

# Advocate

Connect Unite Succeed



The newsletter of the Owen J. Roberts School District

December 2014

Inspiring Each Student for Success Today and Greatness Tomorrow

## Message from Superintendent Michael Christian



The first months of the school year have been filled with opportunities for students and community members to come together. I invite you to read about many ways our students have interacted with the community in this edition of *The Advocate*. In addition to those stories, an impressive 2,500 grand-friends were able to share classroom and educational experiences with our elementary students this fall and our students and staff were also excited to host hundreds of visitors as part of American Education Week.

During the winter months, our schools will remain vibrant hubs of activity. In December and January, students will demonstrate their talents in the arts and sciences. A dozen different free winter concerts are hosted throughout the district in December. Community members are welcome to enjoy the musical talents demonstrated by our students. For your convenience, a master concert schedule has been placed on the district website.

Our young scientists will have the opportunity to display and share the results of their science research throughout the month of January. Each elementary school and the middle school will celebrate science by hosting an individual school event to showcase competition projects. Students will employ the scientific method to design an experiment, gather and analyze data, and present their findings for the topic they selected to research. Several students from each of these schools in grades four through eight will be selected to represent our district at the Chester County level, and potentially move to regional competition afterwards. Science Research Competition events are scheduled as follows:

- East Coventry, Jan. 14; Snow date Jan. 15
- East Vincent, Jan. 14; Snow date Jan. 15
- French Creek, Jan. 12; Snow date Jan. 26
- North Coventry, Jan. 27; Snow date Jan. 28
- West Vincent, Jan. 20; Snow date Jan. 21
- Middle School, Jan. 22; Snow date TBD

Continued on page 7

## Mindful of the Cost of Freedom

Veteran's Day serves as a meaningful reminder to all our staff and students about the importance of supporting those who have served our nation. Throughout the district on Veteran's Day, veterans were welcomed and celebrated for their years of service. Students and staff honored each of the veterans and thanked them for the countless sacrifices made to protect our rights and freedoms.

The annual Veteran's Day breakfast and assembly is a proud tradition at North Coventry Elementary. This year, approximately 100 veterans were treated to breakfast, Morning Colors with the NJROTC, and an assembly program.

East Coventry Elementary was honored to open its doors to veterans for breakfast, musical entertainment and a flag ceremony. The highlight of the day's events was being able to talk to a parent currently serving in the Air Force in South Korea. The students had an opportunity to Skype with him and ask him questions about life in the military overseas. West Vincent Elementary created a Wall of Heroes, honored veterans with breakfast, a school-wide assembly, and classroom activities. East Vincent Elementary students created special poems and unique post card designs which students mailed to veterans.

French Creek honored veterans with a special breakfast followed by a school-wide celebration with patriotic songs, poetry and a moving solo, "God Bless the USA", by Mrs. Holmes, which reportedly brought everyone in the room to their feet, while feelings of pride and respect flooded the auditorium.

Owen J. Roberts High School welcomed U.S. Senator Pat Toomey, Pennsylvania State Senator John Rafferty and Pennsylvania State Representative Tim Hennessy to the 2014 Owen J. Roberts High School Veteran's Day Ceremony. The annual ceremony is organized by Mr. David Schwenk with inspirational performances by the High School Choir directed by Mrs. Sheila McIntyre. (More information about the celebration may be found on the district website.)

Owen J. Roberts robust NJROTC, in the command of Master Gunnery Sergeant, USMC (Ret) Andrew Worley, was in high demand for Veteran's



Day as they demonstrated the trust and leadership which guide respectful activities such as presentation of colors, flag raising and drum and bugle corps.

NJROTC adds both fellowship and dignity to the High School's Veteran's day ceremony and luncheon by providing a color guard, honor guard and Fife & Drum performance in the auditorium as well as interacting and conversing with veterans. Lining the hallways at attention, cadets escorted veterans to a luncheon, where they perform the ritual of the missing man table, reserved to honor those who have given the ultimate sacrifice, as well as the joint cutting of the cake by the eldest veteran and youngest cadet.

Later that day, NJROTC went to Atria Woodland Place Senior Home in Phoenixville to visit with the veterans and other residents. After serving cake and drinks to the residents, the cadets sat with many of the residents and learned much of what they did for the country.

Students of every age were involved in honoring veterans. Owen J. Roberts High School student government president Zachary Serbin addressed the crowd at the high school saying, "Our freedoms, such as playing sports or hanging out with friends, exist because of the sacrifice of veterans like those here today. (As students) we are thankful for the sacrifices of so many veterans."

*Kindergarten  
Registration coming soon.  
See page 8.*

POSTAL RESIDENT

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Pottstown, PA  
Permit No. 22

# Field Dedication

On Friday, September 19, 2014, Owen J. Roberts School District officially dedicated the lower stadium field as “Henry J. Bernat Field” at Wildcat Stadium. Mr. Bernat, along with family, friends, and a vibrant student and alumni section gathered to recognize the legacy of Mr. Bernat as a teacher, coach and community friend. During halftime, a ceremony was held to officially dedicate the field in his name with attention to the brand new scoreboard funded by many donors through the Friends of Hank Bernat along with a generous contribution from the Roberts Athletic Association.

Prior to the game a reception was held. More than 100 well-wishers came to greet Coach Bernat. Alumni came to celebrate and reconnect decked out in nostalgic Wildcat wear.

Henry (Hank) Bernat joined the Owen J. Roberts School District family in 1955 as a Biology Teacher. As a coach, he promoted teamwork, honor and cooperation. A 1990 *Philadelphia Inquirer* article claimed that “he led with encouragement, not criticism”. He touched the lives of over 1500 young football players during his career and was known for his calm demeanor.

Mr. Bernat was named Coach of the Year eight times by his peers and 15 times by Philadelphia-area media. He compiled a 195-133-17 career record. He was inducted to the Pennsylvania Football Coaches Hall of Fame, Tri-County Chapter of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame and Ches-Mont League Hall of Fame. He coached several athletes who went on to play professionally and many who played Division 1 Collegiate Football.

Mr. Bernat retired from Owen J. Roberts in 1991 after 35 years of service. A dedication to Mr. Bernat in the 1991 Ledger read, “Coach Bernat, whether in his role as teacher or coach, has never lost sight of his basic mission—the education of young people.”



# A Picture is Worth a Thousand Dreams

Mr. Tom Sonnenberg was in Staples buying school supplies when he noticed a poster about DonorsChoose.org. DonorsChoose is an online charity where teachers may seek to have projects funded. He researched and decided to give it a try. His application was based on a quote by Elliot Eisner, “Art is literacy of the heart”. His premise was that students need to study and make sense of the world they live in. He argued that photography would let students more fully participate and shape the elementary school experience.

In late August, Mr. Sonnenberg posted the project to DonorsChoose asking for \$321.85 for digital cameras. Two days later he was contacted by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation pledging half with a match. North Coventry PTO helped by posting on Facebook and in only one day, the project was fully funded. Donors included complete strangers who just believed in the project. “I was ecstatic and it was a real boost to my beginning of the year,” said Mr. Sonnenberg.

So far, students have used the cameras to take photos of events and daily life at school to contribute to the yearbook and for the Half-Face Project: 4th-Grade students took a selfie, cut it down the center line of the face, and drew the other half of their face.

Check out <http://www.donorschoose.org/mr.sonnenberg> for more.



Half-face art by Michelline Bender, 4th Grade

# Shaking it Off

Administration and staff at Owen J. Roberts Middle School worked tirelessly to make a great thing even better. Challenge Day is a day-long program engaging students in breaking down barriers prohibiting human connection to create a safe, caring community. The Middle School has been delivering a successful Challenge Day experience to students for the past three years, but the nature of the program and the necessity for small group work had meant that only a portion of middle school students were able to participate.

After a year of research, planning and staff professional development, Challenge Day 2014 became a school-wide program. Students were engaged right away when their first period was interrupted with an announcement from Principal Sean Burns that regular classes were cancelled for the day. Instead, students worked on team-building activities in small groups.

Counselors, staff and administration worked together and decided to do a lip-sync homage to a viral “Shake it Off” video (search Shake it Off OJR on YouTube). The song lyrics are relevant to kids and invite them to be resilient to life’s challenges. Throughout the day on November 7, students were reminded in many ways to be

confident, to shake off insignificant things, but turn to an adult for real issues. Guidance Counselor Victoria Morgan knew she wanted a home-grown assembly as part of Challenge Day 2014 held on November 7. “We didn’t want an outsider coming in and telling the kids they care about them. We wanted the kids to know we care about them.”

Throughout the day, students worked in small community groups of 12 students with a mentor to complete team building exercises centered on breaking down barriers, supporting each other, and building a strong school culture. Students have actually been preparing for the work of the day in their community meetings and will continue to build upon the work accomplished in those small groups all year using the responsive classroom model. The responsive classroom approach emphasizes the social, emotional, and academic growth of students in a strong and safe learning environment.

Staff also performed live music as part of the assembly. “Our hope is that opening ourselves up to the students would send a strong message about just how much we care about each and every student,” said Principal Sean Burns.

# Recess Trot

The district wellness council has had great success getting the attention of children with costumes, so five years ago when the East Vincent Elementary School’s Wellness Committee was planning initiatives, they decided to bring a turkey into the mix to encourage students to be active at recess. Parent volunteer Heather Koitzsch coordinates the week-long activity where classrooms compete against each other to log the most miles during recess. “There is a lot of school spirit for the event,” said Mrs. Koitzsch, “It is a way for kids to have fun while bringing attention to healthy activity.”



# Community Members Inducted into Wall of Fame

On Friday, October 3, 2014, prior to a home football game, the Owen J. Roberts Education Foundation presented two annual awards. The Education Foundation has been giving the Outstanding Community Service and Distinguished Alumni Awards since 1997, and has criteria for nominations on their website, [www.ojref.org](http://www.ojref.org).

The Owen J. Roberts Education Foundation recognized Mr. Jason Owens as the recipient of the 2013-2014 Community Service Award and Mr. Randolph (Randy) Loughin the recipient of the 2013-2014 Distinguished Alumni Award. Mr. Owens has made many important contributions to the community including donating and maintaining a new GM vehicle for student driver education use. Mr. Loughin was a member of the Roberts Athletic Association (RAA) for thirty years and in the role of president for twenty of those years, supporting the association with time, talents and resources. Congratulations to each recipient for his significant contributions to the school district and to the community.



# Creating an Inviting Campus



Over the past three years, the High School Student Government officers saw the need to both beautify the campus and provide seating for students around the building. As a result, the officers created designs, initiated many fundraisers, and worked out the many details to complete two landscaping projects which address those needs.

The first project was the main courtyard. The project took a full week to install and involved the creation of four planting beds, placing of eight benches, and planting of eight trees. The area is now available as a reading and meeting space, and has improved the atmosphere for the rooms surrounding the courtyard and all those that pass through on the way to class.

The second project was landscaping the area around the flagpole and Wildcat statue. This project took a full weekend to install, and included a planting bed around the entire area, and the placement of two benches and four trees.

The Student Government hopes these projects beautify the campus, provide more functional space, and promote pride in OJR students.

# Work of Many Hands

West Vincent students are tackling an enormous mosaic project with the help of two resident artists from Philadelphia, Baily Cypress and Julie Deery. The project began in September working with the 6th grade students to plan out images that would



represent nature and animals from the area. 6th grade students looked at photographs and created drawings that were enlarged and/or traced to use when working with clay. There are also historical references included in the design in the form of Conestoga wagons, names of houses used in the underground railroad, Native American Tribes, and historical buildings from the area.

Every student in the building worked with the artists three times: one time in a clay-making class, one in a glazing class, and one in a tiling class (putting the pieces together like a puzzle). Over 10,000 student-made clay tiles are mixed with commercial tile and glass pieces to create a nature scene that is a nod to the history of the area where the school now sits.

The finished mural is 42 feet long and 5 feet tall and has been installed on the outside wall of West Vincent under the roofed entrance to the building. It is made up of 14 panels, each 3 feet by 5 feet.

# Busy Best Buddies

The Owen J. Roberts Best Buddies Chapter partnered with the Owen J. Roberts Education Foundation to host Run 101, a 5K Run and 1 mile Fun Run/Walk on October 19th. The mission of Best Buddies is to enhance the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities by providing opportunities for one-to-one friendships and integrated employment. Best Buddies is the first unified, international program that pairs individuals with intellectual disabilities and college or high school students in one-to-one mutually enriching relationships.

Owen J. Roberts High School is fortunate to be one of the over 1,200 Best Buddies chapters in Colleges and High Schools throughout all 50 states and 22 countries. While participants find part of life's fulfillment in friendship, the Best Buddies pairs are also examples to their communities of acceptance and support for people with intellectual disabilities.

The Best Buddies Fall Fest took place October 22 as an opportunity for the members of the Best Buddies club to meet new friends from other local school districts. Three other school districts attended the event to join in a number of various fall activities. The students are assigned to groups and get to mingle with other students from local schools. The Best Buddies headed the stations that the students participated in for a short time period before rotating. Some of the activities included corn hole, pin the face on the scarecrow, scarecrow relay, pumpkin ring toss and Halloween parachute.



# Cancer Awareness Month

In October, two major district events brought awareness to the fight against breast cancer. Veteran journalist and eight-time Emmy award winner, Lu Ann Cahn, from NBC-10 was the guest speaker for the Pretty in Pink benefit for Susan G. Komen organized by Mrs. Barbara Green. The October 11 event featured a live auction and buffet dinner. Students decorated the cafeteria transforming it into a garden setting. The high school Student Council took an active role in fundraising. NNDCC, OJRHS Orchestra, OJR staff and many community organizations donated time, talents, and merchandise to make the evening a success. The event raised \$4,600 toward the cause.

On October 31, Owen J. Roberts held its first "Pink Out" football game. The Pink Out night was sponsored by the Unite for Her organization with the help of Ms. Kira Rump of the Middle School. Unite for HER works to bridge the gap between the medical and wellness communities with education, complementary therapies and resources. The funds collected will benefit those in our community. Unite for HER met with the varsity football team and explained ways to reduce risk of disease and how to support those who may be in need.



# Dog With a Blog



Samson, a 6-year-old certified therapy Golden Retriever owned by Mr. Jim Fitch, is a regular in the reading rooms of French Creek Elementary School. Samson is a patient listener who offers love and support to readers with all abilities.

This year, Samson took on a new role as a dog with a blog. Mrs. DiBattista's fourth grade students blog regularly to Samson. Some children use their blogs daily, while others use them only at school once or twice per week - it varies by interest. The class loves to have an audience for their writing. Students blog about science, literature, research and much more. Samson, a self-proclaimed "expert on just about everything," responds to blogs. you can read Samson's blog at <http://kidblog.org/2014-15MrsDiBattistasClassKidBlogs/>

The kids in my class can't wait to check their blogs to see if Samson has commented on their posts," offered Mrs. DiBattista, adding, "Having Samson as our Tail-waggin' tutor definitely adds excitement to the editing process of writing workshop. Samson is an active audience for the students, so they tend to put more effort into their writing."

# Learning to Lead and Serve



This year North Coventry Elementary School established a Sixth Grade Leadership Team to provide ALL 6th grade students multiple opportunities to develop their leadership skills through service learning. The program kicked off in September with all 6th grade students participating in a day-long leadership academy that focused on teamwork and communication.

Students were then asked to complete a job application for student leadership jobs: Morning Greeters (pictured above), Environmental Leaders, Spirit Squad, Peer Tutors, Actors Guild, Hall Safety, and Bus Safety. Principal Dr. Susan Lloyd along with 6th grade teachers Kristin Colfer, Tim Maher, Diane Raab, and Nick Zurga reviewed the student applications, awarded students at least two jobs, and issued each child an employee ID. The various jobs are coordinated by the school's 6th grade teachers, guidance counselor, instructional support teacher, and principal who work with the students and then provide them monthly compensation in the form of a charm for their employee ID.

# Spooky Moves

Halloween is where the action is at Owen J Roberts School District. But apparently the holiday is as full of activity as it is costumes and candy. Ghoulish moves, a sense of humor and smatter of playful games were all part of the mix at the REA Sponsored Safe Trick-or-Treat Night featured on WFMZ Channel 69.

For the second year, East Coventry Girls on the Run presented "Ghouls on the Run", a lively relay race for little goblins. To add to the healthful fun, the Owen J. Roberts Wellness Council brought a spark of wellness to the celebration with Spooky Yoga! Volunteers demonstrated poses like Black Cat and Flying Bat. Instead of candy, children were treated to a keepsake yoga pose card as well as being able to choose an affirmation book mark. Students seemed to love playing games and being challenged to the treat of physical activity.



# Safe Night for Children

More than 1100 children participated in the Roberts Education Association's Safe Trick or Treat Night on Wednesday, October 29, 2014. In its second year, the event drew more than twice as many participants as the previous year. The price of admission was a food item to be donated to the Coventry Food Pantry.

Due to the rural nature of our school district, teachers in the district felt there was a need to provide children with a safe way to trick or treat. "We have a central location and felt we could fill that need," said high school teacher Karin Suzadail.

Teachers, administrators, community organizations and older students all worked together to provide an enjoyable evening for Owen J. Roberts families. The high school halls were decked out for the season. Students had been working on decorations for weeks. You can watch the WFMZ 69 news story from the district website.

The night has become a chance to work and play together to do something special for children. In a thank you message, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael Christian shared, "While the excitement of trick or treating entices children to participate, it is the total experience that makes the night so enjoyable for our families. Students saw their teachers in costume, participated in fun activities, and donated to a worthy cause."



# Being Awesome

East Vincent Elementary Students have been challenged to "be awesome" this year. Students brainstormed what that means; respect, honor and kindness were three of the themes students settled on in describing awesomeness. In their opening assembly, students honored departing-by-retirement Chief of Security Larry Mauger for emulating those qualities.

Collaboration, communication, and character were other themes students identified in being awesome. East Vincent students, teachers and home and school accomplished a collective endeavor to assist others as part of the district Make a Difference Food Drive. Parents supported their children in selecting and purchasing items for those in need. K-Kids

and Lion Cubs collected, counted, and delivered the donated items throughout the two-week drive. Mr. Matt Venza allowed students to choose how he should shave his beard and sported his "friendly mutton chops" when they were successful in surpassing their goal of collecting 2,200 items. On September 24, when the Gross School Bus arrived to collect canned goods, Dr. Bell remembers "a beautiful, brisk, fall day with numerous, enthusiastic students taking turns to carry 2,349 cans/items on to the school bus headed to Coventry Food Bank as the entire student body eagerly chanted with pride, 'Fill that bus!'. She reported it being a special moment in her career. "It was indeed awesome," she said.



**Principal Cheryl Bell with incoming Chief of Security Kevin Smith and retiring Chief of Security Lawrence Mauger.**

# Preserving Treasures

The Owen J. Roberts School District welcomed the grandson of district namesake Owen J. Roberts. Mr. Owen Hamilton made a trip from Vermont to hand-deliver artifacts that had been stored in his sister's attic. Among the many photographs are several portraits of the Supreme Court which include Justice Roberts, who served for more than 15 years. Included with the relics were a copy of the Congressional Declaration of World War I, hand-written letters from Justice Roberts to President Truman with President Truman's responses, multiple honorary degrees, wedding memorabilia, and hundreds of news clippings, including those discussing his possible candidacy for United States President.

Local historian and archive volunteer, Mrs. Karen Oncay, will sift through and begin to organize some of the treasures as the high school looks for ways to preserve and display the mementos in ways which our students and public may interact—such as framing the honorary degrees. The possessions of the late Justice Roberts give our community a glimpse into the legacy and life of the man who made education such a priority in our region.



# Food Drive Spirit of Giving

Kicked off on October 13, 2014, the 9th Annual Make a Difference Food Drive filled a school bus with as much food as could fit! Each school building and administration building participated in full force. The spirit of giving was readily apparent on the faces of students as the school bus made its rounds to our 7 school buildings on October 24. The bus was absolutely packed with provisions to help the food pantry into the winter months.

Our thanks to Gross Bus Company for donating a bus, to Ms. Cindy Barnett for driving and hauling super heavy boxes, Mrs. Kira Rump for organizing, and the many clubs who rallied the troops to make a real difference. Thank you to all our students and families for helping fill the shelves at Coventry Food Pantry! Coventry Food Pantry serves more than 100 families in our community.



# Sunshine, Friends, and Open Terrain

Nearly 300 Owen J. Roberts students from each of the district's five elementary centers joined in an exhilarating cross country run on Tuesday, October 28. Any student who wished from East Coventry, East Vincent, West Vincent, North Coventry and French Creek Elementary in grades 4 – 6 were able to participate in the activity. Owen J Roberts School District has offered an after-school cross country running event since 1972. Now-retired Health and Physical Education teacher, Mr. Terry Stouffer, started the program as an outgrowth of the mile club.

This year, the high school took ownership of the event utilizing high school and middle school cross country athletes who acted as mentors, coaches, course marshals and cheerleaders for the elementary runners. Even though cross country season was completed for most athletes with only state-qualifying competition left, all athletes committed to and were present to set up the course encouraging runners from start to finish.

Home to the Varsity Wildcat Cross Country program, Warwick County Park offers the splendor of what nature can bring to running. High school athletes led elementary students through a tree-studded path to complete a one-mile fun run for 4th and 5th grade and a 1.5 mile timed run for the older 6th grade runners. In addition to the motivation from varsity athletes, elementary students received plenty of encouragement with several teachers running alongside and a crowd of parent fans to line the course.



# Hope on the Hill



In October, the high school's very robust Leo's Service Club donated more than 236 man hours to various community causes. They read to children at a local pre-school, helped relocate the charity "In Ian's Boots", chaperoned the East Vincent dance party, operated a coat drive, manned the Halloween Safe House and planned, provided and served a community meal—Hope on the Hill at Spring City United Methodist Church.

# Digital Citizens

With the opportunities technology can provide come great responsibilities. As part of their Unity Day work, East Coventry 6th grade students took on the challenge of defining what it means to be safe, responsible and respectful online. Working in teams,



the students identified strategies for using technology in appropriate ways. They explored digital etiquette, digital literacy, digital rights and responsibilities, health & wellness and safety on the internet. Students created themes and posters that they will share with lower grades during classroom meetings throughout the year.

## Incentive to Contribute



As part of the Make a Difference Food Drive, middle school principals Corbin Stoltfus and Sean Burns agreed to be taped to a pillar in the cafeteria. For each dollar donated, students received a three-foot piece of duct tape.

## Superintendent Message

Continued from page 1

Finally, our High School Anchor Club will serve special refreshments with the assistance of the High School Wildcat Ambassadors at the annual Senior Citizen Holiday Tea and Afternoon Concert to be held on December 15 at 12:00 p.m. A special collection of beautiful holiday music will be presented by the Owen J. Roberts High School music department. I hope you can make the time this winter to see Owen J. Roberts students excel in the classroom and on the stage.



## Cash Rewards for OJR

Giant Food Stores A+ School Rewards Program allows schools to earn cash rewards. Giant shoppers are able to register their Bonus Card and designate an Owen J. Roberts School as the recipient. More information is available at [www.giantfoodstores.com/aplus/](http://www.giantfoodstores.com/aplus/).

## Homecoming Weekend Brings Community Together



The high school had a very successful spirit week kicking off homecoming with different themes each day. On Friday, in celebration of the homecoming game, the halls were a sea of Wildcat red. The walls of the auditorium were nearly bursting as students held a very entertaining pep rally engaging the student population in Wildcat Pride. That evening, Samantha Garritano was crowned 2014 homecoming queen. On Saturday evening, social media lit up with glitter, glitz, and ties of all colors as students posed for the Homecoming Dance. Students had a great time dancing, socializing and sharing stories of the previous week.

Homecoming is especially meaningful when the present school community can welcome and interact with alumni. One alumna who ran the 5K on Sunday said it was the first time she had been back to the high school since she graduated over 20 years ago. The football game and Run 101 were two ways we were able to welcome alumni back to Owen J. Roberts. Many attended the homecoming football game and a few joined 138 students, staff and community in the Best Buddies/Education Foundation Run 101 Walk/Race held at the high school.

## Lunch Lessons



In October, Chef Rick Wray made his rounds to each elementary school educating students on the art of eating apples in many forms. Chef demonstrated how easy it is to saute apple slices in a bit of apple juice, sprinkle with cinnamon and enjoy! The program was part of an ongoing partnership with Chartwell's Food Service and the District Wellness Council. Parent volunteers and food service director, Mrs. Heather Bonner, helped to make sure all students who cared to had a taste and understood the goodness of apples.

## Science Review

Monday, October 27, at East Coventry Elementary, scientists came to school to meet with students about their science experiment plans. Students met with scientists in small groups according to their experiments. For example, students doing a Botany experiment were in one group. Scientists met with several groups throughout the morning.

Students brought to the meeting a Preliminary Research Plan which included the research topic and experiment design proposals. Students then discussed their ideas with scientists who helped them identify and consider variables and constants. Adults also helped students write a strong hypothesis.

District-wide, many parents attended a science seminar night on October 22. The district offered an opportunity to assist parents in supporting their children through the Science Research Competition process. Following the introduction of each building coordinator, parents were informed of the competition process and the required paperwork for local, regional, and state competitions. In addition to curricular expectations in grades 4- 8, parents received a district handbook, hints for assisting the student scientist, competition dates/timeline, and coordinator email and contact information.

The Citadel Heart of Learning Award is a teaching excellence award for Chester County. Each year, fifteen finalists and three overall winners are selected for their outstanding contribution to the community through teaching. Teacher nominations are now being accepted until December 31, 2014. Please visit [www.citadelheartoflearning.com](http://www.citadelheartoflearning.com) for more information on how to nominate an educator for this award.





The Owen J. Roberts School District has been ranked the 24th best school district in the Commonwealth, according to a national ranking agency that rates both hard data and student surveys. The rankings were compiled by Niche.com. The school district also received an overall grade of A+.

OJR senior, Kennedy Houck, was presented with the Widener University High School Leadership Award. In partnership with WCAU-TV NBC10, Widener University honors students who exhibit strong leadership skills, academic excellence and exceptional character.

OJR senior Laurel Wynn completed the requirements and has earned her Girl Scout Gold Award on the topic of self-defense for girls and women. To make the project sustainable she developed a website, [www.tinyurl.com/ladies-self-defense](http://www.tinyurl.com/ladies-self-defense), that is free and open to the public and was shared with domestic abuse shelters in our area.

Congratulations to Ahmed Farhan, Ethan Gelting and Patrick Shaw who are semi-finalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Congratulations to Alexander Bendyk, Makenzie Briglia, John Dyer, Christopher Gardiner, and Nathan Smith who received Letters of Commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Program in recognition of their outstanding academic promise.



**OJR** Education Foundation  
**children's clothing consignment sale**  
 Save \$ Raise \$ Make \$  
**Sat, March 21, 2015 8-12**  
 Cash for stash—earn \$ and help fund student programs and new technology  
**Consign or Donate!**  
 Get details at [www.ojref.org](http://www.ojref.org), pick up a consignment packet at your school's office, or contact Kathy Soeder at [KSoeder@ojrsd.com](mailto:KSoeder@ojrsd.com)

**Owen J. Roberts High School**  
*Senior Citizen Holiday Tea and Afternoon Concert*  
 December 15, 2014, 12:00 p.m. - FREE!

As a seasonal gift, please joins us for a beautiful free concert by the Owen J. Roberts Music Department followed by dessert, coffee and tea provided by Anchor Club with hospitality by the Wildcat Ambassadors

High School Auditorium  
 RSVP by December 11 to  
 Sheila McIntyre:  
 610-469-5663 or  
[smcintyre@ojrsd.com](mailto:smcintyre@ojrsd.com)

Rain date - December 16.




On Henry J. Bernat Field, Owen J. Roberts Wildcats played the 56th annual Turkey Bowl game against Pottstown High School in several inches of snow Thanksgiving Day. Wildcats came up with a big win to help celebrate the retirement of Athletic Director and alumnus, David Strook.

## Wildcat Athletic Highlights

The Wildcat Girls Cross Country team grabbed the PAC-10 League title for the third consecutive year.

The Girls' and Boys' Cross Country teams competed in their respective District One AAA meet on October 24 at Lehigh University. Out of 54 teams, the girls' team finished in 13th place, with Alex Glasier, grade 9, qualifying for PIAA State Cross Country competition in Hershey, PA. The boys' team finished in 24th place in the overall team event, with two athletes qualifying for PIAA State Cross Country competition in Hershey, PA: Liam Conway, grade 9 and Abe Van Helmond, Jr., grade 11.



At the PIAA Pennsylvania Cross Country Championships, Alex Glasier finished 31st out of 225 runners in the AAA Girls race with a time of 19:22. She was the top finisher from the PAC-10. Liam Conway finished 87th out of 239 runners in the AAA Boys race with a time of 17:05.

Meredith Lee, a senior, placed 3rd in the District One tennis playoffs and advanced to the PIAA State Tennis Tournament in Hershey, PA where she finished an impressive 4th place.

Maddie Sager, grade 11, finished 3rd in the regional golf championship. For the third time, she went on to represent Owen J. Roberts High School and the golf team in the PIAA State Individual Golf Championship where she placed 7th in the state.

The varsity Boys Soccer team captured the PAC-10 Soccer Championship on October 16 at OJR Wildcat Stadium, on Henry J. Bernat field, against a very good Boyertown team.

Keep up to date on what's happening in the district by visiting [www.ojrsd.com](http://www.ojrsd.com) often, where you can launch Wildcat TV, the Daily News Blog, Facebook, and Twitter.



## Kindergarten Registration

If you have a child who will attain the age of five on or before the first day of September 2015, your child is eligible to begin school in the fall of 2015. A new online registration system will streamline the process of registering incoming kindergarten students for the 2015-16 school year.

In mid-January, go to [kreg.ojrsd.com](http://kreg.ojrsd.com) for more information about online kindergarten registration. At the end of the online registration process, you will be prompted to make an appointment to complete the registration process at your child's school.

School contacts:

**East Coventry Elementary School:** Laurie Jordan - 610-469-5707

**East Vincent Elementary School:** Karen Hydutsky - 610-469-5714

**French Creek Elementary School:** Alexandra Lewis - 610-469-5710

**North Coventry Elementary School:** Chris Ficca - 610-469-5709

**West Vincent Elementary School:** Diane Banks - 610-469-1402