking full advantage of the wonderful programs being offered. First, we have the After School Enrichment Program. There are about 150 children in all grades having a great time in various activities such as candy making, scrapbooking, Tae Kwon Do, American Girls, Magic, Kidzart, K'nex fun, Cake Decorating, Mad Science, Spanish, Beading, Stamping and Bowling. Although some of these activities are provided by professional companies, just as many are provided by parents who have a talent they are willing to share. If you have a talent or hobby to share, please think about running a class. Low level of commitment, huge level of rewards!

Another program in full swing is PARP (Parents As Reading Partners). It started with all children in grades K-3rd receiving a brand new book!! What a great surprise when they arrived at school last Monday morning. Those children in 4th & 5th grades who took advantage of joining a 1st ever book club at Okte received either The City of Ember or The People of Sparks. The book club is taking place three consecutive Thursday evenings with many fun and interesting activities and discussions. Let's hope this is the start of something that will last for years to come, the children are really enjoying it! Kathy Crouth, who is the chairperson for this program, does a wonderful job making sure all of the children have a chance to benefit from reading with their parents as well as coordinates all of the parent & teacher volunteers it takes to run this program. It is a huge undertaking and rest assured Kathy leaves no stone unturned. For those lucky enough to have attended Family Reading Night were treated not only to the comedic talents of Jolynn Williams and Sean Carter a.k.a. Annie and Zack (The main character in the Magic Tree House Series and her cousin) as well as some wonderful stories read by some of Okte's finest K, 1st & 2nd grade teachers. A special thank you to all who attended.

It's not too late to be a Shen Inventor! Submissions are due this Saturday, February 7th at 8:00am at the Clifton Park Center. This is a wonderful opportunity for your child to showcase their imagination!! For more information or any questions, please feel free to contact our chairperson, Brenda Birken at 577-7452 or bbirken@nycap.rr.com.

Coming up on February 26th is the first annual Almost March Madness basketball tournament. There are 5 elementary schools participating in this event. Come on out and cheer on the teachers and staff of Okte to VICTORY!! Details and ticket information have already been sent home.

Plans are underway for the Dad's Dinner. Save the Date, Thursday March 12th and join many of Okte families for dinner. Look for details and volunteer opportunities coming home soon.

Mid-winter recess is just around the corner. We hope you enjoy the time off; relax, read, play in the snow, etc. Have fun, be safe and make wonderful memories.

Stay connected ...you can find more information on our website. We list all important dates, upcoming events and offer a feedback for your use to let us know how you think we are doing as a PTA. Log on to www.shenet.org and click the link to Okte Elementary and then click Okte PTA.

Keep in mind; none of these events could take place without your help and donation dollars.

Pam Kelly and Wendy Reynolds
Okte PTA Co-Presidents

Deborah Price, Principal
<http://www.shenet.org/okte/okte.htm>

Pam Kelly, PTA Co-President
Wendy Reynolds, PTA Co-President

OKTE YEARBOOKS

The Okte Yearbook pre-sale will be from January 26-February 13. Order your 2009 Okte Yearbook now! The cost is \$14.00. Our full-color, 72-page book has a custom cover designed by our fifth graders. Order forms were sent home in January. Checks should be made payable to Okte Yearbook. Yearbooks will arrive in early June.

Thank you,
Okte Yearbook Committee

SHEN INVENTORS

The Shen Inventors display date is Saturday February 7 at Clifton Park Center. Parents should bring invention posters (and models if you made them) by 8 am. Judging will be through the day and inventions should be picked up by 4 pm otherwise they will be discarded. All Okte participants will be able to participate in an ice cream party at a time to be determined. Parents are encouraged to bring 3 copies of the filled out Judges form (fill out name, teacher, school and project name). The form was in the information packet. This will save time Saturday morning, but you can also obtain copies there.

The NY State invention convention competition form must be submitted by February 9, 2009. For more information on the State competition visit,
<http://www.crd.ge.com/invent/mechanics.html>

ALMOST MARCH MADNESS!!

On February 26 Skano, Arongen, Tesago, Okte and Shatekon will have teachers and staff suit up to play in a basketball tournament. Doors open at 5:15 pm. The festivities begin at 5:45 pm with warm-ups and end at 8:15 pm with awards for the winning team. There will be no ticket sales at the event. Due to the number of spectators expected, space will be limited. A lottery will be used for buildings that have more interest than tickets. "Team" t-shirts may also be purchased along with your tickets at a cost of \$6 per t-shirt. Okte's team color is yellow!! There will be "team" pom-poms available at the game! Come out and show your support for your Okte teachers and Staff and have a great time!!! Any questions please contact Pam Kelly at 383-8802 or pkelly325@nycap.rr.com.

SHENENDEHOWA PTA COUNCIL PRESCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Shenendehowa PTA Council Preschool Committee presents a Kindergarten Readiness Panel at 7PM on February 10th in the Tesago/Skano Cafeterias. Snow Date is February 11th. Contact Evelyn Hickok at 373-2320 or Kate Kirkpatrick at 280-1176 for more information.

FROM THE COUNSELOR'S CORNER

I will be running an adoption group again this year for students who were adopted. If you have a child who was adopted and would like them to participate please feel free to contact me at 881-0543 or rockeric@shenet.org. Brochures for the group will be located outside of my office on the bulletin board. Thank you!

OKTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTA SCHOLARSHIP

The school year of 2008-2009, the Okte PTA will provide three scholarships of \$500.00 each to deserving Shenendehowa Seniors who formally attended Okte Elementary School for at least two years. Applications may be picked up at the **High School East Guidance Office** from Mrs. Butera. The application may also be emailed directly to the Senior. For the application to be emailed to the applicant, please send a request to jfeit1@nycap.rr.com and in the "Subject" area write "Okte Scholarship". The completed **hard copy** application form should be returned to Mrs. Butera at **High School East Guidance Office**, no later than March 6, 2009.

A WORD FROM OUR SECRETARY...

On Wednesday, January 14 we had our 4th PTA meeting. Our 1st and 2nd meetings were very well attended, there was a nice crowd at our 3rd but the 4th was not at all well attended. Our meetings generally are no longer than 1 hour and babysitting is available as well as refreshments. There are many benefits to attending a meeting. It is a great time to get connected, discover resources, network with other parents and speak out in a relaxed but structured forum. Mrs. Price, Rick Mincher from the school board, and our teacher liaisons are all on hand at each meeting and often make time to answer questions. It is important to remember that we need at LEAST 11 people at our meetings to vote on approval of minutes as well as any issues or changes. At our third meeting we discussed and voted on the PTA helping to fund the wonderful bucket-filling program. This program would not have been possible if we did not have enough members present to vote. Remember your vote counts! We hope to see you at our next PTA meeting on Tuesday, February 24.
Thank you, Donna Cuva

SPRING PICTURES

Spring pictures will be taken at Okte on Tuesday, March 24th. There will be reminders sent home as the day draws closer. The children do not need to bring in money on picture day. Packages will be purchased on approval.

Thank you,
Okte Yearbook Committee

HOSPITALITY HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

I would like to pass along a "HUGE" thank you to everyone who helped out in any way for the Teacher's Holiday Luncheon held in December. Hospitality could not have hosted such a successful event without all of the generosity from the Okte parents and I wish I could thank each of you individually. I do want to thank Trish McCarvill for making all the telephone calls. I very much appreciate your time. Thank you Pam and Linda for helping me to set up the evening before. Thank you to Linda, Amy, Wendy, and Pam for helping out the day of the event. I know the teachers and staff truly enjoyed and appreciated all the wonderful food, delicious desserts, and beverages.

Debbie Rivers, Hospitality
(Doots290@nycap.rr.com)

Dates to remember...

February 13	Last Day of ASEP.
February 16-20	Mid-winter Recess
February 24	OKTE PTA Meeting
March 2	Math Madness Begins
March 9	Kindergarten Registration (5:00 - 7:30 pm District Office)
March 12	Dad's Dinner
March 16	Spring Fundraiser Begins
March 27	Superintendent's Conference Day - No School (Spring Fundraiser ends)
March 31	Math Madness Ends