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Robin Winslow from the Coventry Police Department reads to children in Donna Costa's second grade class at Tiogue School on Thursday. The school hosted several guest readers as part of its Reading Week celebration.

VIPs get some quality reading time

JESSICA SELBY

jselby@ricentral.com

COVENTRY — Several special visitors dropped by Tiogue School on Thursday.

Central Coventry Fire Chief Robert Seltzer was there. So was Dan Jaehrig from News Channel 10, Lt. Robin Winslow from the Coventry Police Department, Coventry School Superintendent Kenneth DiPietro, West Warwick firefighter Paul McAllister and many, many more.

The visitors paraded through the school and then dropped by individual classrooms to visit with the kids in their classrooms. Some talked with the kids about what they do for a living, some asked the students about their own personal interests, but all of the visitors interacted with the kids through reading, the purpose of their visit.

The visitors were guest readers at the school, an activity planned at Tiogue as part of their Reading Week activities.

According to Michelle Coen, one of the reading specialists at the school, having different people read to the students is an important component to language development and reading comprehension.

"In addition to it being nice to have so many different people from the community come into the school to meet with the kids, it is also a great way to make the kids

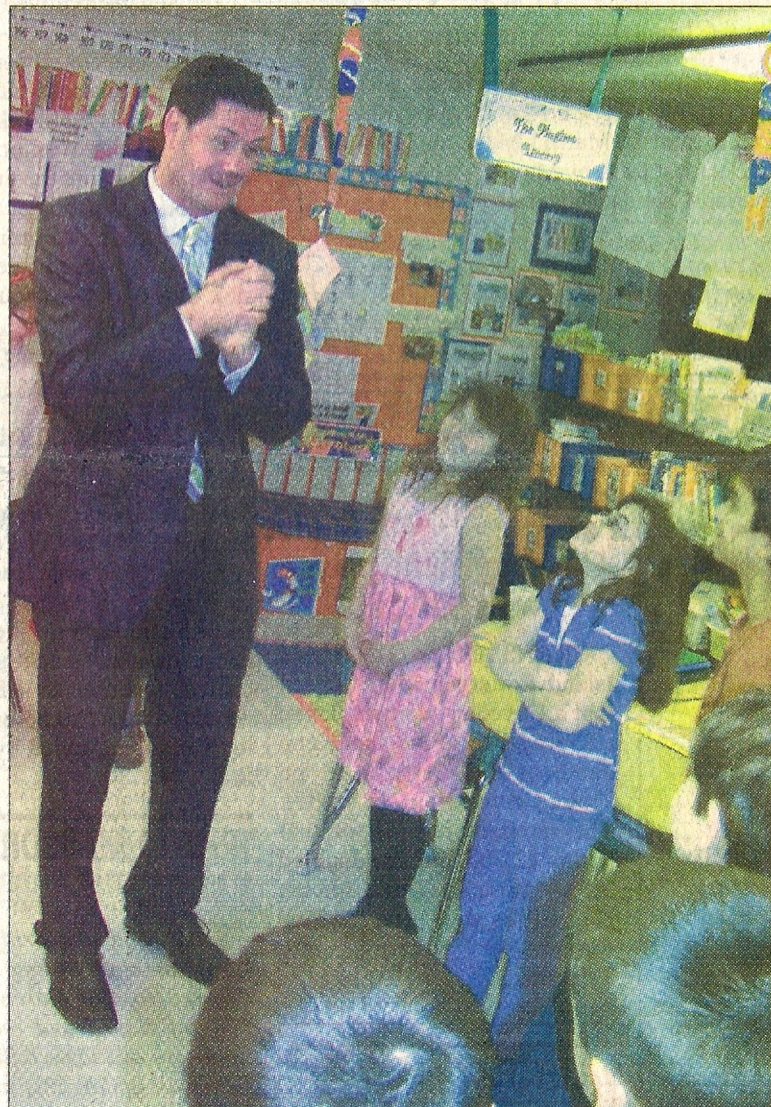
realize the importance of reading and to show them that reading is something that adults enjoy too," Coen said.

Lt. Robin Winslow of the Coventry Police Department told the boys and girls in Donna Costa's second grade classroom that she loves to read. She brought in several books for the students to choose from and ultimately selected two. She read them a story about police officers and their job.

Next door in Daye Citrone's second grade classroom, Dan Jaehrig had the students hopping in and out of their chairs. Before reading to the students he encouraged them to participate in an exercise where he had them give descriptions of their teacher. Several of the students gave praise and paid compliments to their teacher, Mrs. Citrone, and Courtney Huges, who co-teaches in that classroom.

Meanwhile in John Coen's classroom, Sergeant Sean Hardin and Specialist Anthony Alves were busy leading students through physical training exercises. They asked the students about doing push ups and sit-ups and even encouraged them to do it when they got home.

The military officers then read the students a book they said would "lift your spirits," called "Playing Right Field," by Willy Welsh.



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NBC News Channel 10 news anchor Dan Jaehrig leads Tiogue School kids in an exercise Thursday before reading his selection.

Special readers visit children

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Adele Richtarik, one of the reading specialists at the school who helped to coordinate the guest reader day as well as all of the Reading Week activities, said each of the guest readers were invited to bring a book of their choice. She said most come geared with a book of their choice, but just in case, each teacher is informed of who their guest reader will be ahead of time and is encouraged to select a book that would be appropriate for the guest to read if they come empty handed.

In addition to the guest reader day activities, the students at Tiogue also enjoyed a variety of other reading motivated activities throughout the week. Richtarik said the students got to listen to

a professional storyteller on Tuesday. She said the teachers swapped classrooms on Monday and read to different students. And, she said, the students were also invited to receive a book during the Books are Wings visit on Friday.

Richtarik said teachers were also encouraged to play reading motivated games with their students like reading bingo. She said some of the teachers also invited students' parents to come to school to read to the kids.

According to Coen, Reading Week is an event that is typically held during the month of April, but celebrated by schools across the nation during different weeks in the month. Tiogue School, she said, typically tries to hold the week-long activities during the week just prior to their school's April vacation which begins on Monday.