



NORTH TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

# NT SPIRIT

NT SPIRIT

WINTER 2010

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR STATE CHAMPIONS!

### A SEASON



### TO REMEMBER

The 2009 Lumberjack Football Team fulfilled the dream of every high school football player across the country. They are State Champs! A great ending to a historic season.

Before winning the State Title the Jacks finished the regular season 7-0, including winning the 100<sup>th</sup> T-NT Classic. During the seven game regular season the Jacks outscored their opponents 299-49.

The six game playoff run began with a 40-13 victory over Frontier. In that game, senior quarterback Mike Tuzzo rushed for four touchdowns and junior Joe Montesanti added a pair. Steve Kijowski rushed for 176 yards and added 15 tackles.

Next for the Jacks was a rematch of last year's Section VI Class AA Final as Orchard Park traveled to NT. This year's Lumberjacks avenged last year's defeat by beating the Quakers 21-7. NT took control of the game on its second play when Joe Montesanti took a pitch from Tuzzo 49 yards for a touchdown. Aaron Davis and Tom Sell also scored for the Jacks in that game.

Then it was on to Ralph Wilson Stadium for the Section VI Class AA Championships. The Jacks clobbered Lancaster with a 54-7 win, setting a new record for points in a Section VI Championship game. After a scoreless first quarter, NT exploded for 34 points in the second quarter. Three touchdowns were scored by Steve Kijowski and three by Joe Montesanti as the Jacks won their first sectional title since 2002. The Lumberjack defense recorded five interceptions in the game.

In the Far West Regional game NT survived Webster Schroeder (Section V) 26-24. With key starters Aaron Davis and Steve Kijowski missing most of the second half NT proved that good teams need good depth. Reserve running back Tom Sell rushed for 131 yards and two touchdowns. Joe Montesanti added another 148 yards on the ground. Quarterback Mike Tuzzo also tossed two touchdown passes. This victory earned the Jacks the right to play in the state semi-final game for the first time in school history.

The Lumberjacks insured themselves a spot in the State Championship Game with a 28-7 win over Baldwinsville (Section III). NT's offense scored all their points in the first half of this game. Montesanti scored on a 28-yard pass from Tuzzo and a 71 yard run. Sell added another touchdown for the Jacks. In the second half, NT's defense stepped up by keeping Baldwinsville's All State Candidate running back in check allowing him only one score. Sean McDonough made a huge defensive play by first deflecting a pass, then intercepting it and finally running it back 50 yards for his first varsity touchdown.

The 2009 Jacks secured their place in school history with a hard fought 14-7 victory over New Rochelle (Section I) at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse. NT scored first with a touchdown pass from Tuzzo to junior tight end Travis Charsley. New Rochelle tied the game in the third quarter. The Jacks battled back and took the lead minutes into the fourth quarter when Montesanti hit Darrik Bloomfield on a halfback option pass. Bloomfield jumped over a New Rochelle defender and turned a sure interception into an NT touchdown. Sean McDonough sealed the victory for NT by deflecting a forth down pass with less than 2 minutes remaining in the game. The victory completed a perfect 13-0 season and gave NT and Niagara County its first state football title. The victory also made Section VI a perfect 4-0 in state championship games for the second year in a row.



Darrik Bloomfield with winning touchdown



**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

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January 11, 2010

## **Superintendent's Letter Notice of Intent to Retire**

Vincent J. Vecchiarell  
Superintendent of Schools

NTCSD Board of Education:

This is to advise the Board of Education of my intention to retire from the position of Superintendent of the North Tonawanda City School District, effective September 17, 2010.

My entire professional life spanning over 35 years has been dedicated to the education of our youth and I have been rewarded by the many positive relationships I have forged. I will always be grateful for the support received from the faculty, staff, students, board members and the communities that I have had the opportunity to proudly serve. I feel blessed to have enjoyed such a long successful career in education having served as a classroom teacher, guidance director, principal, assistant superintendent and for over 25 years as superintendent of schools.

It has been my pleasure to work these past four years as Superintendent of the North Tonawanda City School District and I relish the challenges that we have faced. As I reflect on the progress we have accomplished together since I was first appointed to serve as Superintendent, I am proud of the many positive changes that I have seen. We have focused on raising academic achievement levels for every student in the school district and have developed Action Plans for all our schools to follow to meet these goals. An emphasis has been placed on literacy and a new literacy program has been implemented at all of our elementary schools. The administration has been restructured and new principals hired for the Middle School, Ohio and Spruce Elementary Schools along with an Executive Director of Educational Services, Director of Student Services, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Athletic Director, Assistant Principals and Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds. We were successful in having the community overwhelmingly approve a \$48 million Capital Improvement Project at no cost to the taxpayers. This project includes repairs and upgrades to current school buildings as well as improvements to health, safety, security, instruction and a ten classroom addition at NT Middle School. This project also provides access to the latest in computer technology for staff and students, including expanded power and data infrastructures, ceiling mounted projectors and interactive whiteboards in all classrooms. We have provided professional development opportunities that have increased the technology integration skills of our teachers. We have redesigned our district website and are in the process of updating the information on it. With the enrollment in the district declining, initial plans have been developed to right-size the district schools. After three years of very difficult negotiations, the district settled its contract with the teachers union. We have positioned the District to be in strong financial shape to weather the storm during these tough economic times.

The North Tonawanda City School District continues to maintain a positive relationship with the Orleans-Niagara BOCES and we also are building a ten classroom addition at our Middle School to lease to BOCES to serve the special need students.

Academic achievement at our schools has increased and we have numerous Scholar-Athlete Teams. We also have excelled in the arts, music and athletic arena at the Section, Regional and State levels. I will take with me many memories including our Lumberjack football team finishing this year undefeated and New York State Class AA Champions. The good news continues and is evident as we witness the success and achievements celebrated by our students every day.

It is my intention by providing the Board with notice of my intent to retire at this time, to allow the District to begin the superintendent search process for a candidate to serve as my replacement. I am hopeful that the District will always place students first in all decisions and continue in the right educational direction necessary to fulfill our vision of being a leader in public education by providing the best opportunities for all students to achieve academic and personal excellence.

I look forward with enthusiasm to the next phase of my life and I'm excited to see what the future holds.

I want to thank the North Tonawanda School Community for the opportunity to serve as your School Superintendent.

Sincerely,

Vincent J. Vecchiarella  
Superintendent of Schools

## Elementary School News

### Drake School

#### SMART Boards

As part of the Capital Project that is nearly complete, Drake School received 22 SMART boards. Each classroom has a projector connected to the teacher's computer, which projects the computer desktop image onto an interactive whiteboard. The interactive whiteboard accepts touch input from a finger, pen, and solid objects. Although teacher training has only just started, all teachers are excited to be learning and using this technology in their classrooms. When a good SMART website is found, it is shared among staff and used eagerly by the Drake students!



Shown here is Gabrielle Hickey from grade 5.

#### Safety Patrol

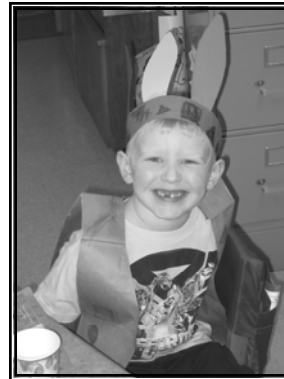
Drake School is proud of its Safety Patrol! The Drake Safety Patrol has offered older students a chance to help with bus lines and hall patrol. Safety Patrol members also have the opportunity to recognize other students for good behavior, which has made a positive impact on the entire school!

Front row: Jacob Lemke and Marie Cuccia  
Back row: Rachel Anderson, Elizabeth Wildt, Desiree Doucette



#### Thanksgiving "Feast"

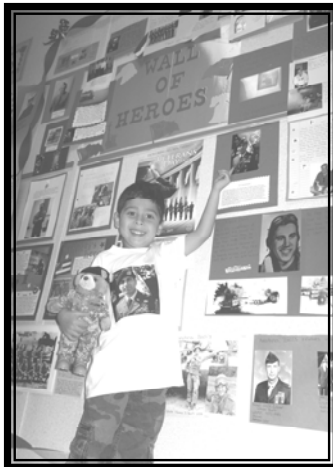
As part of a social studies unit, the Drake kindergarten students took part in a "feast" for Thanksgiving. They learned all about the Pilgrims and Native Americans and the contributions each made to our early society. Students made and decorated costumes depicting both groups. Shown here is Jordan Dudas from Mrs. Trimboli's class.



### Grant School—UPK

#### "Wall of Heroes"

To honor Veteran's Day the Pre-K students came up with a "Wall of Heroes." Their wall consists of family members, friends, or someone special that is serving in the war or has previously served in a war. Included in the pictures sent in by parents was the person's name, who they were related to in Pre-K, and a small autobiography about that person. The student pictured here next to the "Wall of Heroes" is Taj Kateli whose father Danesh Kateli is in Iraq. He is wearing his army pants and on his shirt is a picture of his father—he is very proud of him as are we.



#### Dinosaur Fossils

In November the Grant UPK students had special visitors. They were paleontologists from UB who taught the students about dinosaur fossils. Dr. Charles Mitchell and a student of his brought in a fossilized egg, the head of a T-Rex, tools and bones for the students to examine. What a great experience everyone had with the experts!







## Gilmore School

### Veterans Day Essay Winners

Two Gilmore students were recently honored at an awards dinner held at the Lily of the Valley Veterans Post on November 20<sup>th</sup>. The students were asked to write an essay about what Veterans Day meant to them, and Veysal Mukhtasimov and Nicholas Kagelamacher received first and second place, respectively. As a result, both boys were invited to read their essays to attendees of the post, as did other students from area districts with award winning essays. The students were honored with certificates and gift cards to Barnes & Noble.



Pictured are award winners Nicholas Kagelamacher and Veysal Mukhtasimov

### Spelling Bee

Gilmore School's fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students participated in the 2010 National Spelling Bee program, sponsored by the Gilmore Home School Organization. Each classroom teacher administered a twenty-five word qualifying test to all students to produce two semifinalists from each room. Those fourteen students then competed in a school wide Bee to produce one champion on December 9, 2009. Mr. Holesko and Mrs. Jennifer Licht served as pronouncers and Mrs. Cheryl Davignon coordinated the Bee and also served as judge.

The semifinalists were Liliya Sakharchuk, Noel Nickerison, Ramil Musayev, Mikayla Sobus, Erica Nugent, Jeremy Crafts, Wesley Payne, Devin Vogel, Alaa Aljibouri, Brittany Verhague, Shawn Frasier, Victoria Andres, Kayla Seeley, and Jeslyn Zakes.



Each semifinalist received a certificate for participation. Fourth grade champion, Ramil Musayev, fifth grade champion, Wesley Payne, and sixth grade champion, Brittany VerHague, received a certificate, a dictionary and a pocket thesaurus. The Gilmore School champion, Brittany VerHague, will go on to compete in a regional competition sponsored by the Buffalo News on February 3, 2010. Good luck!

### Teacher of the Year Award

Gilmore School was contacted by the Niagara Falls Boulevard Wal-Mart Store to report that one of our teachers, Mrs. Jennifer Kendt, was being recognized as the 2009 Teacher of the Year! Mrs. Kendt teaches at Gilmore Elementary School as our 5th/6th grade MPP teacher. Wal-Mart presented Mrs. Kendt with a \$500 Wal-Mart gift certificate which will be used for her classroom. In addition to this awesome news, 10 Wal-Mart Classroom Award cards, each valued at \$100, were presented to teachers to be utilized to support classroom activities or needed supplies by each grade level/department. The ten staff members are:

Kindergarten Teacher - Patti Montaldi

1st Grade Teacher - Heidi Himes

2nd Grade Teacher - Mary Hempel

3rd Grade Teacher - Kelley Moore

4th Grade Teacher - Kelly Kotlik

5th Grade Teacher - Patty Coia

6th Grade Teacher - Rosemary Davis

Special Education Teacher - Bonnie Hathaway

Computer Teacher - Carley Ellis

Physical Education Teacher - Mike Cox



Pictured are John Stafford, Wal-Mart Official, Jennifer Kendt, Award Winner, Tracey LaGrosso and Lorrie Ryan, Wal-Mart Officials

### Virtual Field Trip

The fourth grade students at Gilmore Elementary School had the opportunity to put what they learned into action and become scientists. After studying food chains and ecosystems, they took a virtual field trip sponsored by the Discovery Center in Missouri. The students were able to interact with a teacher from the Discovery Center to discuss how food chains are related. They learned first hand how to dissect owl pellets in order to determine the owl's prey. The students truly enjoyed this hands on activity in which science really came alive.





## Ohio School



November had the students and faculty at Ohio Elementary School learning about how to say Thank You to Veterans. We brought in pictures of family and friends to display in the halls.



5<sup>th</sup> grade students, under the direction of Audrey Strong, gave parents and students a musical timeline of the history of the United States.



Throughout the day, veterans went into classrooms and spoke to students.



On November 10<sup>th</sup>, the entire school met around the flag pole to say the pledge to the flag. Students were then treated to Taps being played by a veteran from WWII.

## Meadow School

### “Polar Express”

The second grade classes at Meadow Elementary School took a ride on the “Polar Express.” As the students arrived, they gathered together to listen to the story being read by Lou Diamond Phillips over the internet. They returned to their classrooms to see that they had been transformed into trains. Tickets were given for boarding. The day was spent “aboard” the trains bringing literature alive by discussing and writing about the prized possession they brought along for the trip and comparing and contrasting the movie to the text. We all returned safely from our train ride to the North Pole on The Polar Express!



### Meadow Students make Altar de Muertos--Day of the Dead Altar

*El Día de los Muertos*, or *The Day of the Dead*, is one of the most celebrated holidays in Mexico. It is the time of year that the deceased return to earth to visit their relatives and loved ones. For the living, this is an opportunity to honor those who have passed on. The annual reunion takes place in November. Altars are left overnight so that the spirits can enjoy the feast, and then on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, the rest of the family enjoys the offerings. This unique tradition reveals important elements of Mexican culture: love and respect for our ancestors; celebration of the continuity of life; strengthening family relationships and promotion of community solidarity.



Meadow students had an opportunity during their art classes to honor someone who they loved from the past

Kindergarten Students at Meadow Elementary School had their Thanksgiving Feast Celebration.



## Spruce School

### Veteran's Wall



Spruce School has been participating in an ongoing project to raise awareness of friends and relatives who have served, or are currently serving, in the Armed Forces. Pictured are Emily Howell, Angelo Gerace, and Alec Roy, who are pointing to stars honoring their relatives. Emily's grandfather served in WWII. Angelo's great-grandfather rode in the Rough Riders with Teddy Roosevelt during WWI. Alec has relatives who are veterans of past wars as well as relatives currently serving. Many parents commented that they have enjoyed this project as it sparked conversations at home about patriotism and the importance of our military personnel who protect us, our constitutional rights and our freedom. Families sent in names of veterans who have served in every war as far back as the War of 1812. Many of the Spruce students have relatives and friends currently serving our country. We are all thankful for their dedication and the commitment they have made to defend our freedom both now and in years gone by.

This project was coordinated by Ms. Ellyn Broeker, Reading Specialist at the school.

## Spruce Kindergarten Activities

### Code of Honor

Students at Spruce Elementary are busy learning about their "Code Of Honor" which includes the importance of respect, toil and safety. Pictured here is Mr. Jetter getting into the morning huddle to talk to the Kindergarten classes about safety and what it means in their classroom.



### NT Fire Department Visit

Kindergarten students at Spruce Elementary recently had a visit from the North Tonawanda Fire Department. Chief Hromowyk came into the classroom and reviewed the importance of 911, stop, drop and roll, smoke detectors, never hiding from the firemen and answered many important questions that were on the students' minds. Firefighter Himmelbeck took the children on a tour around the fire truck showing off the tools that the firemen carry. He also talked about what they use these tools for. The fireman provided each child with a coloring book that reviewed the important issues that were talked about that day and fire hats. Pictured ready to go home with their



hats on from left to right are: Marcelina Vazquez, Antwan Walker, Anthony Scinta, Wilson Hender-shot, Hunter Ambrusko and Hannah Raybon.

### Grandparents Day

Spruce Kindergarten students celebrated Grandparent's Day working as teams and enjoying the literature, There Was An Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly by Simms Talback. Upon arrival to the classrooms, students worked together with their Grandparent (or older special friend) in making their very own Old Lady and other important creatures from the story. Following this construction, the teams walked to the auditorium for a "Welcome" from Principal Rick Jetter and with plans to read the story altogether. However, before Mr. Jetter was able to finish, there came a banging on the door, with none other than the Old Lady herself explaining to the children that the story they were about to read was simply not true....a "Fantasy" story! The Old Lady herself, along with the children, sang the story and reinforced the story sequence with puppets and picture cards. A great time was had by all!

*Pictured from left to right are: Student teacher, Ms. Vaughn holding the Big Book, Front row from left to right, Alaina Grace Roberts with the puppet, The Old Lady, Alexis Cheeley and her Grandma*



### Library Trip

Spruce Kindergarten Students recently visited the North Tonawanda Library and listened as Mrs. Bugyi explained the importance of taking care of books. Mrs. Bugyi showed the children the many exciting ways that the children can enjoy the different types of litera-



ture. The students viewed a movie, "Harry the Dirty Dog", and toured the building where they could see computers, magazines, books on tape, videos, CD's and just a wonderful environment in which to read.





## NT Middle School

### National Junior Honor Society

The National Junior Honor Society at NTMS recently held their 1<sup>st</sup> Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. The Kindergarten students from Ohio School were invited to the middle school café to meet Santa Claus and listen to him read the famous poem, *'Twas the Night before Christmas*. While they were there, they enjoyed donuts and juice provided by the NJHS. Members of the NJHS led crafts and coloring throughout our holiday extravaganza, such as reindeer puppets, Christmas greeting cards, stockings with glitter and fur, and ornaments to hang on their trees. We hope everyone had a great time and we would like to offer more activities like this in the future.



### Do The Right Thing Award

North Tonawanda Middle School is proud to announce that three students have been honored as finalists for DO THE RIGHT THING.

Students Reanna Bradt and Natalie Wellenc both 7<sup>th</sup> graders, and Beau Bradshaw an 8<sup>th</sup> grader turned in cash found in two separate instances on the school grounds. For these acts of honesty the students were all nominated for the "Do The Right Thing Award".

Every other month up to 80 children from the Niagara County area, on the basis of their exemplary behavior/attitude, can be nominated by teachers, police officers, youth leaders, and the public for the "Do The Right Thing Award". Eight finalists will be selected from this group. In order to reach as many children as possible and to reinforce their positive behavior, the first 80 nominees each month will receive certificates of recognition and a t-shirt. The eight monthly finalists will also receive a plaque, incentive prize package, and recognition in the "Do The Right Thing" public service announcements in local newspapers and onTV that recognize children who distinguish themselves through their behavior and provide positive role models for their peers.

Mrs. Colburn and the staff of North Tonawanda Middle School would like to thank the members of the Niagara Police Athletic League for choosing these students and join in proclaiming their motto:

**Good Kids are newsworthy and positive behavior can be "very cool."**



Pictured are 7th graders Reanna Brandt and Natalie Wellenc



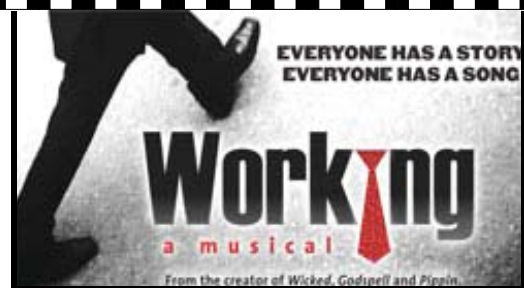
Pictured is 8th grader Beau Bradshaw



## KUDOS

### QUALITY STUDENTS FOR CLASS OF 2010

Mariya Baranov	Caitlin Kirbis
Kayleigh Bemisderfer	Emily Livesay
Darrik Bloomfield	Meghan Malone
Gina Castiglione	Morgan March
Jason Contangelo	Alyssa Molina
Stephanie Czaja	Vanessa Nguyen
Andrea Darrall	Kellsie Nolan
Aaron Davis	Zachary Ostroff
Olivia DiPalma	Mary Schwartzmyer
Sarah Doucette	Theodore Sorensen
Abbigal Doyle	Marie Strycharz
Emily Ertel	Samantha Stuhler
Scott Farrell	Gina Stulba
Colin Fike	Brianna Stutzman
Kimberly Garbus	Josey Topolski
Ilia Gazdovich	Michael Tuzzo, IV
Eric Glatz	Austin Tylec
Shannon Graves	Mackenzie Weiland
Benjamin Kanaley	Colleen Wiechec
Stephen Kijowski	Brandon Wurl



### ANOTHER NTHS SUCCESS

Audiences were delighted with the NTHS Drama Club's production, **WORKING**. The musical highlights the everyday jobs of average, hard working Americans and the actors really delivered each character's message. The talent of our district's students is overwhelming as amazing sounds and acting filled the auditorium.

Our cast was: Jeff Burruano (iron worker), Joey Wright (parking attendant), Mary Jean Reynders (teacher), Heidi Matheis (supermarket checker), Dan Torres (migrant worker), Jessica Caruana (housewife), Shannon McMahon (mill worker), Skyler Haseltine (mason), Joe Taylor and Jamie Core (truckers), Stacy Baughman (waitress), Nick Jasek (retired man), Karalyn Henderson (cleaning woman), and a full ensemble of NTHS's finest.

F.Y.I.

### New York State's "NEW" Child Re- straint Law

Effective November  
24, 2009 all children

must be restrained in an appropriate child restraint system until they reach their 8th birthday, while riding in a motor vehicle. For more information:

[www.safeny.com](http://www.safeny.com)



### Pre-K & Kindergarten Registration

Registration packets will be available by February 15th and can be picked up in the lobby of the Administration Building

Dates and times to return **in person** to the Administration Building to have the application packet reviewed and processed are:

February 22 and 24  
March 2 and 4

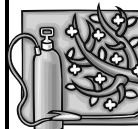
From 1:00-7:00 pm at the  
Central Registration Office  
Administration Building  
175 Humphrey Street

807-3568

### Pesticide Notification Program

The North Tonawanda City School District may periodically use pesticide products on school property. For more information on the products used or to be registered for the 48 hour advanced notice, contact Jeffrey Gaston at 807-3517 or in writing at 175 Humphrey Street., North Tonawanda, NY 14120.

Recent applications include:



8/21/09—Weed Control—Various fences around Meadow Complex athletic fields

9/26/09—Weed Control—Adm. Bldg.