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THE 2015 GAYNOR GALA

DINOSAURS, MAMMALS, & WHALES - Oh, My!

Each year, parents, teachers, administrators, alumni, extended relatives, and friends of Gaynor gather as a community to celebrate our school through the remarkable Gaynor Gala, while also raising critical funds to advance the school’s mission. This year, the annual event did not disappoint. While hosting Gaynor parent Jennifer Rudolph Walsh at the American Museum of Natural History, guests enjoyed an evening full of delightful music, exciting entertainment, and philanthropic opportunities. Throughout the grand event, members of the Gaynor community savored and bid on silent auction items displayed amongst magnificent dinosaur bones and African mammals. The evening continued with music and entertainment in the Whale Room, where the spirit of generosity evident during the live auction overwhelmed the whale in the room.

Critically acclaimed actor, writer, and director, Ethan Hawke, took the stage to host the evening’s festivities, which included an intimate acoustic performance from Oscar and Grammy award-winner, Melissa Etheridge.

Gaynor Middle School student Wyatt Walsh introduced his mother, Jennifer, with a side-splitting speech entitled “The Top 10 Reasons My Mom is Awesome!” before she accepted the Founders Award for her commitment to, and support of, Stephen Gaynor School.

The evening served as an ideal opportunity to celebrate the importance of our mission to help students gain the skills and confidence necessary to learn, grow, and reach their full potential. All in all, the 2015 Gaynor Gala was an absolute record-breaking success. Attendees helped raise $125,000 for Stephen Gaynor School’s expansion project, including the Beethoven cabana.

This incredible event would not exist without the tireless dedication of our Gala Chair, Adam Haller and Sylvia Vaccaro, as well as the many generous parent volunteers, including Carrie Doine and Linda Schaffer for their leadership on the unique student art projects. We are grateful to all in the Gaynor community who made this event a whale of a time.
I MATTER: ADOPTING A SCHOOL MISSION FOR AN ART PROJECT

An extraordinary aspect of the gala takes place within the “Gaynor Art Gallery” section of the silent auction. Every year, gala volunteers work with the entire student body to create stunning works of art that help raise money for Stephen Gaynor School’s expansion project. This year, the art gallery took on a new life with a school-wide collaborative art project entitled “I MATTER.”
Gaynor parent Linda Schaffer’s thematic idea led to the creation of unique student artwork that was designed onto lanternshades by Lamp-in-a-Box, a generous company that donated all of the lamps to the Gaynor Gala. The art gallery’s theme was a simple, yet powerful idea that rings true to Gaynor’s mission: What I do, what I say, who I am matters. This uplifting message leads to pride, accountability, and inspires one to make a difference. The art projects symbolized the meaningful contributions we can make alone and together as a community.

Recent volunteers teamed up with Gaynor’s art and photography teachers to help students in each class express their ideas through age-appropriate interpretations and mediums, which were collaged alongside their classmates on a lamp.

Major thanks to Linda Schaffer and Carrie Booval for leading this innovative project, inspiring our entire community through artists’ expression, and reinforcing Gaynor’s mission within the thematic idea, “I Matter.”

Ms. Fox/Ms. Diamond, Ms. Friedman/ Ms. Rosenfeld, Ms. Savage/Ms. Greenberg, and Ms. Stein/Ms. Watson: Students wrote poems about themselves with the opening statement, “I am...,” “I wonder...,” or “I try...,” then combined their words to surround the lampshade with their ideas on self-reflection and self-confidence.

Ms. Berman/Ms. Simonson, Ms. Glazer/Ms. Vidra, Ms. Howard/Ms. Doblish, and Ms. Sandler/Ms. Karwe: Students created works of art with white ink on black paper hands that illustrated pictures and words describing who they are, what they care about, and what they love.

Ms. Borders/Ms. Feldman, Ms. Larson/Ms. Kus, Ms. Morabito/Ms. Muraz, and Ms. Wrobel/Ms. Maylahn: Images were created through a two-step process combining photography and hand-drawn artwork. Each student filled up a page with words and images that represented who they are and what they care about. Their photographed silhouettes were manipulated in Photoshop and layered with their original artwork.

Ms. Barrow/Ms. Felt, Ms. Benson/Ms. Nielsen, Ms. Kasindorf/Ms. Ngau, Mr. Meyer/Ms. Pong, Ms. Rebocho/Ms. Garry, and Mr. Rubel/Ms. Green: Students photographed important images in their environment and community using the Hipstamatic photo app on iPads.
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS’ ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT FLOURISHES WITH STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER

NEW YORK CITY, SUMMER 2015 - Christin Brandel and Lomas Hunter love to write and in Middle School, they’ve given many opportunities to do so; however, this year, they took their writing to a new level. They created The Gannor Times, the first-ever student-run newspaper in Stephen Gannor School. “We started the newspaper because we knew it would be fun,” explained Co-Founder and Co-Editor Lomas Hunter. “We both love writing and our writing isn’t always published so it is fun to write your own story and have other people read it.”

The student-run newspaper is published every three weeks, with the help of special advisor, Ms. Nielsen, who is also a Middle School Assistant Teacher. She says Christian and Lomas came to her with a solidified concept: they wanted to start a collaborative newspaper where students could choose what they wanted to write about. Christian added, “We knew we wanted Ms. Nielsen’s help. She’s one of our favorite teachers and we knew we could trust her.”

Though topics are open for discussion, Christian says, “We’ll tell them if we think they could do better.” Not only does the newspaper provide opportunities for independence, but it also allows students to shine. Students are enthusiastic about the topics they choose and they look forward to the time in the day when they come together to brainstorm and write. “The newspaper is probably my best writing,” boasts Lomas. “I love sports and I get to write about that in the newspaper.”

What’s more for next year? The Co-Editors have lofty goals: “Next year we’re going to be even better,” predicts Christian. “Maybe we can publish the newspaper twice a month!”

Congratulations to all of The Gannor Times newspaper staff!

Were you at The Gannor Times launch? Which article did you enjoy the most? What topics would you like to see covered in the future?

The Gannor Times is comprised of many Middle School students who all share a love of writing and an entrepreneurial spirit. Core members include: SERENA BEARD-GALATTI, ELSA GERIN, NATALIE GORCHER, CHRISTIAN GRANDBS, NOAH GRENBURG, LOMAS HUNTER, ALEXA KLIPPEL, SAMMY JANG, JACK LIVY, NOAH LIVY, ADAM TORMA-RODDLE, TAY SMITH, Demita Co-Founder and Co-Editor, “Social Advisor” MS. NIELSEN.

Paper Maché Birds Spread their Wings through Art and Science

Students in the classes of Ms. Geller/Mrs. Marx and Ms. Yeazl/Mrs. Morris have been transformed into artists! Working on a collaborative art-science project with Mr. Rachlin and Ms. Gross, students created incredible paper maché birds of their favorite fowl. But this project went well beyond the bound of glue and paint of paper maché. Students also conducted extensive research, wrote paragraphs of their findings, and illustrated their birds in their natural habitats cross-curricular study. To top it all off, these students participated in a “Penguin Pause” class at the Central Park Zoo.

Clay Pinch Creatures in their Multi-Media Environment

Ms. Weesell’s art class, students in the homeroom classes of Ms. Costello/Ms. Varone, Ms. Fascio/Ms. Yeazl, and Ms. McManus/Ms. Laffan discussed animals and environments in artworks by Henri Rousseau.

They learned clay-shaping techniques to make pinch creature sculptures, then experimented with layering materials such as papier-mâché, markers, watercolors, beads, oil pastels, and masking tape to create multi-media habitats.

In the paintings, Henri Rousseau, 1910

Otto Landscape, Henri Rousseau, 1916

Dunit Flecker

The Flamingo, Henri Rousseau, 1917

Odette Buffalo

David Gray

Janie Landau

Zwiw Landau

Serena Bear-Galati

William Horan

Duncan Flecker

Sam Karr
Floral Inspiration through the Camera Lens

Inspired by Gaynor’s neighborhood Tulip Festival in the Worswick Community Garden, Mr. Gaynor’s photography students took a closer look at the natural beauty of flowers through digital pictures. Mr. Gaynor explains, “There is something about the inherent beauty of a flower - the wide variety of colors, shapes, and patterns - that provide drama and interest to the landscape.” Middle School and Upper Lower School Photography students visited the community garden to take in the gorgeous spring weather and the colorful scene, while snapping photos using iPads.

The classes used the Hipstamatic application, which enabled each student to add unique, creative filters and effects. This nature-based photography project taught the students the importance of experimenting with, and using various angles, heights, and proximities for the harmony, balance, and rhythm of photographing flowers. Students mounted their photographs onto Northern White Pine wood that was stained with orange pecan tea. These gorgeous works of art hung on display throughout the school, in a perfectly timed celebration of springtime’s naturalistic beauty.

Gaynor Basketball Teams: Getting Better and Better!

During the winter athletics season, the excitement from Gaynor’s gymnasium could be felt through the entire school. With most of the basketball games taking place on our home court, Gaynor students, families, and staff were able to support our players and enjoy the team spirit. To top the season off, the American International Private School League (AIPSIL) chose Stephen Gaynor School to host the boys’ playoffs, which was an exciting experience for the entire school community.

Snatch James expressed his pride for all of the teams, explaining, “All of the basketball squads enjoyed an excellent season this year with each player gaining new skills and improving their game. We are so proud of all of their accomplishments!”

Boys’ Green Squad Finished in third place in the AIPSIL tournament. Way to go!

Boys’ White Squad Headed a record-breaking season, finishing with the first undefeated season in our school’s history.

Girls’ Green Squad

Girls’ White Squad

Great progress and development throughout the entire season and were placing their best basketball by the end.
DEVELOPING LIFELONG LEARNERS THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES

MEMORIZING FACTS. RECALLING PLACES. LOCATING PLACES. THAT IS SOCIAL STUDIES. RIGHT? NOT ENTIRELY. AT STEPHEN GAYNOR SCHOOL, A SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM ENCOMPASSES SO MUCH MORE.

Social studies compels students to question, interpret, evaluate, and analyze. In short, it requires students to think.

While all classes at an age level may cover the same overarching topic, teachers differentiate their approach to their lessons. The way an individual student learns is always the focus. Ms. Berman, a Lower School Head Teacher, explains, “The environment for multi-sensory learning in social studies not only ensure that each student learns, but that his or her strengths are highlighted in different ways. The artists can draw, the singers can sing, and the writers can write. The students are not locked into material being presented in only one format.” Above all else, social studies is dynamic and multi-disciplinary. It is embedded into multiple subject areas. For example, Middle School students studying Ancient Civilizations will ponder, “Who should run the government?” These same students will study the evolution of democracy in ancient Greece, later writing an expository essay explaining how government changed in Athens or writing a creative play based on Athenian values. Simultaneously, students will read Greek and Roman myths in literature, and showcase their understanding of Greek architecture by building a model of a temple in art. Multiple exposures to the social studies concepts allow students to synthesize learned information and showcase their understanding in creative ways.

Social studies has the potential to spark passion in students. A concept-based, multi-disciplinary social studies curriculum helps students develop a lifelong love of learning.
Gaynor Community Cycles for the CLC’s Success

Gaynor proudly serves our community through our Community Learning Center (CLC), a free after-school reading program for children in New York City public schools. Thanks to the fundraising efforts by the Gaynor community, the program has tripled in size over the last few years. To keep up the momentum, the CLC hosted its annual Cycling for Success event at Flywheel’s Lincoln Center location this spring.

The Gaynor community joined together for this philanthropic and sweat-inducing event. CLC Co-Directors, Kate Adlin and Kristi Evans, were thrilled with the event’s continuing success and support from the Gaynor community. Ms. Adlin explained, “As the Community Learning Center has gained momentum over the years, we have started to see support from others who donate to our cause time and time again. We are so moved by the devotion that Gaynor families have shown by committing to the CLC each and every year.” Two Gaynor families even undertook the entire event at Flywheel so that the fundraising efforts could continue, illustrating a shining example of the undying support of our community.

A special thanks to all who helped make this a record-breaking CLC fundraiser! With more than 30 people in attendance (the most attendees ever) and nearly $2,500 raised (the most money raised in CLC history), the CLC Cycling for Success event achieved new highs. The funds raised will help ensure the program continues to serve neighborhood students who truly benefit from a small group tutoring environment.

YAP CLUB PARTNERS WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO HELP ANIMALS FIND A “FOREVER HOME”

Members of Gaynor’s Youth Animal Protectors (YAP) Club had the amazing opportunity to partner with Pillows for Paws, North Shore Animal League, and Zani’s Furry Friends for a bi-annual fundraiser this spring. The students had a fantastic time helping animals find a “forever home” through this humane education event. Behavioral Consultants and Social Skills Specialist, Dr. Kim Spanjol, who is one of the leaders of the After-school Club, strongly advocates the importance of animals in children’s lives and believes the more students involved in events like this, the merrier.

“We’d love to have even more Gaynor students on our mission to help others,” she said. “The YAP club released a short video at the event, cleverly titled the “YAP-umentary,” that detailed the efforts and triumphs of the members of the club in their strides to find happy homes for animals in need.”
Butterfly Visitors in the EC

During the month of April, Ms. Homlish and Ms. Young’s class shared their room with a few very special visitors: butterflies! The Willow Room carefully observed their growth from caterpillar to chrysalis to butterfly while patiently recording their scientific observations and drawing artistic pictures in their class butterfly journal.

The Social Studies of Dance

Lower School students celebrated the end of their social studies unit on South Africa with the Cumbe Dance Group! The cafeteria boomed with stomping feet as students first watched the dancers, then joined in for the gumboot dance, a traditional South African dance.

Cumbe Center for African and Diaspora Dance

The dancers shared their experiences in South Africa before teaching students and teachers about the Zulu style of dance. "Seeing how passionate they were about their gift of dance made the students think about their own special talents and how we can share them with others," explained Ms. Sandlin. Students had a wonderful time, taking part in this entertaining, active, and educational performance.

A Middle School Speakeasy

Mr. Meyer and Ms. Peng’s class wrapped up their 1920s American history studies by opening up a limited-time speakeasy in Seminar Room 313. Espying named “Club 313,” to experience what Prohibition times that might have been like, these Middle School students mingled, played cards, and snatched up their very own speakeasy, complete with bouncers and a secret password.

After saying “Hee-Haw” (the secret passphrase based on a popular 1920s Louis Armstrong song and a slang word for “worst”), many students entered the speakeasy, where they enjoyed contributed and watched a Charlie Chaplin film. However, the large crowd caught the attention of “Sheriff” Mr. Gaynor and “Deputy” Ms. Reisch, who ran in with cardboard bats, and the jig was up. Despite the “illegal” club, authorities were pleased to see all of the educational materials students developed and distributed including brochures on culture, celebrities, cars, and fashions during this intriguing time period.

Gaynor Gazette Shout Outs!

A huge “shout out” to Aidan Schwartz, who was selected as one of the winners in the NYC Department of Environmental Protection’s 20th Annual Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest, Second through fourth graders submitted original art and poetry reflecting an appreciation for our shared water resources. Atlanta interpretation of water as a valuable resource was a winner! Aidan, and other participants from the classes of Ms. Poul/Diamond, Friedman/Rosenfeldt, Savage/Greenberg and Stein/Watson, along with Ms. Delancy and Ms. Wourneh who submitted student’s work enjoyed a celebration of their creativity in May.

Kudos to fashionistas Samantha Lang, Mary Margaret Yunker and Caroline Yunker who were featured in a new book called Little Guide to Art Fashion. The author, Rachel Low, dubbed it as a sewing tutar for the students at Pins and Needles.

Congrats to two alumni! Lucy Guazzardo ’12 and Teddy Gutkin ’17 - who were recently recognized by Scholastic for their writing! As part of the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, Lucy received an Honorable Mention at the regional level for a poem titled “Lights With the Lights Turned On” and Teddy received an Honorable Mention at the regional level for a journalism piece, “Fourier dominates Knocks Can’t ExecuteLate” (also featured on his sports blog: sixtrainsports.warriors.com).
Why Morphology?
By Susan Sneders, Reading Department Chair

Morphology is the study of word formations or how morphemes (smallest units of meaning) combine to form words. Increasing morphological awareness contributes to vocabulary growth, improves both spelling and comprehension, and brings students closer to written language. Specifically, our students are being taught strategies to segment or manipulate words according to their affixes and roots or base words. One of the most tangible effects from the integration of a more structured approach to morphology into our reading curriculum is the confidence that it builds in all of our learners. A longer, unfamiliar multilo-syllable word is much less intimidating when you have the tools to break it into smaller, more manageable parts to decode and find meaning.

Daily drills with color-coded flashcards are an integral part of any morphology instruction. They give students practice with the countless affixes and roots that comprise our complex English language. The Gaynor community has gone beyond this seemingly rote chore of word analysis to bring morphology to life with games, contests and even music. For example, Mrs. Down’s Lower School reading group studied the literal and real-world meanings of words such as extort or distort with the popular i-pad application Head’s Up! Leverage a game that had students out of their seats. Ms. Barnwell’s Middle School students wrote the “Uptown Funk Morphology” rap and sang about the meaning of Greek and Latin roots. To quote these talented lyricists, “Morphology’s full of fun!”

The Sustainability Committee:
KEEPING GAYNOR “GREEN”

Stephen Gaynor School firmly believes in the importance of sustainability, which involves maintaining the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony. Here at Gaynor, our teachers and specialists are not only molding the minds of future generations, they are also making the earth a healthier and happier place for future generations.

At the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year, several faculty members formed Gaynor’s first-ever Sustainability Committee, which strives to lead the Gaynor community in environmental awareness and sustainable practices by implementing a “green” curriculum in various disciplines, advocating for “green” policies, applying for grants, conducting community outreach, and organizing “green” events. Throughout the school year, the Sustainability Committee raised awareness of environmental issues by initiating “green” projects within every age group of the school. One of these projects involved a school-wide hydroponic gardening tower. In the winter, the Tower Garden Growing System, a 5-foot tall vertical garden, sprouted beautifully with lettuce, which students harvested for donation to a community soup kitchen.

Committee members also planned and scheduled field trips around Earth Day, where students had an opportunity to experience nature firsthand by planting, cleaning up gardens, and learning about New York City’s ecosystem. They met another goal of cutting back on energy usage by continually reminding students and staff members to turn off lights, computers, and SMART Boards when not in use.

One of the committee’s largest objectives was recycling. Our Upper School science specialists initiated a new organic recycling program and piloted a composting initiative with our Middle School students in the winter. The program went so well that we expanded to Lower School students in the spring. “Now, Gaynor’s cafeteria house compost bins, which are picked up by the city every day, so that they can create new soil, fertilizer, and biofuel,” Mrs. Bolognese, Upper School science specialist, explained.

In addition, the committee successfully recycled more than 100 pounds of used single-serving coffee and tea packets used by staff members, so that the used coffee grounds and tea leaves can be turned into outdoor and office furniture! The committee also instituted a brand new annual tradition: E-Recycling Day, allowing the Gaynor community to drop off used laptops, cell phones, and other electronic devices for proper recycling.

The Sustainability Committee is a significant, positive addition to the Gaynor community. So far, we’ve seen the committee teach and inspire students with “green” ideas, providing students an opportunity to make a difference in their community and the world at large. We look forward to seeing what the Sustainability Committee will do next!
GAYNOR STUDENTS VENTURE TO WASHINGTON, D.C.
WITH CURIOUS MINDS AND HAPPY HEARTS

This year’s Middle School Trip to Washington, D.C. was a fun and rewarding experience. The classes of Mrs. Barnard, Ms. Feng, Mr. Boswell/Mrs. Vinson, Mrs. Lamont/Mrs. King, Dr. Magee, Mrs. Peng, Ms. Marias/Mrs. Radford, Ms. Song, and Mr. Rubel/Mrs. Sine explored on the annual overnight trip where students were able to take the year’s history lessons to task as they explored the nation’s capital. Dr. Magee recounted, “The kids really enjoyed the various activities and had a lot of quality time with their friends, many of whom are graduating which made it a bitter-sweet trip.”

The students boarded an early morning bus to D.C. and wasted no time in getting the adventure underway. The first stop was the “National Mall,” an interactive museum which showcases all things fine – past and present. Our students had a terrific time discovering the history of the nation. That evening, they explored the National Mall and took in the sights of D.C.

The next morning, Middle School students had the amazing opportunity to embark on an exclusive tour of the White House. Dr. Magee notes that, “As always, our students were among the few beholders of all the sacred areas we saw in D.C. To be able to walk along the grounds and enter through the door of the White House was a rare and exciting occasion. This was just the start of a very busy, hot and sticky day. Our students then visited a variety of museums of their choosing throughout the National Mall. Following lunch at the USA Pavilion Garden, a stop at the live Jazz Maroon and an evening sightseeing tour. That evening, they took in the sights of the city as they sailed around the Potomac on a dinner cruise, dining and dancing on the deck.

From the day, D.C was an amazing, unforgettable experience that allowed us to bond with all of our friends,” remarked Middle School student, Malea Bonham. “The Gaynor experience is that for knowledge was so strong, not even the D.C. humidity could slow them down. But more than that, they created memories with these observations that will stay the test of time.”

The Gaynor experience is that for knowledge was so strong, not even the D.C. humidity could slow them down. But more than that, they created memories with these observations that will stay the test of time.
10 Things You Don’t Know About Gaynor’s Newest Teachers!

MS. FELDMAN: Middle School Assistant Teacher with Ms. Borders

WHAT LED YOU TO BECOME A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER?
My second grade teacher was the most amazing lady ever, and I remember deciding that year that I wanted to become a teacher. In college, I took a core class and practicum in Special Education, working with students with language-based challenges. During that semester, I decided to work in Special Education, in particular.

WHAT SCHOOL DID YOU GRADUATE FROM?
I graduated from Vanderbilt University and just completed my Master’s program in December at Teachers College, Columbia University.

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT WHEN YOU WERE IN SCHOOL?
Reading.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CHILDREN’S BOOK?

AS AN ADULT, WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PASTIME?
I enjoy dancing. I’ve been dancing since I was three, but my favorite type of dance is probably Irish Dancing.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?
Molten Chocolate Cake.

WHAT FOOD WILL YOU ABSOLUTELY NOT EAT?
Raw squid.

DO YOU PREFER CATS OR DOGS? VANILLA OR CHOCOLATE?
Dogs. Chocolate—always!

IF YOU COULD MEET ANY HISTORICAL FIGURE, WHO WOULD IT BE?
Queen Elizabeth I of England.

FREEBIE—TELL US ONE FUN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF.
I can wiggle my ears.

MS. SPRUNG:
Early Childhood Assistant Teacher with Ms. Hartman

WHAT LED YOU TO BECOME A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER?
My mom is a Speech Therapist and has a private practice in my family’s house. When I was growing up, there were always children with different abilities in our home and I was very interested in that. Also, in High School, I was a dancer and assisted classes for children with learning differences.

WHAT SCHOOL DID YOU GRADUATE FROM?
University of Vermont.

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT WHEN YOU WERE IN SCHOOL?
Reading and Science, of course!

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CHILDREN’S BOOK?
The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle.

AS AN ADULT, WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PASTIME?
Yoga.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?
Pizzas.

WHAT FOOD WILL YOU ABSOLUTELY NOT EAT?
Steak—I hate steak.

DO YOU PREFER CATS OR DOGS? VANILLA OR CHOCOLATE?
Dogs. Chocolate—always!

IF YOU COULD MEET ANY HISTORICAL FIGURE, WHO WOULD IT BE?
Eleanor Roosevelt.

FREEBIE—TELL US ONE FUN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF.
I have donated my hair to Locks of Love twice.

MS. GUY:
Lower School Science Specialist

WHAT LED YOU TO BECOME A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER?
I came from a general education background, where I had the opportunity to work with some children with learning differences. It made me recognize that I’d prefer to spend all of my time helping these children realize success.

WHAT SCHOOL DID YOU GRADUATE FROM?
Appalachian State University.

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT WHEN YOU WERE IN SCHOOL?
Reading (and Science, of course!)

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CHILDREN’S BOOK?
The Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls.

AS AN ADULT, WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PASTIME?
Cooking, reading, shopping, traveling and exploring the city with my husband and two dogs.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?
Aside from loving all fruits and vegetables, I never get tired of a good guacamole.

WHAT FOOD WILL YOU ABSOLUTELY NOT EAT?
Red meat.

DO YOU PREFER CATS OR DOGS? VANILLA OR CHOCOLATE?
Dogs. Chocolate (preferably dark!).

IF YOU COULD MEET ANY HISTORICAL FIGURE, WHO WOULD IT BE?
Abraham Lincoln.

FREEBIE—TELL US ONE FUN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF.
I studied abroad in Spain, where I completed my minor in Spanish.
SPIRIT WEEK

School pride was on full display this February during Gaynor’s annual Spirit Week. Students, faculty, and staff demonstrated their creativity with a variety of themed days.

To top of the week, Gaynor’s first-ever school song, written by student Elena Siddins, debuted in a special performance by Elena and Remy Gouze.

Gaynor students and their families had a chance to practice their athleticism in fun, exciting games during multiple Sports Nights, thanks to the Parents’ Association, Coach James, Coach Pat, Coach Holly, and Mr. Yelkins.

Gaynor’s Gym echoed with sporty spirit, as students and parents participated in activities like bean bag basketball, keepers of the cards, and scooter soccer!

Reading Challenge

To spread a love of literature, Gaynor students participated in our annual Reading Challenge, which focused on community learning and reading with the theme of "Dare to Share." In the North Lobby, Rory the Bookworm hung on the wall, inviting all Gaynor students to share their reading experiences with the community via colorful notes.

After Rory was completely filled, students celebrated the schoolwide accomplishment with ice cream. Yum!

RELATIVES’ AND SPECIAL FRIENDS’ DAYS

This spring, Gaynor families and friends had the opportunity to visit the classroom and experience Stephen Gaynor School firsthand.

Each class worked diligently to prepare thrilling presentations for their special visitors, displaying the many skills they learned throughout the school year.
**FIELD DAY**

A little stormy weather couldn't rain on Gaynor's Field Day parade! Healthy competition and a lively spirit were still evident on the rescheduled day of athletic activities. Students on the opposing green and white teams participated in exciting games, like Keeper of the Castle, soccer, kickball, and relay races, battling for their team to be the victor of the day. In the end, the green team took the title, but it was a winning day for the entire community as everyone had a wonderful time. Thanks to Coach James, Coach Pat, Ms. Gross, Ms. Soriano, and Mr. Yellin for organizing this remarkable event!

**BOOK FAIR**

Thanks to the Parents' Association, Gaynor's annual Book Fair was a great success! The entire school enjoyed shopping for their favorite books in the gym-turned-book store. As an exciting addition, each class received a special visit from one of their favorite authors (Tony Abbott, Jovanka Stepne, and Alex Simmons), who read passages from their works or conducted interactive workshops, answered students' questions, and signed copies of their books.

**EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN ON DISPLAY IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE FAIR**

Every year, Middle School students get a chance to practice the process of scientific experimental design in an area of personal interest through Gaynor's Science Fair. This year, students from the classes of Mr. Barmwell/Ms. Felt, Ms. Bentsen/Ms. Nielsen, Ms. Kaslnord/Ms. Ngau, Mr. Meyer/Ms. Peng, Ms. Reboczka/Ms. Garca, and Ms. Rubel/Ms. Greer worked extremely hard on perfecting their science projects for months!

"Through the Science Fair, students discover that science is a way of thinking which can be applied to all fields," explained Ms. Fabriant, Chair of the Science Department, who was thrilled with the effort students exerted throughout the process.

Middle School students had the option to explore topics from a wide range of sciences, including physics, engineering, biology, chemistry, and psychology. A few examples of unique experiments this year involved testing the consistency and rise of bread made with different flours, exploring how stealth technology works to make objects invisible, examining how stress can affect the choices a person makes, and looking at how various projects tested when launched from a teakettle.

The project culminated with an impressive display of posters boards choked full of scientific findings throughout the fourth floor of the South Building. Gaynor Lower School students, faculty, staff, and parents admired the exhibits as Middle School student tour guides walked them through this year's Science Fair.

**SCHOOL EVENTS**

**MIddLE SCHOOL BIOGRAPHY FAIR**

During Relatives' and Special Friends' Days, the Biography Fair stood out as an unforgettable addition. Middle School students spent months researching and writing an essay on the person of their choice. They chose between social activists, women's rights leaders, outlaws, inventors, presidents, and real life heroes.

Complete with costumes and professional posters and props, these students beamed with pride as they exhibited their final masterpieces throughout the gym. Characters from Al Capone and Theodore Roosevelt to the Wright Brothers presented their projects and answered questions about their biography.
PARENTING WITH A GROWTH-MINDSET: IS LESS PRAISE GOOD?

By Rachel Matoyo, PsyD. and Clare Cosentino, Ph.D.

How do parents cultivate a growth mindset in children?

- Praise your child not when he/she succeeds at things he/she is already good at but when he/she perseveres at things that seem difficult.
- Let him/her know that by struggling with difficult tasks, your brain actually grows.
- Understand that the best way we can grow our intelligence is to embrace tasks where we might struggle or even fail.
- Praise your child’s process (“I really like how you’re struggling with that problem.”) versus praising an innate trait or talent (“You’re so clever!”).
- Share your own experiences of “failure” and how those experiences helped you evolve and grow.
- Find lessons and inspiration in the success of others who have overcome obstacles and challenges.

One of the most distinguishing aspects of Stephen Gaynor School’s community is the wonderful level of parent participation and engagement in our school activities. From the EC all the way through the Middle School, Gaynor parents are involved, present, and invested in the school’s current and future well-being. Nowhere is this more evident than in the heightened level of support and participation in our school’s annual fund program in recent years. The Gaynor Fund directly supports every single student, teacher, and classroom at Stephen Gaynor School. Recognizing the critical importance of the Gaynor Fund to the sustainability of our unique learning environment, Gaynor Fund Ambassadors – parents representing a wide cross section of our community – have led the charge in communicating the needs, goals, and objectives of the annual fund. Through their tireless work this year, our Ambassadors raised nearly $600,000 from our community – a record-breaking year for the school! More importantly, our Ambassadors have strengthened our ties to the community, serving as a direct line of communication between the school and our parents.

Thank you to everyone for answering the call and supporting our mission in this meaningful way. With your support, Stephen Gaynor School is better poised to meet the evolving needs of our students.

If you would like to become a Gaynor Fund Ambassador, please call the Development Office at (212) 987-7920, ext. 213.

SOUTH BUILDING EXPANSION CELEBRATION

Save the date for our South Building Open House on Wednesday, September 9, immediately following Parent Orientation. See our new academic and athletic spaces and take pride in this school milestone!
MIDDLE SCHOOL MUSICAL

TRADITION AND TALENT ON STAGE

Fiddler on the Roof

Middle School students shined on stage as they performed in Gaynor’s Spring Musical, Fiddler on the Roof, for the entire school, as well as back-to-back nightly performances. After rehearsing for seven months, these Gaynor actors were ready to debut their talents through dance, songs, and dramatic scenes. Gaynor’s adaptation tackled the famous Broadway storyline of a poor Russian dairyman, Tevye, whose goal is to protect his daughters and provide them with a sense of tradition in the face of a rapidly changing world.

Led by Gaynor’s Drama Teacher, Ms. Pfylder-Moore and Music Teacher, Ms. Shappy, our thespians brought this fascinating world to life in Gaynor’s gymnasium, leaving the entire audience smiling. Director of Student Life, Mr. Scortino, applauded the work of the entire team saying, “There was something very special about our kids performing these familiar songs. The educational value of the experience for the students was immeasurable, and Ms. Pfylder-Moore and Ms. Shappy deserve every accolade for accomplishing theater and educational magic with the kids. The gift of their fiddler memories will last a lifetime for the cast and crew. They were a team, and they accomplished something wonderful.” Congratulations to all of the students who made the Spring Musical a great success. Bravo!

CAST:

Ben Banner
Sophie Bohrer
Noah Benci-Szurigeta
Rene Berkhert
Joaquin Cervantes
Jane Crowett
Tasha Delman
Elena Gogianu
Remy Gurban
Harry Hamilton
Remi Ingraham
Francis Jareyla
Mina Karshar
Anna Kraner
Ava Kimmel
Samantha Lang
Caroline Lindemuth
Autumn Arey, Russian Soldier

Jaxon Maggio
Jasper Maharam
Giles Maze
Fitz Meiner
Ming Robinson
Anna Ringoff
Pete Rossi
Maddy Ruddle
Bella Russo
Haley Smidow
Yuva Tang
Philip Winter

CREW:

Sedra Bilardo Galati, Jack Helffer, Isaac Millirand, Jann Silverman, Art Simmons, Sander Stein, Thomas Sumer, Isabel Veteti

COSTUMES: Chy Costumes, Inc.
CO-DIRECTORS: Ms. Krueger, Ms. Shappy
STAGE MANAGERS: Ms. Glazer, Ms. Vidra
In the Hudson Room, Early Childhood students finished their New York Community Study by venturing out on a neighborhood game of hide-and-seek. After learning about addresses, building numbers, directional words, and street names, the class created model buildings in their classroom and tried to find locations on their map mock-up with addresses. Next, the class went on an “address walk” outside, in which EC teachers were “hiding” at different addresses for the class to find. The students worked with Ms. Saadi and Ms. Chan to use directional words (North, South, East, and West) and building numbers to find the hidden teachers at various locations. This was a wonderful, active way for students to apply significant Social Studies learnings in real life situations.

LOWER SCHOOL STUDENTS STUDY THE ECOLOGY AND HISTORY OF THE HIGH LINE

To celebrate Earth Day, Lower School classes took a science-related field trip to the High Line, a park on an elevated section of a disused New York Central Railroad in Chelsea. During their tour, students learned about New York’s ecology and explored how Native Americans used local plants to help them survive. Their tour guide explained the history of the High Line and showed the inquisitive students a wide variety of vegetation that grows there. Before leaving, the students participated in an ecosystem activity, where they each took on the role of a plant or animal in order to see how a food chain is connected. Ms. Sandler explained the significance of this class science trip. “Being able to see important species in our ecosystem at the High Line and creating our own food web helped us realize that we need to strive to preserve our environment as all of the various parts are dependent on one another.” What a fun way to tie in scientific studies, history, environmental issues, and fun!

Middle School students delve into the Harlem Renaissance

After finishing a unit on the Harlem Renaissance in their history groups, Middle School students visited Harlem landmark Sylvia’s Restaurant, where they enjoyed soul food before an educational walking tour of the neighborhood. Ms. Nguyen and Ms. Feit kicked off their tour at an iconic statue of Adam Clayton Powell Jr., the first African-American elected to Congress who represented Harlem in the House of Representatives for more than 35 years. Then, the group toured the Apollo Theater and checked out the artistry of community murals depicting the culture-rich history of the neighborhood. Combining the arts, history, and delicious soul food into a field trip was a great way to culminate these students’ Harlem Renaissance lesson.
When Stephen Gaynor School students stroll across the stage to receive their diplomas, our hope is that they walk away with the skills and confidence needed to succeed. Learning how to learn, advocating for oneself, and tackling challenges that seemed unmanageable are experiences that define our graduates.

The senior class, faculty, family, and staff gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of 37 students. This graduating class has much to be proud of. They leave our school knowing that their voices matter and the friendships they’ve forged are meaningful.

Three talented graduates represented their peers this year. Charlotte Brown and Rene Burkert spoke, reflecting on their time at Gaynor, beginning on their very first day. Charlotte described the faculty as “master builders,” saying, “they give you the foundation, start you off, give you the tools to do it yourself and put it all together with fun, exciting lessons.”

While Rene paid homage to Ms. Shuppo and Ms. Kristin, saying, “You guided, supported, and believed in me all along the way. Gaynor is made up of teachers who do this for all of us students; they guide, support and believe.” And finally, Sirena Beard-Balck performed a beautiful, original song, “Moving On,” which brought the audience to tears.

Several other special guests also addressed the graduating class. Dr. Scott Gaynor; Henrietta Jones Peligroso, President of the Board of Trustees; and Jennifer Hamilton, parent of graduate, Henry, shared words of wisdom as they congratulated the students. Alumni Greg Manuel (Class of ’94), a Harvard graduate and Co-Founder and Managing Partner at MNL Partners, was excited to be back at his alma mater. He explained to the graduates the importance of self-confidence, thinking outside the box and being different, and pursuing something that you love.

We are thrilled to congratulate our graduates and we wish them well as they embark on the next phase of their academic journey.

This year’s Award Recipients are:

**President’s Education Award:**
- **Jack Levy**
  - Recognizes a student who has demonstrated outstanding academic excellence and leadership potential

**New York City Comptroller’s Award:**
- **Jonathan Sokol & Ryan Ehrlich**
  - Recognizes students who have demonstrated the most dedication to community service

**Helen Rosenblatt City Council Award:**
- **Hannah Yekutieli & Jake Swain**
  - Recognizes students who have shown scholastic excellence with an emphasis in Math and Science

**Gordon Gaynor Award:**
- **Henry Hamilton & Nina Goldberg**
  - Recognizes students who embody the spirit of hard work and determination

Our Gaynor graduates will be attending these remarkable schools in the fall:
- **The Beacon School**
- **Berket Witten Levin School**
- **The Churchill School and Center**
- **Dwight School**
- **Eagle Hill School**
- **Fenn School**
- **Grace Church School**
- **Kaufman Music Center**
- **Little Red School House and Elisabeth Irwin High School**
- **Mary McDowell School**
- **Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-Tech)**
- **Solomon Schechter School of Manhattan**
- **Winston Preparatory School**
- **York Preparatory School**

“At Gaynor, I learned how to learn.” – Greg Manuel, Class of 1989
Can you find the Gaynor-related Words?

ADVOCATE
AMSTERDAM
ARTISTIC
COLUMBUS
DR MICHAEL GATOR
GAYNOR GRADUATION
GREEN
I MATTER
MS SIEGEL
SUMMER

Can you help the Gaynor Gator find his way through the maze to reach the star?

Start Here

Use a pencil to trace a path from the start to the star without crossing over any black lines.

Be careful because this is a tricky one!

HAPPY SUMMER GATORS!
TO PARENTS OF ALUMNAE/I:

If this issue is addressed to your child who no longer maintains a permanent address at your home, please notify the Development Office at 212.787.7070 ext. 1125 or alumni@stephengaynor.org with the correct mailing address. Thank you.