

Wolf Times

Volume 12, Issue 3

November, 2014



From the Desk of Jacqueline Norcel, Principal

Dear Frenchtown Families,

Our November theme at Frenchtown will be “We Give Thanks.” This theme will highlight the American holiday of Thanksgiving. The Pilgrims entertained 92 Native American guests at the 1621 event. The first meal was breakfast at which boiled eel, lobster, roast pigeon, and stuffed cod were served. The guests brought turkeys, pumpkins, sweet potatoes, and cranberries to the celebration. Quadequina, son of Massasoit prepared the first taste of popcorn for the Pilgrims. Our Student Council will sponsor a food collection for the needy in Trumbull in November. Please watch for the flyer.

The children will discover that in a democratic society, freedom is a privilege which he/she earns through participating in constructive and purposeful activity.



During the month of November, our staff will also be highlighting these other United States holidays: Election Day, Veteran’s Day, and American Education Week. The theme for American Education Week this year is ***Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility.***

Grade 4 will present their Thanksgiving

musical program on Wednesday, November 26th at 9:00 a.m for the families. First grade’s Pow Wow is on Wednesday, November 26th at 12:00. We hope you will be able to join us.

The country of the month is Italy. If you have any souvenirs or artifacts, we would love to display them in the front lobby display case.

Your children’s teachers will be planning lessons and activities about books in honor of National Children’s Book Week beginning November 17th. I am planning on reading a story to every kindergarten and first grade class during the month of November. Depending on the weather, I will read either outdoors on the picnic tables or in their classrooms.

At home, parents can help support our theme by reading a bedtime story, participating in our FREE reading calendar program, having a daily newspaper and magazine available, visiting the public library, and by talking with your child about what he/she has been reading at school.

Parent Teacher Conferences are to be held the afternoons of November 6th and 12th. Evening conferences are scheduled for November 13th. Each conference period is fifteen minutes long. Your child’s progress over the first twelve weeks will be discussed at these conferences.

At the conference the teacher and parents should exchange information about the child which will help each better understand the child’s needs and personality. At the parent conference, parents can learn about their child’s progress on academic, social, and physical skills during the report period. Teachers will let parents know at what level the student is working, how well he/she is doing and what is expected. The conferences should provide a realistic appraisal of the individual student’s strengths and weaknesses within the total school program. Finally, parents and teachers must work together as a team to effectively meet the child’s needs if the child is to benefit as much as possible from the school experience. Together, goals should be set for the next trimester.



A word of caution about conferences: because parents are often more concerned with weaknesses than with students strengths, sometimes all a parent reports to a child about the conference is what needs to be improved, rather than stressing both strengths and weaknesses. Share good things that were discussed at the conferences as well as things that need improving.

Every one of our children knows that he/she is in school to learn. For most, learning itself is a natural stimulus, providing its own intrinsic reward. It is our (home and school) job to help students understand that they need to continue to learn throughout their lives. Right now, our teachers are making that point obvious with our emphasis on the monthly T.R.A.C.K.S., Dream, Reach, Succeed and Citizens of the Month programs. On Thursday, November 20th we will wear red for accountability. On Tuesday we wear blue and white to show our school pride.

Wishing you and your families, a Thanksgiving blessed with good health and happiness.

Mrs. Norcel



Frenchtown School Dismissal Schedule

Regular Day:

Regular 8:35 am to 3:20 pm

Legal Day: *

Regular 8:35 am to 1:00 pm

Early Dismissal: *

Regular 8:35 am to 1:00 pm

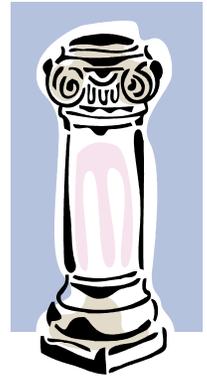
Delayed Opening:*

Regular 10:05 am to 3:20 pm

Character
Corner—
Mr. Weitzman,

Social Worker

Accountability



A natural part of children’s development is to push against limits, explore what boundaries are, and see how to function within boundaries. They are not bad or wrong for following these natural and normal behaviors. It is our job as parents to coach them through these experiences and empower them with life skills so that as the child ages, they've learned how to make good decisions. They will also learn there are consequences for unwise decisions. Help your children learn accountability by removing excuse-based behavior from their life-skills tool belt.



**Lunch will not be served on legal days this year.*

Kindergarten News...

**Mrs. Bershefsky, Mrs. Buswell,
Mrs. Capone, Mrs. Crawford**



Fall has arrived bringing cool breezes, beautiful colors, and squeals of delight and wonder filling every kindergarten classroom at Frenchtown! Our science curriculum brought forth many

exciting lessons and hands on experiences. We began learning one of the most important tools all great scientists use to learn about and discover the world – our five senses! We gathered our lab coats and science notebooks as we ventured out on a nature walk, using our senses to observe fall. We practiced recording our observations in our notebook like real scientists and used this information to write about fall. We had a wonderful time using our senses on our grade level trip to Pumpkinseed Hill Farm where Farmer Jones helped us learn the life cycle of a pumpkin. We enjoyed a hayride, a special story and even got to harvest our own pumpkins to take home, along with a large pumpkin that will stay in our class! Back at Frenchtown, we enjoyed using our senses to observe our pumpkins and write about them. We will do something special with our class pumpkin next month as we prepare for another holiday.

In reading, we continued to establish the routines and expectations of Reader’s Workshop. We are well into the swing of things now and the children have learned their responsibilities for when we gather to read together, how to turn and talk about ideas with a partner as well as how we rotate and navigate our literacy centers. We have read many books and practiced discussing what happened in the story with a partner. We also learned something that good readers do to help them better enjoy and understand a story called, “making connections.” We read many books where we practiced thinking about how something in the book reminded us of something in our own lives. We are just beginning to develop our independent reading skills. This takes a tremendous amount of practice in order to build stamina and read for longer periods of time. Children should be reading at home to you on a nightly basis. They know that good readers read independently by reading the pictures, reading the words or retelling familiar books they have

read! Have your child practice this with the Trophy Readers that come home. Remember to keep these in a safe spot along with the flashcards of our kindergarten sight words as they are introduced. It is so important that you continue to review previously taught sight words regularly for automaticity and maintenance. We will be introducing new ones at a quicker pace!

In Foundations, the children continued to develop their phonics skills through instruction in letter and sound relationships. This month, we focused on learning the letters a, g, d, s, e, r, p and j. We practiced identifying the upper and lowercase letters, writing the lowercase letter with proper formation and played many games that helped us remember the sound associated with each letter. We are more than half way through our unit on letters and letter sounds. Please continue to review all letters introduced so far.

In writing we have been working on conveying our ideas using both pictures and words. We learned that words are separated by spaces and worked on writing the beginning sound we hear in a word. We also began stretching out the whole word to try and write other sounds we hear.

In math, kindergartners worked on recognizing numbers 0-10 and counting objects to show each quantity. We represented these numbers by drawing pictures in counting activities such as Grab and Count, Inventory Bags, the Counting Jar and our counting books. We also talked about measuring and comparing items that are “shorter” and “longer.”



It is hard to believe how far the children have come in two short months! We look forward to meeting with each family during November conferences where you will find out so much more about your child’s kindergarten experience and their individual progress.

Grade One News...

**Mrs. Gambardella, Mrs. Mordecai,
Mrs. Rodrigues, Mrs. Shinnick,
Mrs. Tuohy**

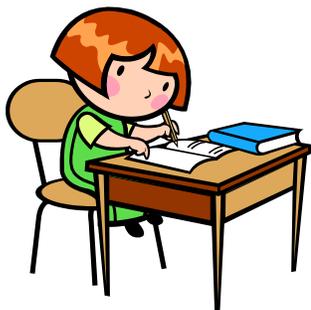
The leaves are falling, the winds are blowing and the temperatures are dropping. First graders are

welcoming fall with their scientific observations. In addition to our fall explorations, we have watched our butterflies as they are passing through the stages of larva, pupa and adult. We will notice how all living things have a life cycle. It's an exciting time of year!

We are becoming such skillful readers as we learn new reading strategies. During Reader's Workshop, we have been learning to be careful listeners and thinkers and to be good partners as we share our ideas. We have been making text-to-self connections as we think how the stories we are reading remind us of our own lives.

Our Foundations program has everyone "tapping out" sounds to help us read and spell words. Echo the owl shows us what to do and we echo back to him. We are focusing on the digraphs "th", "sh", "ch", "wh", and "ck". Ask your child which digraph only comes at the end of words! We are also learning when to use the bonus letters f, l, and s. We are learning "trick" words, too. They are the words we can't tap out. We must learn to read and spell them by heart.

First graders are becoming great mathematicians. We've finished our first unit of study called "How Many of Each?" and we have begun our geometry unit called "Making Shapes and Designing Quilts." Ask your first grader to show you how we "count on" to add! Make sure you are practicing your math facts at home and filling out the Bear Math Facts Calendar.



think of ideas.

Busy workers, smart thinkers, responsible friends, and smiling faces. That's what you will see in first grade this fall!



Grade Two News ...

**Mrs. Angon, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Pereira,
Ms. Sansone**

As the leaves begin to change and the autumn chill is in the air, safety is at the forefront of our minds. The Trumbull Fire Department visited Frenchtown for Fire Safety Week. During this week, teachers addressed the importance of fire safety and prevention! The children enjoyed listening to the firemen discuss important safety procedures for home and school as well as getting the chance to go on their trucks! At Frenchtown, we believe safety is first, for when we all feel safe, learning can take place!



The second graders are building wonderful reading and writing communities within their classrooms. In reading, they are learning how to respond to each other and texts. They are building their stamina and persistence for reading. Please continue to monitor your child's home reading at home so they can practice using the skills they are learning at school. This will not only help create confident readers, but will foster a love for reading as well! In writing, the students are learning the difference between narrative, expository, and opinion pieces. They are also continuing to work on important skills for writing complete detailed sentences as well as checking for punctuation marks. If your child has free time, encourage them to write. The more practice they have with writing the more comfortable they will become as writers.

In math, the students have been practicing both addition and subtraction math facts. It is important that your child practice their math facts each night. Repetition is the best way for children to memorize their facts! In class, they have also learned various strategies for solving math word problems. As the year goes on, the students will be moving away from drawing pictures and relying on more efficient strategies such as using an open number line or breaking apart the tens and ones. We would be happy to share these strategies with you at conferences so that you can understand how the children are solving the problems. Currently, the students are learning what makes a rectangle a

rectangle and some of the children were very surprised that a square is a special kind of rectangle!



Now that our social studies unit on our country has been completed, the students are moving into the world of science! Our first unit is called Air and Weather. Our little scientists will become meteorologists as they

learn about the different types of weather. They will be studying different cloud types as well as learning about how temperature and wind speeds are measured. They will be keeping track of the weather over time and will be looking for patterns.

We would like to thank all of you who were able to join us for Visitation Day and we are looking forward to meeting with you for conferences in November. The second graders are really getting into the routine of second grade and we are proud of their hard work. We are excited to see them learn and grow!

Grade Three News...

**Mrs. Atwood, Mrs. Carley,
Mrs. Cretella, Mrs. Makoski,
Mrs. Martins**

Our students are in full swing in third grade now that November is upon us.

In reading, the third graders are working hard on their Ready Common Core books. The students are reading nonfiction text while focusing on concepts such as identifying main ideas and details, describing the sequence of events and cause and effect. The students studied signal words such as first, then, next, and finally to give them clues to sequence events. In Making Meaning we have been learning about making inferences and we have been discussing character traits. We are always trying to encourage our students to read more nonfiction in the classroom and at home. At home try to encourage your child to choose nonfiction books or articles to read to support our nonfiction reading in the classroom. This would also fulfill a bingo square on our monthly reading logs. Reading 20 minutes per night is a required homework assignment. Please make sure your child is filling

in their bingo boards and a parent is initialing. The Reading Bingo logs are due each Friday.

In math, we finished our unit on strategies to solve equations and number stories. The students were introduced to multiplication and arrays. They learned many strategies to solve multiplication stories such as skip counting and repeated addition. They have been having fun learning the multiplication tables along with our multiplication songs. Have your child practice their basic facts with math flash cards or by using math websites such as Xtra Math, Multiplication.com and Moby Max. This will ensure better results on our 2.5 minute Basic Fact Assessments. We will be moving from addition to subtraction and then to multiplication.

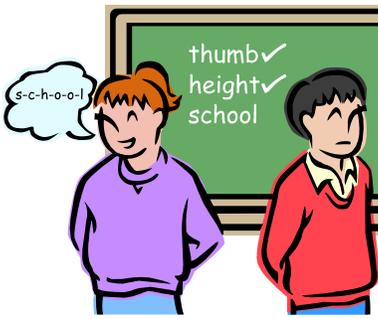
In writing, the students are adding many writing ideas to their Writing Notebooks. Our focus has been on creating strong story ideas along with writing interesting details. They have learned to make sure their sentences tell who, what, where, when and why and they have practiced adding sensory details to their sentences. They have been learning all about how authors find their ideas to write books. They have also been practicing these ideas in their writing. The students have been learning some writing techniques such as making lists, quick writes and using a good sentence from another piece of writing as springboards to new writing pieces.

Fish, crickets, and isopods, oh my! Your child's science classrooms are housing their very own bio-columns. Our scientists are watching what happens in an eco-system and they are recording their observations and understanding in their science notebooks.



We finished up our social studies unit on oceans and rivers. In our next unit the third graders will be learning about three types of forests and the interdependence between trees and soil in a forest. They will also learn about prairie life and identify the kinds of animals that live in prairies and how they protect themselves.

Your child brought home their first BEAR Math Calendar. Please keep the Reading Bingo and the BEAR Math in a prominent location so your



child can access them and fill them in. Please review the spelling words each night with your child. This review will promote good study habits and your child will be

confident on their weekly spelling test. We have also been discussing with the students the importance of doing our best work on homework and on classwork. Please make sure your child is double checking his or her work and that their name and date are on the paper. The wolf folder should be emptied each night too. The cold weather is sneaking up on us. Make sure your child is dressing in weather appropriate attire.

Thank you for your continued support at home.

Grade Four News...

Mr. Fiore, Ms. St. John

Mrs. Weinstein, Mrs. Wolfe

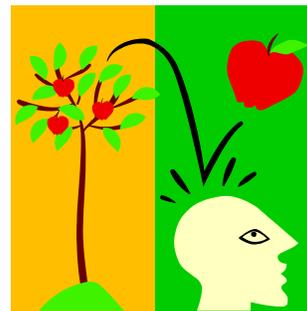
We hope you enjoyed the opportunity to step into your child's shoes during Visitation Day and experience life in the classroom.

Our fourth grade mathematicians have already come a long way since the start of the school year! Students have learned a variety of strategies to use when multiplying and dividing larger numbers. Using open arrays seems to be the method of choice for most, while others prefer the U.S. algorithm or lattice multiplication. At this point, students are encouraged to use the strategy with which they feel most comfortable. As is required across all curricular areas, students must be able to explain their thinking using words and or illustrations, and not just demonstrate mastery of computation skills. Districtwide, elementary school students are encouraged to use xtramath.org to practice basic facts. It is a free site, which provides practice to increase speed and accuracy with basic math facts. I hope you will support our efforts to develop fluent mathematicians by encouraging your child to visit the site three times weekly. Each session only takes a few minutes. The results of your child's progress are automatically forwarded to teacher accounts. Students may earn certificates of achievement. The time spent on the computer may be recorded on the monthly Bear Math Facts Calendar. Many of the errors we are observing in

class are due to the lack of automaticity with basic facts. Students follow systematic strategies, but demonstrate errors in computation.

Now that initial reading records have been completed, we are meeting with small groups to analyze leveled texts and target specific comprehension skills. A close reading approach continues to be utilized during reading instruction. More specifically, our current focus is on story elements and character analysis. Children demonstrate progress in their ability to defend their thinking with evidence from the text. They are learning to examine text below the surface and question the author's message, purpose, and choice of words. We encourage children to stick to one "just right" book in the classroom and at home, rather than juggle two texts at once. Twenty minutes of nightly reading is mandatory to develop proficient readers. Share a read aloud with your child, once weekly, to demonstrate fluency and model appropriate phrasing and expression.

To build academic vocabulary, fourth grade classes at Frenchtown are piloting a new program, "Building Vocabulary with Roots." We recently explored the directional and negative prefixes *im-* *in-* and *col-* *com-*. Though the program is challenging, students are beginning to recognize some prefixes that have been introduced in the beginning units, while reading just right books. In writing, we are beginning to explore opinion pieces. We will examine controversial topics, practice note-taking skills, take a stance, and support our opinions with evidence from texts and multi-media.



Science classes have wrapped up our erosion S.T.E.M. unit, culminating with an activity where students worked in groups to design and test a riverbank reinforcement system. Now, while driving along the highway or walking along a riverbank or beach, children will recognize and understand the purpose of riprap, retaining walls, gabion baskets, and jetties. In our current unit, Force and Motion, we are exploring Newton's Laws.

In homeroom classes, students experienced the democratic process when selecting student council representatives. This process was reinforced



in social studies classes where students learned about the responsibilities of the three branches of the government. As is tradition, students were

treated to a visit from government officials and candidates during our Democracy Day program coordinated by Mr. Fiore. Children have been studying maps and globes in preparation for our study of Connecticut and exploration of the regions of the United States.

One of our areas of focus, spanning all areas of the curriculum, is learning to follow directions. It is evident in student work that children are not taking the time to thoroughly read directions prior to completing a task. Please encourage your child to read all directions before starting a homework assignment. In addition, encourage children to use a highlighter to find proof of their answers for reading comprehension assignments. As the passages become more complex, use of this strategy will be most helpful. We expect students to answer questions using complete sentences and proper English writing conventions when completing assignments.

Grade Five News...

**Mrs. Alfano, Mrs. Demshak,
Mrs. Ferraro, Mrs. Gaspar,
Mrs. Grunow**

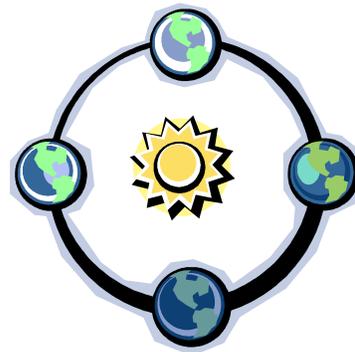
Parent Partnership:

A positive parent-teacher relationship contributes to your child's school success. This positive relationship makes a child feel like the important people in his life are working together. It was great to have so many of you attend our parent visitation. Even a short visit will help you identify some of your child's strengths and challenges. It's also a great way to get a feel for our Frenchtown climate and intangible but important factors like the enthusiasm of the teaching, engagement of the students, quality of communication and respect between students and teachers, and the overall sense that our school offers a safe and inspiring learning environment. Remember parent conferences for 5th grade will be held on Thursday, November 6th afternoon/evening and Wednesday, November 12th

afternoon only. You want information about how your child is learning and his/her social development. Your child's teacher wants to know more about what your child loves to learn as well as any struggles he/she may have. Conferences provide us an opportunity to look at the whole picture of your child together. Please contact your child's teacher by email if you have any questions or concerns prior to your conference.

Spotlight on Science:

Engineers follow a process to make new products. The engineering design process involves a series of steps that lead to the development of a new product or system: step 1: Identify the Problem, step 2: Do Research, step 3: Brainstorm and Develop Possible Solutions, step 4: Choose One Solution, step 5: Design and Construct a Prototype, step 6: Test the Prototype, step 7: Communicate Results, and step 8: Evaluate and Redesign. In September, your child used this process to try to create the most effective design to harness solar energy to conduct heat using common materials including cardboard, black paper, aluminum foil, plastic and tape. Throughout the year, we will provide our 5th graders with opportunities to develop critical-thinking and problem solving skills through invention and innovation using this engineering design process.



Our study of the Earth, Moon, and Sun continues. Your child will learn that most objects in the solar system move in a predictable motion due to gravity. Students will explain the motion of the

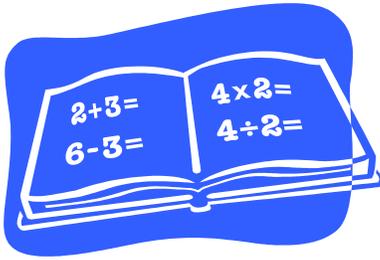
Earth relative to the sun that causes Earth to experience cycles of day and night. They will construct models demonstrating Earth's rotation on its axis, the moon's revolution around the Earth, and the Earth and moon revolving around the sun. They will also distinguish between the sun as a source of light and the moon as a reflection of that light.

Mark Your Calendars:

On November 4th, 27th, and 28th there is no school. November 6th, 12th, and 26th will be early dismissal. Our first field trip to Winding Trails is on November 10th.

Math News...

Mrs. Gidwani, Mrs. Sansone



Please be sure to visit our Frenchtown math site each week. We have links to on-line math games, printable fact

worksheets and flashcards. You can also find the Pearson Homework Link to help you with your math homework. Go to www.frenchtownelementary.com and click on the Math BEAR.

If you want to access the math homework site directly, go to www.pearsonsuccessnet.com.

Login: frenchtownmath

Password: wolves2014

Click on Student Math Handbook for your grade.

Remember to turn in your pink Bear Math Calendar each month for a prize (grades 1 through 5).

From the Nurse's Office...

Mrs. McCullough

Enterovirus, Ebola, Flu, Yikes! So many reasons to be afraid! But don't panic, with a little time spent on prevention you can increase your chances of staying healthy this fall and winter.

Enterovirus is prevalent in the summer and fall and there are many strains but mostly cause mild to no illness. However there has been a recent uptick in the number of cases seen around the country. Those who are most susceptible are infants and children younger than 5 years of age and those with chronic lung disease. So the kids with asthma need to be watched closely. This infection starts off looking like an innocent cold but can progress to difficulty breathing rapidly. So don't wait, get your child to a doctor at the first sign of respiratory distress especially if they have asthma!

Prevention:

- Wash hands often with soap and water. For enteroviruses, alcohol hand sanitizer is not a replacement for washing with soap and water.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you don't have a tissue, cover your mouth with your sleeve.

- Avoid kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.
- If you are sick, stay home to avoid exposing others at school or in the workplace.

EBOLA

Ebola has been a topic for weeks now and I hear so many false statements on the news about its spread. Chances are, unless you are traveling around the world, you will not come in to contact with Ebola. You have more of a chance of getting sick from the flu.

EBOLA IS NOT SPREAD THROUGH CASUAL CONTACT. YOU MUST TOUCH THE BLOOD OR BODY FLUIDS OF INFECTED PERSON AND THEN TOUCH YOUR EYES OR MOUTH OR IT ENTERS THROUGH A BREAK IN YOUR SKIN. IT IS NOT TRANSMITTED THROUGH THE AIR AND IS IN FACT UNABLE TO SURVIVE IN AN AIR DROPLET.

Symptoms mimic those of many viruses such as the flu: Fever, body aches, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.

Symptoms usually start 4-10 days after coming into contact with Ebola virus but can occur as early as 2 days to up to 21 days after exposure.

A person infected with the Ebola virus cannot pass it to others before any symptoms appear.

Spread of Ebola has occurred in hospitals and clinics to health care workers who have contact with body fluids while treating patients and to others through re-use of contaminated medical equipment (such as needles) without proper sterilization.

While it's impossible to know how every patient became infected, it's safe to say that the vast majority came from people directly touching the fluids or the dead body of patients who were actively ill. The patient in Dallas, for example, helped to carry the very ill daughter of his landlord to a clinic. She was turned away from the overcrowded clinic and carried home, where she later died.

That is not casual contact. In all cases of preventing the spread of viruses, good old hand washing is the key!

Music News...

Mrs. Tavella

K, 1, and 2 have conquered rhythms short and long. And we ended October with some spooky songs. "October Rocktober" was a song that really caught our ears!

We had drum solos and backup dancers, and a solo boys part with no fears!

In November we will begin to learn about pitch, melody, and high and low.

We will learn to sing with hand signs until we know,

How to sing an entire scale, it will be great!

We will let you hear our improved voices and rate!

PTA Reflections Theme for 2014 – 2015

“The World Would Be a Better Place if...”

We all have ideas on how to make the world better...get creative and show us how!

Students wishing to participate must submit their artwork to the Frenchtown PTA. Attention of Zdena Quinn by December 4, 2014.

Entry forms and the rules for each artistic medium are available on FTparents.com and will be sent out via Wolf Mail and posted on the Frenchtown Parents Facebook page and from the main office.

Summer Box Top Raffle Winners

1. Brill, Connor
2. Koch, Cassidy
3. Reily, Erin
4. Smith, Owen
5. Demers, James
6. Liriano, Emmanuel
7. Bachelder, Austin
8. Mercado, Ronald
9. Katz, Caleb
10. Carroll, Brianna
11. Santiago, Gabriella
12. Arcamone, Jack

September Box Top Raffle Winners:

1. Puglio, David
2. Macura, Brandon
3. Messler, Jack
4. Scott, Charles
5. Kouble, Timothy
6. Kelly, Madison
7. Lepore, Collin
8. Wich, Matthew
9. Lojko, Madeline
10. McLean, Brett
11. Pucci, Isabella
12. Pelle, Steven