

BRINGING DRAGONS TO SCHOOL

Characters from story come to life at Hopkins Hill



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COVENTRY — For the month of March, students at the Hopkins Hill Elementary School participated in the One School/One Book program.

This year's book of choice was Tony De Terlizzi's "Kenny and the Dragon."

"It is a wonderful story about a rabbit and an unusual dragon," said Tancrelle. "All families took time to participate in this special activity. Every child in grades K-5 receive a copy of the

book and we asked that families read it together at home during the month of March as we read it in school."

Tancrelle described reading together at home is a valuable activity because it enables children to be effective readers in addition to being a fun, worthwhile family activity.

The reading activity was also tied in with the Pennies for Patients fundraiser.

Teacher Kim O'Connell said their fundraising goal was \$2,850, which the school exceeded by bringing in a total of \$3,180.

"The kids are so generous," O'Connell said.

"They brought in their money from their own pennies they saved."

This fundraiser was one of the many the school takes part in throughout the school year.

"We incorporated the comprehension strategy, visualizing," Tancrelle explained. "This is where students made a movie picture in their minds to help them understand what they read. We also had a 'Question of the Day' to promote a discussion at home and in school."

O'Connell said after reading "Kenny and

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the Dragon," her hopes were that everyone learned something from Graham — the story's gentle giant — not to stereotype others and learn about peace-making rather than violence.

"While we are reading we want kids talking about the book," O'Connell told the Daily Times in an earlier interview.

O'Connell explained how educators do whatever they can to make learning fun for students and that means being creative. With that said, with help from the ELA Department, students throughout the school created neck ties with their renditions of

what they learned most from the book.

"This was the way we 'tied in' the fundraising with the lessons from the book," O'Connell said.

Tancelle explained how when the fundraising began, if the students exceeded their goal, she, along with other teachers, would dress up as characters from the book.

True to their word, they all struck a pose Friday morning with a parade being held throughout the school that afternoon to celebrate the students' success.

"For me," Tancelle explained, "I think it's important for children to adopt a love of

reading because reading is the passport that will take them anywhere in the world and beyond," she said. "I hope the book will inspire a sense of community within our school and among our families and students as part of the school community — coming together for a common purpose."

Teacher Kim O'Connell holds a few of the ties students created while Behavior Specialist Mike Greene is dressed as "the princess," gym teacher Derek Hitte as the "dragon," and Hopkins Hill School Principal Kathy Tancelle as "Kenny the Rabbit" from the book of the same name.

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