

# Mrs. Zavaglia – Grade 2

Mrs. Zavaglia's class chose **Morris Frank** as our hero. In October, we had a special furry four-legged visitor come to Harrison School. Her name was Octavia and she was born at the Seeing Eye in Morristown, NJ. Octavia came to school with her puppy-raiser Pam Chirls. We learned about the experiences and training that each puppy must go through to become a Seeing Eye dog. So how did this wonderful human-dog relationship begin?

With Morris Frank of course! Morris became legally blind at the age of 16, due to two accidents that took away his eyesight. His father shared an article about a woman in Europe that trained dogs to guide people who were blind. Morris traveled to Europe to meet Dorothy Eustis. She matched him with an intelligent and trained German Shepard named Kiss, whom he later named Buddy. They both returned to the United States to start the first Seeing Eye Dog School in his home state of Tennessee. When they realized that the climate was a little too warm for the dogs, they relocated to Morristown, NJ.

Morris also helped change the laws to allow guide dogs to accompany their owners into public buildings, such as stores and restaurants. He

also was the first American allowed to travel on an airplane with his guide dog Buddy. Our class watched video clips, listened to his courageous story and discussed how his own disability gave him the opportunity to help many blind people today. We learned so many interesting facts that we each wrote a fact and created a bulletin board about him. If you visit Morristown, you will see Morris Frank's dream live on. You can observe the trainers and guide dogs walking the streets so that someday a blind person will have a life of independence with their Seeing Eye dog. Thank you Morris Frank!

