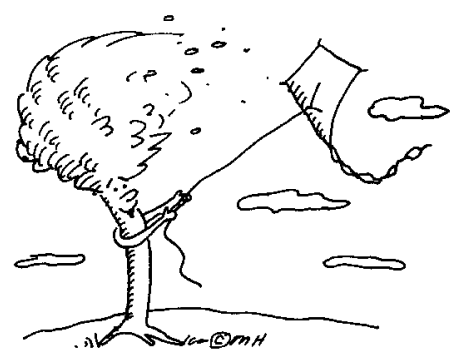


FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS CATHY STOCKER & KAREN THORNTON

What a glorious fall it's turned out to be! As I write this I'm watching brightly colored leaves swirl to the ground and looking forward to one of my favorite Westbrook traditions, the Fall Clean Up! There's nothing like sharing rakes and a tarp with a fellow Westbrook family up on the sledding hill to make you feel like you're really part of a community! We're fortunate to have so many fabulous volunteers to help us keep our many extraordinary Westbrook fall traditions alive!



Our Room Parent chairs hosted a festive teacher appreciation luncheon and planned the heartwarming Thanksgiving Pie giveaway! The hugely popular Book Fair was paired with Spirit Wear & LEDO night this year with tremendous success. And then there are newer traditions that are getting off to a fantastic start this year. Our Welcoming Committee has set up several successful mentoring relationships between veteran and new families. We don't need a construction study to tell us we're growing, so its these kinds of relationships that help us maintain that "small school" feel. Our PE liaison has re-energized the lunchtime walking program and the kids are loving it, not to mention the already oversubscribed Glee Club after school program we just launched!

None of this would be possible without our legions of PTA members and volunteers, so we salute you and thank you!

Cathy Stocker & Karen Thornton

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WESTBROOK WARMLY WELCOMES

Our New Attendance Secretary !!

As you know, our new Attendance Secretary started during the first week of November We are very excited to have her here at Westbrook! Please make sure to include her in any emails you send regarding your child's attendance or after school plans.

Susan_H_Holcomb@mcpsmd

AQUA EAGLES CANOE ON THE PATUXENT RIVER

By John Marder

On October 26, 2011, the Aqua Eagles went on a field trip to Patuxent River Park. We went canoeing and identified animals like a kingfisher, which is a bird that is good at fishing. The Aqua Eagles canoed in the Patuxent River and in one of its tributaries. While canoeing we saw a beaver lodge and learned that there is an underwater entrance, but part of the lodge is dry. We also learned about the mud on the bottom of the river and how it is made of plants that have decomposed. Another thing that the Aqua Eagles discovered was that the plants in the marshes are gray because when the tide rises and the plants get submerged underwater, mud covers the plants. When the tide gets lower again the mud dries on the plants.

The Patuxent River is very healthy. The healthy level of dissolved oxygen (the oxygen in the water) is 5 parts per million and up. The amount of dissolved oxygen in the Patuxent River is 9 parts per million. Also, the amount of nitrogen and phosphorous in the river, some of the biggest pollutants in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, was one to zero parts per million, which means there is almost none.

In conclusion, we had a great time canoeing and learned lots of interesting facts about the Patuxent River.

RECESS 101

By Lori Berman

Westbrook has limited recess equipment and lots of children who are looking for something to do at recess. The school is collecting used equipment, especially balls, so that our children will get more exercise and spend less time standing around at recess. (Balls are constantly lost in the creek.) Please go to your basement, find a couple of balls, a jump rope, maybe a rarely used hula hoop, and bring them to the main office.

More physical activity means our children will learn more, have more fun and, we hope, go to bed easier (a win-win for all of us!). In fact, one research study found that people learn vocabulary words 20% faster following exercise than they did before exercise. So, go now... run, don't walk... find a couple of things you no longer use and please drop them off this week at the main office!

Balls allowed: soccer, kickball, nerf balls, any other soft-type ball. Basic rubber playground balls are particularly popular. Balls not allowed: footballs, baseballs, softballs, lacrosse balls, etc.

They also really need teetherball clips (they seem to break or disappear a lot).

Please use permanent marker to write WESTBROOK on everything you send in.

WESTBROOK ANNOUNCES A SISTER SCHOOL!

Viers Mill Elementary School & Westbrook Partner-Up

This year, Westbrook is joining forces with Viers Mill Elementary School in a Sister School Partnership. It is a new initiative between Westbrook and Viers Mill in which families of students at both schools share resources in order to enhance the educational opportunities for all of our children. Viers Mill Elementary school, located in Silver Spring, has about 600 students, over 70% of whom are eligible for free or reduced meals. This fall, Westbrook is planning to hold a book drive at Book Fair, and a coat drive for students

at Viers Mill. If you have any questions about the partnership, contact Valerie Baruch (vbaruch@verizon.net).

"I learned it is okay to make mistakes and it is good to be creative."

- Tom Graeub

See pg. 3 for the Artist-in-Residence story

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM INSPIRES

By Karen Baratz & Jacquie Moen

The 2nd Grade just completed a terrific puppet-making residency that tapped into their artistic and story-telling skills. The children created imaginative animal puppets out of range of household materials including paper bags, plates, cups, tissue paper and toilet paper tubes. Each class presented their stories (adapted from popular children's folktales: "Clever Tortoise," "Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock" and "A Story, A story") in an assembly on October 20 for Kindergarten and 1st grades as well as the parents.

Here's what some of the parents had to say:

" Working in class with the artist and kids was terrific. They had so much fun creating their puppets and each one had their own idea. It was neat to see the most simple to the most elaborate develop into something that each child was truly proud of."

"We are very pleased with the Puppet Residency! I was happy be able to volunteer on the first day and see how beautifully Carolyn worked with the children and helped them to create their unique show. I unfortunately was unable to get out of work to be at the actual show, but my husband and my mom were there and said it was adorable.... what a wonderful program for our 2nd graders. "

The students were also thrilled to have this amazing opportunity:

"I've been inspired in art and making puppets since I was 3 years old. I started drawing pictures, cutting them out and then I would put on a puppet show for my sisters. I was so excited when Miss Quinn told us our class was going to have a puppet show! After the performance, I was very proud of myself!" ---Lucy Thorp

"I learned that you can make anything out of nothing!" – Noah Ehrenberg

"I was excited about my part in the show. I learned to deal with mistakes, find out what to do and how to make to make things. Making mistakes is not a big deal! I got the hang of making puppets. I enjoyed making the puppets out of many recycled materials to respect the environment." –Anon.

"I learned it is okay to make mistakes and it is good to be creative." –Tom Graeub

Even though it was hard to make the puppets and scenery, it was really fun to perform". Amelia Lettre"

I want to do it again"! Gabby Block

"I liked acting in front of First and Second Grade and the parents"! Zachary Solomon

"It was really run performing in front of the Kindergarteners"! Jacob Kolton



Naomi Fry with her puppet!



A puppet performance



Performance with puppeteer and storyteller, Carolyn Koerber



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We're still collecting Box Tops so don't forget to keep clipping! Box Tops can be found on regularly used products such as General Mills cereals, Kleenex tissues, Ziploc baggies, Yoplait yogurt, and Hefty trash bags. Simply clip the Box Tops, put them in an envelope or plastic baggie, and either send them to school in your child's backpack or leave them in the Box Tops collection box on the drop-off table.

ENTERTAINMENT

Local Theater Review

It's a Peach of a Performance!

Review of James & the Giant Peach by Hailey Sobel

The third and fifth graders both went to see James and the Giant Peach at B-CC High School on Friday November 4, 2011. We wondered how they would make a giant peach and the bug and insect characters. They did a great job!

We were very surprised at all the detailed costumes and the special effects. For the Peach growing they put a balloon in the tree so it looked like it was growing, but for the giant peach they construction of a half circle out of wood and used orange fabric covering. They used sound effects that were sort of creepy to show the peach splashed into the water, and for the seagulls pulling the peach. They also had snow falling when they were in the clouds and the cloud people made hail out of the snow to throw down to earth. They also had excellent lighting for different times of the day, and different colors. The costumes were good even though they looked homemade. The actors were funny, especially Aunt Spiker and Aunt Sponge.

Overall it was hard to believe they were only high schoolers, since the performance was so professional.

SLAM POETRY EVENT

4th Grade Artist-in-Residency Smash Success

The 4th grade Artist-in-Residency was a great success!. Artist, Gayle Danley, entertained both fourth grade parents and students with a special Slam Poetry performance on October 25th. Students worked with Danley to write and perform their own slam poetry at homeroom presentations on November 8th.

Danley taught the 4th graders about the Slam Poetry process or how to create Slam Poetry. According to Frere Raymond, " Slam Poetry is about an experience that you

haven't written about before...it's improve. .. We worked on the pieces over a period of three weeks and we performed it twice, once for the parents and once for our class. It was phenomenal."

