

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

3rd Graders Create Pizza Box Biographies

Garrison, NY, February 6, 2012 – As part of the Garrison School’s new Journeys reading program, Leslie D’Onofrio’s 3rd graders recently learned about biographies. The students read about Thomas Edison and Michael Jordan in class and enjoyed the section so much, Mrs. D’Onofrio decided to let the students choose another famous person to read about for their January book report.

Mrs. D’Onofrio’s students selected a person, read a book on their subject and decorated the inside of a pizza box with clip art, original drawings, wrapping paper, craft supplies, stickers, letters and paint to showcase the famous person and their accomplishments including a series of pizza slices with biographical information. Finally, the 3rd graders gave a presentation to their peers, teaching the class all about their subject.

“We have switched to Common Core State Standards and we are planning two units of study for ELA and Math that correlate to the standards. As part of that, students have to present knowledge and ideas they have learned.” said Mrs. D’Onofrio. “The students were excited to present the biographies they had worked on to the class.”

Students chose books from home, the school library or one of the public libraries in town. Mrs. D’Onofrio commented that many students were very particular about who they wanted to read about and were willing to wait for books on their subjects to be ordered from the local libraries.

Garrison 3rd grader, Fallon Barry created an impressive pizza box decorated with clip art of her subject, Babe Ruth, along with baseball-themed craft supplies. “My brother is a big Babe Ruth fan and my dad had a biography of Babe Ruth at home,” Fallon said. One of the things I learned was that Babe Ruth’s full name was George Herman Ruth. Also, I thought Babe Ruth was an orphan but he wasn’t. His parents sent him away to a special school when he was seven years old.”

Emma Bakker decided to study about Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart when her mother brought a book on Mozart home from the library. “[The biography project] came up and I said, ‘Snap! I have to do it. I have the book.’”

Emma reported that she copied several images from the book to use in decorating her beautiful pizza box. One of the images was of a portrait of Mozart that Emma found particularly interesting. “I thought it was cool because someone really liked [Mozart’s] music so much they commissioned a painting of him.” Emma really enjoyed decorating the box but enjoyed the

presentation the most. “The best part was explaining all of Mozart’s information to the class,” she said.

Mason Sharpley read about George Lucas for his biography project. “I chose George Lucas because I like Star Wars and I like that he used to drive race cars,” he said. One of the things Mason learned about his subject is that George Lucas couldn’t swim as a child. Mason really enjoyed decorating the pizza box. He covered the entire box with Star Wars wrapping paper and photocopied images of George Lucas and Star Wars characters from the books he read.

“I was very impressed with all of the pizza box biographies created by our third graders,” exclaimed Garrison School Principal Stephanie Impellittere. “It is clear our students took a lot of pride in their projects. Our teachers have been working hard to align the existing curriculum with the new Common Core Standards and our new reading series; Journeys. This is a marvelous example of how both new initiatives are being taught in our classrooms.”

