

PHOTO BY DAN RICOTTA

## Vacations, Decorations, Traditions and More!

BY SYDNEY GROSSMAN AND VIOLET SHEFFER-STEVENSON

It's that time of year again! Time to put on your holiday cheer. Have you ever thought about what goes on in other people's homes to celebrate the holiday season? Get prepared for vacations, decorations, yummy food and holiday treats. Winter break starts on December 24, and Christmas is coming up on December 25. Get ready to celebrate!

Most people plan to spend time

with their family to celebrate the holidays. "The first 5 days of break, I'm going to Bryce to celebrate with my mom's side of the family. The second half of break, I am spending time with my dad's side to celebrate the New Year," said Tristan Thompson, a fifth grader. Family is definitely a key component to spending the holiday right. "During the holidays, I light the menorah with my family

and eat latkes, a traditional Jewish potato pancake. We also usually go to a warm place such as Costa Rica," said Sophie Grossman, a fifth grader. Many different families do many different things for the holidays.

Third grader, Victoria, celebrates Christmas and New Year's by decorating a tree with her favorite bird ornament and hanging a wreath. She also enjoys giving gifts and eating sushi. Third grader, Max, also likes eating sushi. In Kohana's family, they celebrate Christmas and her favorite decoration is the tree. She loves eating carrots and mashed potatoes, and cookies and milk at the holidays.

Alexa celebrates both Christmas and Hanukkah and they have a party. Jacob's family celebrates Hanukkah by lighting a menorah. Amber loves her family's Christmas tree. Brianna's family celebrates Kwanzaa. In Malvin's family, they celebrate Christmas and he loves the Christmas tree and helping his family decorate it. He looks forward to eating special holiday tacos, called buñuelos. Oliver loves eating corn, chicken and gingerbread at Christmas. Others' favorites include turkey dinners, mac and cheese, barbecue ribs, lobster, rice and beans, sweet potatoes, pie, eggnog, candy canes and ice cream. Max and Oliver love the big red ribbons at Christmas time. Mikayla gets excited about standing under the mistletoe. Many students said they are happy to see the lights, bells, stockings and stars that people

*continued on page 2*

VACATIONS *continued*

deck the halls with in this upcoming season.

Many kids like to help “deck the halls” for the holidays. There are other ways kids can help their families and other people in the community have a holly, jolly season. Holiday celebrations of Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa all represent and encourage giving, helping, building community and making people smile.

Here are some ideas for helping others and spreading good cheer:

 Cook for an elderly neighbor or deliver home baked cookies to your local police or fire department.

 Be extra helpful around the house or do something special for your siblings.

 Run a charity race to raise money for people in need.

 Participate in a toy drive like “Operation Santa” at the Post Office.

 Clean out your closet and give outgrown clothes, coats, toys, and books to charity.

 Donate loose change to organizations like the Salvation Army—Look for volunteers who are dressed up like Santa and are ringing a bell.

 Search the Internet for other ideas or come up with your own.

 Last but not least, make a card for your teacher!

Make sure you put on some holiday cheer, eat some good food, help with decorating and most importantly during the holidays, try to make someone smile.

# 11 Questions with... Theo Drye



PHOTO BY ELEANOR HOROWITZ

## 1. What is your favorite subject in school?

Reading.

## 2. If you had a pet, what would it be?

I already have a pet—a cat named Amber. She is very fluffy.

## 3. Where is your dream place to live?

That’s hard. Maybe Europe. I went to London and Germany. Munich?

## 4. How do you feel about playing the lead in *Shrek*?

I’m really happy. I was dazed when I heard I got the part.

## 5. How are you preparing for the role?

I have a CD with all the songs. I’ve been practicing at my piano lessons. My dad is a trumpet player, but he also sits at the piano with me and helps me learn the songs.

## 6. Did you find the script easy or hard to memorize?

It’s hard because I have a lot of words. But, if you keep practicing it just comes to you and stays with you.

## 7. How do you feel about being painted green?

I’m fine with it.

## 8. Do you want to be an actor when you grow up?

No, I want to be an architect. I wanted to be an architect before I got the Shrek role so that hasn’t changed.

## 9. Do you like singing and dancing? If so, why?

Yes, especially the dancing. I do hip-hop once a week.

## 10. Do you and Shrek have anything in common?

Ogres are like onions. They have layers. Shrek’s outer layers are tough and as you get down deeper, they get softer. Sometimes I can be tough, but I’m a good person.

## 11. What is your favorite part of the show?

Getting to act with my friends. It’s fun being with them when they are in their roles, like Rafael playing Farquaad and Leo playing the Captain Guard.

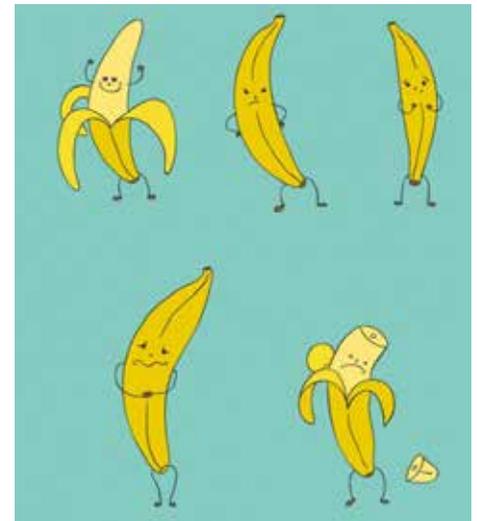
BY CARMEN LACOSTA KOLSRUD

PHOTO BY NATE WILDMAN



BY NORA WILDMAN

Do you ever imagine you're the character in your book? You can pretend to be it on Character Day. Third grader, Jackie Feldman, dressed up as Matilda from Roald Dahl's book. She chose Matilda because she plays funny pranks. Ella Scandura in room 402 dressed up as Hermione. When she read *Harry Potter*, she admired Hermione because she was smart. Tatiana Hadzic dressed up as Nikki from *Dork Diaries*. She really liked the series and the only character in mind was Nikki.



## Overheard at LUNCH:

BY EDWIN HOROWITZ & ARI LULLA

**THURSDAY, 12/9**

**MENU:** Pasta, Chicken, Broccoli, Sandwich, Wrap, Burrito

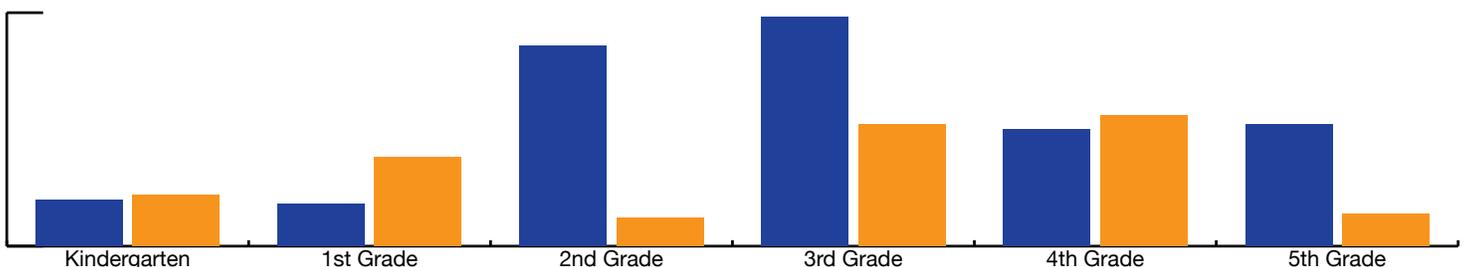
- "Pasta was fine." -Daniel
- "Burrito is fine." -Ethan
- "Chicken is just OK." -Alex

**WEDNESDAY, 12/16**

**MENU:** Burrito, Chicken Tacos, Banana, Tomatoes

- "The banana is stinky!" -Ethan
- "I like how the chicken is greasy." -Theo
- "I like how the tomato tastes Chinese." -Max

## Monthly Poll: Do you prefer playing video games or board games?



**POLL MANAGER:** JENSEN KREBS **POLLSTERS:** EDWIN HOROWITZ, ASHLEY JACKSON WILLIAMS, CARMEN LACOSTA KOLSRUD, ARI LULLA, SAMANTHA ZAINO.

# After School Program Spotlight

BY SAMUEL COHEN

If you ever wondered if you should take an after school class at P. S. 11, but did not know what goes on there, read on to find out more. The kids who attend the after school program say it is really fun and interesting because there are so many classes to

She said, "It allows me to relax and create with no limits."

There is a class called "Rock Star" in which you can learn to play instruments and sing. Advanced Soccer is a class which is great for kids who like sports. There is even a class

BY ELEANOR HOROWITZ



Rock Stars in After School

choose from. They say the teachers are really nice, too. Oliver Allen is in the Lego class in the after school program. He said, "I can create anything I want to build." Another student, Jazmyne, is in the Art class.

to help you with the homework you get in school. Then, you don't have to do your homework at home.

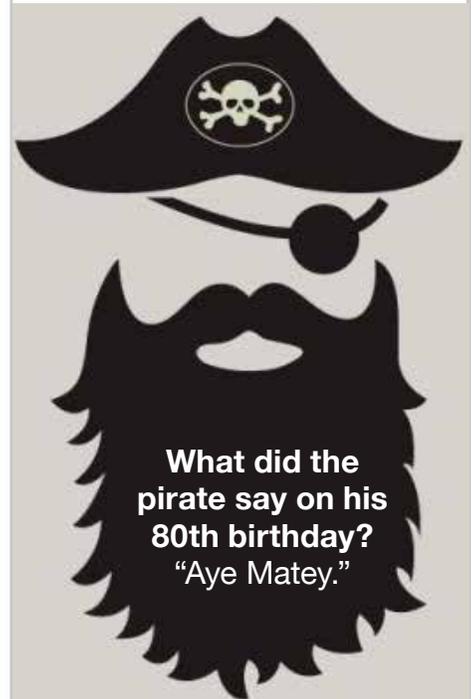
Debbie Osborne, the person in charge of the after school program, has been running the classes for 18 years. She said she wants kids to have fun because "the kids work hard" during the school day. The Minecraft class,

which has been offered for the first time this year, seems to be the most popular after school class because it filled up so fast. Now, you have an idea of what goes on after school at P. S. 11.

## JOKE of the MONTH

BY JENSEN KREBS

A judge is sending a criminal to jail. She says, "You, sir, have committed a terrible crime, and having been found guilty, you must spend the next 15 years in jail." The criminal cries out, "What?! Can't I get a shorter sentence?" The judge replies, "Sure. Go to jail."



What did the pirate say on his 80th birthday?  
"Aye Matey."

## A PEEK AT MR. BENDER

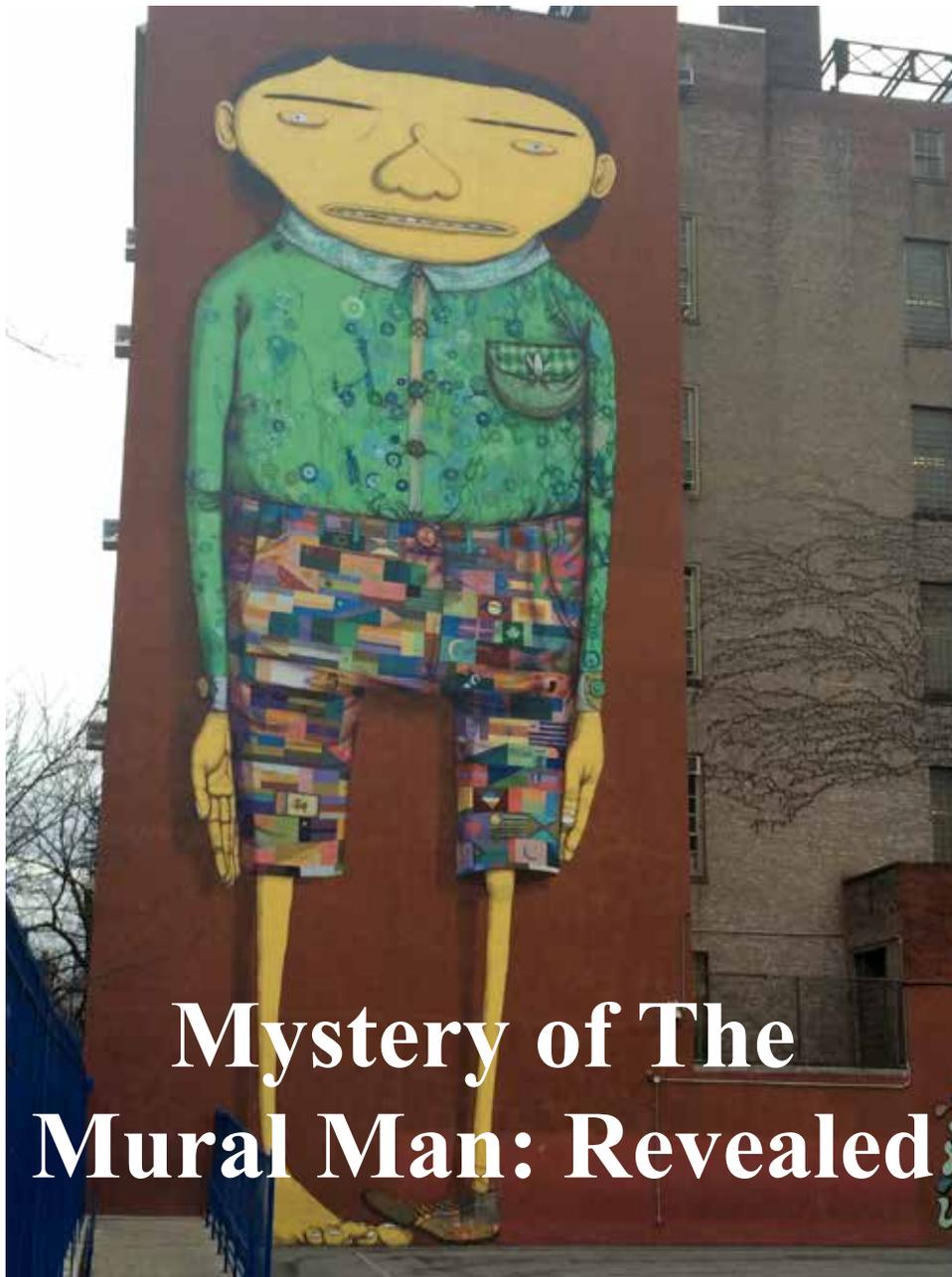
BY SAMANTHA ZAINO

FRIDAY, 12/11/15 – 7:55 A.M. AND 8:50 A.M. I randomly checked Mr. Bender's office twice...no Mr. Bender!

MONDAY, 12/14/15 – NOON

Still no Mr. Bender. I waited 15 minutes and left for lunch. Where is our busy Mr. Bender? Then, as I ate my lunch, I looked up and THERE HE WAS, smiling as he walked into the cafeteria. I went over to him.

Mr. Bender is a true hero—not only does he run the school, but he was busy helping some third grade girls be nicer to each other (and he helped them solve their problem). Here's to Mr. Bender—A TRUE HERO!



# Mystery of The Mural Man: Revealed

PHOTO BY NATE WILDMAN

BY: JOE DOYLE AND RUBY WILDMAN

Have you ever wondered what that big, yellow man is doing on the wall by the big yard? Here, you will learn all about it! The artists are “Os Gemeos,” who are from Brazil, and Futura, who is from New York. Os Gemeos are identical twin brothers. Their names are Otavio and Gustavo Pandolfo. Futura is an American graffiti artist. They all started August 6, 2010 and ended August 13, 2010—only one week to paint it! The theme is a message of interna-

tional unity. Os Gemeos’ characters are also known as “gigantes,” or “giants.” The flags on his shorts represent countries around the world. They are painted with non-traditional colors to represent unity. The hope was that the mural would serve as a gift to the community and to the kids of P. S. 11.

Originally the mural man wasn’t supposed to be on our wall! Nike hired them to do the mural at their building. But suddenly, Nike re-

alized that the wall it was going to be on wouldn’t work! A parent at our school knew the makers, so they said, “We have a wall at our school. Why don’t you come and do it here?” So, they came to our school and made the mural man. There was a different design considered, and guess what? Mr. Bender had to decline it. It makes sense because the design was a man climbing out of the wall and Mr. Bender thought that it would scare little kids. The first design was for Nike’s basketball gear and they were probably thinking it would attract a lot of basketball lovers near the hoops!

People have different opinions on the mural man. Some people think it represents different things. Mr. McGill, our parent coordinator, thought it represented a community because of the flags of different countries around the world. Also, he thought that every artist should be able to decide what he or she wants to make and be able to decline or admit changes to their artwork. Mara Silverstien, a second grader, thought it represented different countries and our school, P. S. 11. Second grader, Eli Parmett, wondered how they painted it so high. He thought they may have used ladders. Actually, they had a crane with a box at the top, so they could paint it so high! Not many people know the story of the mural man.

You have learned how the mural man was made, who made it, why they made it and many other great aspects of the mural man. You probably learned some things you might not have known before. Remember some of the bigger aspects of the mural man. The biggest things can be the most important and valuable.

# The Squash-ed Plan

BY PEMA EDWARDS

Squash and Pumpkin are friends. They have no family members. Squash and Pumpkin are boys who met at the skate park. Pumpkin is a better skater than Squash. Squash likes to shortboard. Pumpkin likes to longboard. Squash is very envious of Pumpkin because Squash wants to be better than Pumpkin at skating.

One day, Pumpkin was skating and did a new trick. He landed a 360 in front of all the skaters, including Squash! All the skaters cheered and banged their boards on the ground. It was the first time Pumpkin landed this trick. This made Squash even more envious, so Squash came up with an evil plan to eat Pumpkin!

He texted Pumpkin to come over for Thanksgiving dinner. Pumpkin arrived at Squash's place. "What's for dinner," he asked, "mashed potatoes?" "No," Squash replied. "Pumpkin pie." "Aaaahhhhhh!" screamed Pumpkin. Just then, Pumpkin got an idea. "I will teach



PHOTO BY ASHER BLACKMAN

you how to skate better, BUT in exchange, you do not kill me," said Pumpkin. The next day, both Squash and Pumpkin went to the

skate park and practiced. Squash landed his trick, a front side kick turn! And he forgot all about eating his friend.

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## What's Your New Year's Resolution?

BY AMANDA BALLAS

People have been celebrating the new year for four thousand years. Ways to celebrate include parties, eating special foods, watching fireworks and making New Year's resolutions. Making resolutions is a tradition in which people make promises for self-improvement or do nice things in the upcoming year. The first civ-

ilization to make New Year's resolutions were the Babylonians. They would make promises to the gods and want to start the year off right. During Roman times, most of the resolutions were to be good to others. New Year's resolutions haven't changed that much over the years.

Most P. S. 11 students know what

resolutions are and many have some interesting ones. For example, third grader, Hayden, wants to see her cousins more. Vicky, in first grade, has a resolution to eat less junk food and third grader, Ava, wants to be kinder than she already is. Fifth grader, Rachel, wants to be neater and her classmate, Sarann, wants to

RESOLUTIONS! *continued*

stop biting her nails. Fourth grader, Grace, wants better food in the cafeteria and Daniel, in 5th grade, wants to be a better person. Another student, Monica, made a resolution to read more books. A few students didn't know what a New Year's resolution is, though they now think it is a good idea.

Only 45% of Americans make New Year's resolutions. Over half of the people who make them do not keep them, though. Here are some tips to follow if you are interested in making a New Year's resolution. First, pick a realistic goal, like, "I will cut down on sugary drinks," as opposed to, "I will teach myself how to fly." Second, give yourself time to accomplish your goal. You have a whole year! If you slip up, it's ok. Keep trying. Third, make resolutions that are fun, you can stick with and you will enjoy. You can even make ones the whole family can follow.

New Year's resolutions are about hope. Everyone wants to be a better person. Whether you make a resolution or not, the New Year is exciting because you never know what the future holds. Happy New Year!

PHOTO BY DAN RICOTTA



Ready for the New Year.



PHOTO BY ASHER BLACKMAN

# Family Friday Around the School

BY: LORENZO MATIZ

Do you like Family Friday? If you do, then this is something to read about. It's a really busy place on Family Friday at P. S. 11. It happens only once a month, but a lot of time goes into the plans. Each grade has a different activity and there are parents and relatives everywhere!

The fifth graders were having a holiday breakfast. In class 5-405, they were getting breakfast, including lots of donuts and munchkins. Ben Buman likes Family Friday, "because you get to know your friends' families better." Then, Ben was off to eat more munchkins. Mohanna, in Room 405, said she "likes showing off her classroom to everyone who visits" and "sharing everything that we learn throughout the year."

Down the crazy, busy hallway, in Room 306, there were first graders, and they were making a timeline. They had lots of pictures and scissors in their hands. The parents were helping them glue pieces to long, colored strips of paper. Student, Aidana

Zhanuzak, said she likes Family Friday because, "it makes us very comfortable to be with our families in school." Mr. Bender could be seen walking the halls as well.

The third graders had a Wax Museum project. It was in and around the cafeteria. They were dressed like famous, historic people and pretended to be made of wax. They all had little "buttons" that, when pushed, would start each person saying their part. There was Queen Elizabeth, Thomas Jefferson, Leonardo da Vinci, Cristiano Ronaldo, Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr., among others. Everyone had posters, and visitors were going around learning about all the famous people for Family Friday. Mr. Bender was there, too. He seemed to be everywhere!

Family Friday is the coolest day of the month because everyone has fun and the kids do so many special things. It seems to be an important event for P. S. 11.

# Featured Artwork

ARTIST: JULIA ZAINO, 3RD GRADE

ARTWORK EDITOR: ASHLEY JACKSON WILLIAMS



If you would like to submit artwork to be considered for our next edition, please draw, paint or write it on 1 sheet of letter-sized paper (one side only), then drop it in the News Box in the Main Office. Make sure to include your name and class on the back. You may also submit article ideas, jokes or poll questions.

# Introducing...The Rockin' Reporters



BACK ROW: Carmen Lacosta Kolsrud, Violet Sheffer-Stevens, Sydney Grossman, Eleanor Horowitz, Ashley Jackson Williams, Asher Blackman, Lorenzo Matiz, Nate Wildman, Samuel Cohen, Dan Ricotta, Gabe Kennell, Briana Hasimaj.

FRONT ROW: Ari Lulla, Edwin Horowitz, Amanda Ballas, Samantha Zaino, Jensen Krebs, Joe Doyle, Pema Edwards, Nora Wildman, Ruby Wildman, Lena Bonds.

Special thanks to our Editors, **Lena Bonds**, **Briana Hasimaj** and **Gabe Kennell** for their editing, consulting and fact checking on this issue.