Gratitude
by Stephanie Scaccia

It’s hard to believe that this is my third year here at Brown School. I remember my first time walking in the doors, admiring the colors around each classroom door; the customized flags, and student art work on the walls. Brown School was an unfamiliar place to me; in fact, the only thing I knew was that it was supposedly “the best kept secret in Schenectady.”

I received a friendly greeting in the main office and then sat down to take a look at the current yearbook. I was surprised to see the unusual format of the pictures, not individual students, but groups of students surrounding each other and their teacher; with a silly face or a warm embrace. First impressions are important, and as nervous as I was waiting for my interview, I was pleased with my first impression of Brown School, which has turned out to be a lasting impression.

I am continually impressed by what we accomplish and do for our students. From the musical performances to the sporting events, to the preparation for the Schenectady parade, to our extensive cafe menu, and to the many exciting activities happening in the classroom each and everyday--there’s truly never a dull moment! Not to mention all the behind-the-scenes work that often goes unnoticed in the various offices around the school. All of these things, in addition to the students, make Brown School school a special place to work and learn.

This Thanksgiving, I will share my gratitude for the faculty, staff, and students of Brown School. They have truly created “the best kept secret in Schenectady,” which should continually be shared with others!
The Past and Present President
Fourth Grades Journey Down the Political Trail

The fourth grade classroom was an exciting place to be last Tuesday as the students held a mock Presidential Election for the entire school community. Like all elections, the preparation began weeks ago as the students gained background knowledge about the voting process, elections, the two candidates, and past presidents who held the position.

Preparing for the big day was very exciting as all the students took on jobs to transform the fourth grade classroom into the voting district for Brown School. Inside the booth (made with shower curtains), a voter found one red box with a photo of Romney, the Republican candidate, and a blue box with a photo of President Obama, the Democratic candidate. The students also added a donkey on the blue box and an elephant on the red box to make the choices more accessible to the younger voters.

Out in the hallway, voters needed to sign the registry in order to be given a ballot. Students worked together by directing voters to the booth, explaining the voting procedure, and then rewarding the voters with a patriotic sticker.

After voting, everyone was led to the Hall of Past Presidents. Weeks before, each fourth grader selected a president to research and used the information to create a PowerPoint presentation. The classroom was abuzz as the voters listened to the stories of these past leaders.

At the end of the day, the students counted the ballots and announced the results to the school. President Obama won with 101 votes and Governor Mitt Romney had 51 votes.

It’s All About Connections
Here is a list of comments made by the fourth grade students when discussing the connections between the mock election and the real election:

- When I was voting, I was excited.
- I felt pressure when I went up to vote – who do I vote for?
- I knew who I wanted to vote for and was eager to do it, but then I almost messed up by putting the ballot in the wrong box.
- I learned that voting is harder than I thought because sometimes you don’t know who you are going to choose.
- Voting – it was like I felt like I was going to make a difference. (even if it was a mock election)
- I wanted to know about the issues to be knowledgeable to vote.
- Many students most likely voted for the party or person that their parents voted for.
- We even had someone try to vote twice and we said they couldn’t vote twice. We even looked for their signature on the registration form.
- Our results from the mock election reflected the real world!
**PALS (Parents Actively Lending Support)**

The 1st and 2nd grade Movie Night will be on December 14th, so mark your calendars! Also, information was sent home recently regarding planning for the spring Gala. Please sign up if you are interested in helping out.

The next PALS meeting will be on December 14th at 6:30pm. Join us in person or contact PALS@brownschool.org if you would like instructions on how to remotely attend the meeting. The next PALS meeting will be on November 6th at 6:30pm. Please join us in person or contact PALS@brownschool.org if you would like instructions on how to remotely attend the meeting.

**Continental Studies**

Did you know that over 2,000 different languages are spoken in Africa? Did you know that the Amazon Rainforest is located in South America? The second graders are learning these facts and many more as they research the seven continents. The students each selected one continent to research. They have spent the last two weeks collecting information and pictures which they will use when they create informational posters to share with the Brown School community. Stop outside the second grade classrooms after Thanksgiving break to see their posters on display.

**Radio Disney - MVP Generation Go!**

How many fruits and vegetables can you name? What if you had the added pressure of a time limit? Oh, and what if you were in a team competition and you had to keep a hula hoop going at the same time? That’s just what some of the Pre-K through Fifth grade students were asked to do during the MVP Generation Go assembly.

Students learned about healthy habits though fun, game-show-style activities, and they had a chance to show off some of their dance skills, too!

**Barnes and Noble Book Fair**

Upper school guitar students performed at the Barnes and Noble book fair on Thursday, while students went on scavenger hunts and created bookmarks. If you weren’t able to join us at the store, you can still support Brown School and place your online orders through Monday!

**Team-building**

Fourth and fifth graders worked on team-building activities, including the human hamster wheel and the pipeline game.

**Veterans Day Celebration**

Students in the 3-5th grade chorus met at Colonie Center Mall to sing for Veteran’s Day
Annual Appeal Update:
Your contribution to the Annual Appeal is an investment in the educational quality of the school and contributes directly to enriching the academic curriculum and enhancing student activities. The uniqueness of a Brown School education, with its tradition of academic excellence and musical and artistic richness, is only made possible by the equally strong tradition of giving by the Brown School community. Gifts to Brown School are tax-deductible. We are very grateful to the following people for their donations. The total pledges to the Brown School Annual Appeal to date are $28,232.00.

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Give Thanks to Brown School!
If you make a gift to the Brown School Annual Appeal by Thanksgiving, the Board of Trustees will match your gift dollar for dollar up to $10,000. Call Mary Frawley in the Business Office to make your gift of thanks!