



Book Talk

by Dianne Krulick

Once a month, a group of *Ellenville Middle School* 7th and 8th grade students meet to discuss a book that they read. This program, facilitated by *Middle School* teachers Bob Hanington (*above, right*) and Bill O'Donnell (*above, left*), is an exemplary one that has earned them a \$2,000 award, courtesy of the Staples Recycle for Education Program. This award program is a joint partnership with NYSUT (New York State United Teachers) and Staples, Inc., set up to support enrichment activities that directly impact students in New York State public schools in need.

During a discussion of "Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry," students spoke about the horrible conditions that existed. Though not an "action" book, this book has relevance with its lack of positive news and the aspect of negative getting a lot of attention. There was a sharing and connecting of personal backgrounds to this book with the issue that characterizations from the book exist today. Emphasis was on the tolerance of differences.

As part of the requirement for the award, students must read two books and participate in the discussion group. The plan is to take a trip to an IMAX film, have lunch, and purchase books at the bookstore. Book Talk participants include Becky Avery, Julia Dekan, Kathleen DiMilia, Bryanna Doolittle, Erin Logan, Alexis Reister, Samantha Rosenstock, Erica Stoekeler, Dan Torres, Tim Van Etten, and Stephen Wendel.



Soap Box Derby Racer

by Gary Rubin

The *Ellenville Middle School Soap Box Derby* crew has been working on constructing an official Soap Box Derby racer this school year. The students had the opportunity to learn how to build a racer and use the many different tools needed for construction. The derby crew went on field trip to *Bob Gaydos Body Shop*; Bob Gaydos (*photo above, at right*) and painter Wayne (*left*) gave them a tour and explained/demonstrated how to paint a car. After painting, the crew will do their final construction of fastening the body to the chassis. The students will then write a letter to the *Ellenville Village Board* requesting police assistance in closing a road with a hill to test drive the racer later in the spring. The racer will be on display during the *Middle School Science Expo* on May 17th.

Historical Fiction Readers at MS

Sixth grader Brandon Stinehour demonstrates a karate stance (*photo, right*) while reading "Karate Master" to the audience at the Grades 5/6 *Historical Fiction Presentation* April 8th in the *Ellenville Middle School Library*.

This year the annual event was organized by English Language Arts teachers Mary Brackman, Toni Franza, Robert Hanington, Theresa Hartnett, and Bill O'Donnell with *EMS Library* Media Specialist Katherine Lewin.

Student writers/readers read excerpts from a variety of sources. Participants and their readings included: Harley Bleitzhofer ("Diary of the Salem Witch Trial"), Matthew Wilhelm ("Anne Frank" newspaper article), Alexis Palega ("Revolutionary War Diary"), Elyssa Garcia ("Titanic Diary"), Tomasz Czarnecki ("Journal of Christopher Columbus"), Alexander Lonstein ("Granville T. Woods" diary entry), Amanda Smiles ("Diary of Queen Hatshepsut"), Dylan Beaver ("Diary of a 1960s College Student"), Samantha Rue ("Harriet Tubman" interview), Caden Otunu ("Phillis Wheatley" interview), Cynthia DeHosson ("Diary of Alexander the Great"), Benjamin Altshuler ("Journal of William Shakespeare"), Jake Grogan ("Revolutionary War Diary"), Paul Campbell and Matthew Wilhelm ("Adolf Hitler" interview), Guy Meyers ("Babe Ruth" journal entry), Tobey Kass ("Revolutionary War Diary"), Marissa Santiago ("Diary of Joan of Arc"), Zachary Kosloski ("Life in the 1820's" journal entry), Brandon Stinehour ("Karate Master"), Colleen Spratt ("Diary of Plato"), and Marissa Cohen ("Phantom of the Opera Diary").

Jen Pautz's first graders took a walking field trip on April 20th to Lock Thirty One. Students, shown at right with owner Andy Bugna, made potato pancakes, ate them as a snack, and then toured the kitchen.