

**Second grade students in Ms. Baptiste's class learned all about their community.**



Week of January 31, 2011

## A Message from the Principal

Stacey Bernstein

Groundhog Day is on February 2, 2011. This day marks the time that a groundhog will awaken from a deep sleep to look for his shadow. If he sees a shadow, there will be six more weeks of winter. However, if he doesn't see his shadow, it is a sign of spring. Use this day to talk about the importance of

scientific observations and predictions.

Allow your child the opportunity to become a scientist by allowing him or her to make observations about nature, have discussions about the science behind Groundhog Day, research the accuracy of the experimentation, and

draw conclusions.

Science does not have to be limited to the classroom. It is important for our students to connect the scientific inquiry skills learned in school with events that occur daily.

Let's hope for an early spring!

## This Week's Agenda

**Monday, 1-31-**

- Kelso Assembly

**Tuesday, 2-1-**

- 5th grade Cybersafety Workshop

**Wednesday, 2-2-**

- PTA General Meeting 9:30 am
- Executive Meeting 11:00 am

**Friday, 2-4-**

- Parent Portal opens at 4pm for viewing report cards. (Please let us know if you don't have access so that we may help you.)

Future Otsego Happenings

2011

**Monday, 2-7-**

- BOE Meeting @ Signal Hill 8:00 pm

**Wednesday, 2-9-**

- Relay for Life Kick Off 7:00 pm

**Sunday, 2-13**

- HHH Unity Fair

## Kids' Night Out BINGO

We would like to extend a special thank you to Karla Hofsiss, Christine Varrone, and the many volunteers who helped make this year's Kids' Night Out a huge success. A great time was had by all!

[Quick Click: 5 Ways to Help Your Child Become an Outdoor Observer](#)

Find fast ways to introduce your child to the wonders of nature.

- Create play binoculars to train your child to focus his gaze. Tape two toilet paper rolls together side-by-side, and attach a string so he can wear them around his neck.
- Put a hula hoop on the grass, and ask her to lie down on her stomach and study the area inside the hoop. She should describe what she sees — from weeds to bugs — and record her observations in a special "naturalist" notebook.
- Place a foot-long piece of string in the grass and ask him to pretend to be a tiny ant hiking along its path. What would he see? How long would it take?
- Have a texture scavenger hunt, where you challenge her to find things in nature that feel smooth, slippery, rough, cool, hot, etc.
- Ask him to sit down on the grass, close his eyes, keep quiet and listen carefully for five minutes. Afterwards, talk about what he heard. Could he hear better than he usually does?



**Nurturing a Nature-Lover**

Please click the link below to access the complete article from Scholastic.

[Nurturing a Nature-Lover](#)

# Parent Talk

## Nurturing a Nature-Lover

By [Alice Sterling Honig, PhD](#)

Even if you live in a cold climate, you can help your very young child love nature at any time of year. Start indoors! Tuning her into nature will increase her observational skills and enrich her growing vocabulary with lots of new words such as birds, flowers, leaves, snow, wind, and clouds.

**Houseplants:** Plant some of the orange, grapefruit, and lemon seeds from fruits that your toddler has eaten. Explain that the plants need water and earth and light to grow. These citrus seeds make small plants with shiny green leaves. Your toddler will be so proud of his little plants.

You can also enlist your child's help in planting a huge amaryllis bulb or forcing fragrant paperwhites. She will gain dexterity and wrist control as she learns to tip a small watering can. She will have trouble saying "amaryllis," but no trouble enjoying how it grows and bursts forth with huge scarlet blossoms.

**Outdoor gardening:** In the late autumn, give your toddler a small trowel without a sharp point. Let her help you make nice cozy holes to plant bulbs (supervise her closely so she doesn't try to taste them, since they are toxic). Tell her they will sleep in the earth until the springtime wakes them up. Then they will start growing green leaves and pretty flowers — yellow daffodils or brightly colored tulips. Talk to your little one about how beautiful the flowers are, how gently we must touch them or their petals fall off. Talk about how proud you are of how careful she is with these plants.