

**Garrison Union Free School  
1100 Route 9D, Garrison, NY 10524**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Students Celebrate the Year of the Dragon**

**Garrison, NY, January 27, 2012** – In celebration of Chinese New Year, the breezeway of the Garrison School is a splash of vibrant colors, fantastic dragons and beautiful paper lanterns. During library time, with the help of 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Debbie Earle, and art class, under the supervision of Art teacher, Coulter Young, many Garrison students learned about Chinese history and culture and created their own works of art, inspired by the traditions of the Chinese holiday.

Chinese New Year is a 15-day cultural celebration celebrating the end of the winter season and the transition into spring. 2012 is considered the Year of the Water Dragon. This year, Chinese New Year began on January 23 and will end on February 7.

One entrance to the breezeway at the Garrison School is graced by a large banner marking the Chinese New Year holiday. The banner was designed by middle-school students Addie Westerhuis and Caitlin McCullough with Mr. Young. Addie had also prepared a report on the 15 days of Chinese New Year that was shared with her class in preparation for the holiday.

To celebrate the “Year of the Dragon,” the 2<sup>nd</sup> graders created dragons using KidPix on the library computers. Chinese dragons all have similar characteristics including the eyes of a rabbit, the mouth of a camel, the antlers of a deer, the scales of a carp, the whiskers of a catfish, the talons of an eagle, the legs of a tiger, the ears of a cow and the body of a serpent. The students incorporated all of these characteristics into their own dragons. Mrs. D’Onofrio’s 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class enjoyed decorating colorful Chinese dragon heads as well.

3<sup>rd</sup> graders at the Garrison School learned about the zodiac calendar. Then, using KidPix on the library computers, the students created an animal from the calendar and wrote about each animal’s special characteristics; including depicting ox as loyal and stubborn, tigers full of passion and courage and dragons as energetic and strong.

Ms. Timmons’ 1<sup>st</sup> graders explored tangrams – ancient Chinese puzzles consisting of seven flat shapes which are put together to form a specific shape using all the pieces. Tangrams are sometimes called “seven pieces of cleverness.” The students used their imagination and created their own amazing tangram pictures.

The last day of Chinese New Year celebrations includes a lantern festival when everyone lights candles and lanterns to guide the wayward spirits back home. The Kindergarteners created

colorful paper lanterns of their own in their classroom and in Mr. Coulter's art class, 5<sup>th</sup> graders and 7<sup>th</sup> graders decorated rice paper lanterns with traditional symbols and imagery.

Admiring the artwork in the front entry, Garrison School Principal Stephanie Impellittere shared her thoughts on the holiday. "With such rich folklore, traditions and mythology to explore, the Chinese New Year is a fun addition to our curriculum. Our students really enjoyed participating in the holiday while making some beautiful works of cultural art."

