



# Great Falls Current

February 2011

Main Office: 703-757-2100

**24 Hour Attendance Line: 703-757-2111** Please leave a message: absence or tardy by 9:00 a.m.

Great Falls Elementary School Website: [www.fcps.edu/GreatFallsES](http://www.fcps.edu/GreatFallsES)

## DATES OF INTEREST

### FEBRUARY

- 1/31-2/1 Teacher Workdays-NO SCHOOL
- 2/1 Ski & Tubing Day @ Whitetail Resort
- 2/2 3rd Grading Period Begins
- 2/8 Report Cards Sent Home
- 2/8 PTA Executive Meeting, 9 a.m.
- 2/10 PTA General Meeting, 9 a.m., Cafeteria
- 2/11 Bingo Night/Bake Sale, 6 p.m.
- 2/16 Spelling Bee
- 2/17 6th Gr. Field Trip - Ethics Day
- 2/21 President's Day - NO SCHOOL

### MARCH

- 3/3 PTA Executive Meeting, 9 a.m.
- 3/6 Fun Fair & Courtney Schilling Fun Run
- 3/9 3rd Gr. Field Trip to GWU
- 3/9-10 5th Gr. SOL Testing - Writing
- 3/11 Spring Picture Day
- 3/14-18 Book Fair

## TELEPHONE USAGE-STUDENT AND VISITORS

**Cell phone use by students and visiting adults is not permitted during the school day.** Children are discouraged from making telephone calls home during the school day unless it is an emergency. In case of illness, the school health aide will make the call home. Please help your child to develop a routine of placing things which must be brought to school in a designated place the night before in order that lunch money, school books, and homework will not be left at home. We would like the classrooms to be free of interruptions.



### It's Time to Pre-order Your GFES Yearbook!

Pre-order forms will be sent home next week in each child's Tuesday Packet. The price of each yearbook is \$20.00. Please complete all the information on the payment envelope. If paying by check, please make **payable to Provine School Pictures**.



**March 18, 2011 is the last day to place an order.** Only those who pre-order will be guaranteed a copy, so send your order in early! Yearbooks will be distributed in June.

### YEARBOOK COVER CONTEST

You can help make this year's school yearbook cover the best ever! It's time to be creative and design a picture for the cover of the Great Falls Elementary Yearbook. Designers must use the following guidelines:

- Paper color: White
- Paper size: 8 1/2 X 11 inches
- Use markers, crayons, colored pencils or water colors to fill the whole paper
- Make sure there are no spelling errors
- Student art work only - No adult help please

Deadline is Friday, March 4. Turn your entries in to the office.

Great Falls Elementary participated in the National Geography Bee sponsored by the National Geographic Society, again this year. During the month of December, students in the fourth through sixth grades competed to see who would represent our school in the national contest. After the preliminary round, two representatives from each classroom competed in their grade-level competitions. Following the grade-level competitions, representatives from each grade level went on to participate in the school competition.



Benji, Jackson, and James represented fourth grade. Fifth grade was represented by Sophia, Trevor, and Derek. Maddy, Alvin, and Jessica were our sixth grade representatives. Trevor emerged as the winner of the school competition. After many rounds of very difficult questions, Sophia was our first runner-up.

Congratulations to all participants and our grade-level representatives. We wish Trevor the best of luck in the next round of the National Geography Bee.

## Important Dates for 6th Grade Students and Parents

### Cooper Middle School:

#### **Transition/Curriculum Coffee for Parents of Rising 7th Grade Students**

February 9th (9:30-11:00am) or February 10th, Special Ed. (6:15-7:00 pm), General Ed. (7:00-9:00pm)

#### **Cooper Elective Fair for Parents and Students**

February 17th (7:00-8:30pm) \**Make-up date on Thursday, March 3rd (7:00-8:30pm)*\*

#### **Cooper Principal, Arlene Randall, Visits 6th Grade Students:**

March 22, 9:30 a.m.

### Kilmer Middle School:

#### **Curriculum Night for Parents and Students**

March 3rd (6:30-8:30pm) \**Make-up date on March 10th (6:30-8:30pm)*\*



Congratulations to Lauren, a Peer Mediator and 6<sup>th</sup> grade student, who was the recent winner of a t-shirt design contest for the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Mediation Conference at George Mason University which will be held in March. Lauren's design will be presented and sold at the Middle and Elementary School Mediation Conferences. Hundreds of Peer Mediation students from all over Northern Virginia will have the opportunity to wear Lauren's t-shirt design. Pictured is Lauren receiving her award from Peer Mediation Leadership Team Members, Kristen Woodward and Nancy Colfax.

### *Good Health is in Your Hands*

Illnesses like colds and flu are caused by viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. These illnesses are spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. You can manage the risk of spreading germs by taking the following precautions at home and at school:

- **Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.** Cough or sneeze into a tissue and throw it away or cough or sneeze into your sleeve, away from your wrist.
- **Clean your hands often.** Wash with soap and warm water, rubbing vigorously for 15 to 20 seconds, several times a day. Soap combined with scrubbing removes germs – water alone is ineffective. In the absence of soap and water, alcohol-based wipes and hand sanitizers will kill the germs.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.** Viruses can survive for 2 or more hours on surfaces like door knobs, telephones and desktops – assume your hands are contaminated unless you washed them recently.
- **Stay home when sick and check with a health care provider when needed.** FCPS policy states that children with fevers of 100 degrees or higher should not attend school and should stay home until fever-free for **24 hours without medication.**
- **Practice other good health habits including a healthy diet, exercise, plenty of water and rest all year long.**



Finally, the Fairfax County Health Department encourages everyone to **get a flu shot** this season – it's not too late. Check out the following link for more details on the Health Department vaccination program: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/flu/>

### Northern Virginia Writing Project Young Writers' Workshop

Here's a chance for students in grades 4-12 who love to write to work with a skilled staff and a talented group of fellow writers at George Mason University.

- Saturday, February 26
- Saturday, March 19
- Saturday, April 2

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

To register or to get more information, visit:

[www.nvwp.org/youngwriters/](http://www.nvwp.org/youngwriters/)



### *A note from the Office of Transportation...*

#### **Parent's Responsibility for Child's Walking Routes to School Bus Stops**

- Parents are responsible for selecting their children's walking routes to and from the bus stop.
- Parents are responsible for providing supervision that is appropriate to the student's age, the student's maturity, and conditions on the route.
- FCPS Transportation Staff provides general safety information to school communities, and responds to requests for specific information, and advice when practicable.
- FCPS Transportation Staff does not assess all possible walking routes, supervise those routes, or guarantee the safety of any particular route.
- Staff assesses routes for unusual hazards when walkers, parents, or others bring concerns to their attention.



# Kindergarten 2011-2012

**WILL YOUR CHILD BE 5 YEARS OLD BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2011?**

If you answered yes, it is time to register your child for Kindergarten at Great Falls Elementary.

## 2011-2012 KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION

Parents and children eligible for 2011-12 kindergarten are invited to an overview of the school's kindergarten program on **Wednesday, April 6, 2011, 9:15-10:15 a.m. in our school cafeteria.**



Rising Kindergarten students will meet our kindergarten teachers in the classroom for a special welcome and activities. Parents will meet with in the cafeteria to receive information about required immunizations, physical examinations and health forms from the public health nurse. Classroom teachers will also present information on the kindergarten curriculum and the daily schedule.

This is an excellent opportunity for parents unsure of whether or not their child is ready for kindergarten to come, listen, and make an informed decision.

Registration packets are available online, [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu). Click on the 'Forms' link, then select the 'New Students Enrolling' option under Bundled Forms for Parents. Registration materials will also be available in the school's main office.

To register a student in Fairfax County Public Schools, parents must provide:

- Proof of residency (original Deed, contract, copies not accepted)
- Proof of birth/citizenship (must be original birth certificate, copies will not be accepted)
- Health Documentation (All requirements are noted on the FCPS Registration Requirement Form)
- Completed Home Language Survey.

Parents who bring completed registration materials may register their child directly after the Kindergarten Orientation. The Physical/Immunization Form may be turned in at a later date.

*Plan ahead* - A completed physical and all required immunizations must be received before your child may start school. March and April are good months for obtaining a child's physical examination. Remember to keep a copy of the physical for your future personal use, such as summer camps, and save a phone call to your doctor.

## SURVEY OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

A Survey of Preschool Children will be sent home in your child's March 1st Tuesday Packet. Children who will reach their fifth birthday on or before September 30, 2011 must be enrolled in kindergarten for the 2011-2012 school year, unless the parent or guardian notifies the school in writing that they do not wish the child to attend school until the following year.

It is not necessary to return this survey unless you have a preschooler ready for kindergarten. If you have a child who is eligible to attend kindergarten in the 2011-12 school year, please complete this survey and return it to school by March 31, 2011. **This survey is not a kindergarten registration. You will still need to complete the proper registration forms to enroll your child.** Registration packets are available in the school office, on the FCPS website: [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu) or at the Kindergarten Parent Orientation on April 6, 2011.

Please help us spread the word to neighbors and friends who have preschool children, and live within the Great Falls Elementary School Boundaries.



# The Roadrunner Express

Great Falls Elementary PTA

[www.gfepta.org](http://www.gfepta.org)

February 2011

## President's Corner

Happy February everyone!! We are officially past the half-year mark and still have so much more to do! February and March are filled with fun and exciting family events. Please join the Road Runner on the slopes at White Tail Ski Resort, this coming Tuesday. He and the Colvin Run Dragon will be dueling it out! Please find the voucher below that will allow for special group pricing. Information is also on our web page.

On February 10<sup>th</sup> at 9am we will have our General PTA Meeting. We are honored to welcome guest speaker, Jane Strauss, our cluster's school board representative. Janie will present us with the most up to date happenings in our school system. She will be available for questions and discussion. Then it's BINGO and Bake Sale on Friday the 11<sup>th</sup>. Please refer to the PTA Calendar on the website for more events and special announcements.

Since we have officially passed the half-way point of the school year and it's time to start thinking about next years PTA Organization. Available positions include:

- President-elect: Acts as an aide to the President and performs the duties of the President in their absence.
- Vice President (2-3): Acts as liaison between committee chairs and executive board. Attends monthly Board Meetings
- Treasurer-elect: Aides the treasurer in keeping a full and accurate account of receipts and expenditures, makes disbursements in accordance with the adopted budget, and presents a financial statement at meetings.
- Secretary: Maintains meeting minutes and by-laws
- Membership Director: Maintains PTA membership and produces membership directory.

There will also be several committee chair openings. If you are unsure of what position is right for you, or need any information on any of the positions, please feel free to contact any of our current PTA Board members. Their information is on the PTA website [www.gfepta.org](http://www.gfepta.org)

There is no time like the present to get involved in your child's school and there is no better way to get to know what is going on at Great Falls and make friends than by being active in the PTA. Send your nominations to our nominating chair Mary Kate Moran at [marykmoran@aol.com](mailto:marykmoran@aol.com).

Many thanks to all of you, as always, for everything you do!!!

Karen Collazo  
PTA President, Great Falls ES

## SAVE THE DATE. BOOK YOUR SITTER!

Dust off that golf attire

### Caddyshack at Riverbend

You are invited to our Annual Night Out Fundraiser!

Friday May 6<sup>th</sup>

Riverbend Golf and County Club

**Music, Dancing, Live and Silent Auction, Light Fare, Cash Bar**

**Every Dollar Raised Directly Benefits our Children!!!**

*P.S. Dads, there will be lots of Mother's Day items!*



Great Falls Day at Whitetail Ski Resort!

Tuesday, February 1, 2011

Please print this voucher and present at Group Sales.

Slopes open at 8:30 am, Snow Tubing (time tbd)

Voucher is good per family or group of friends and must be presented for discount.



# DON'T MISS GFES **Be Mine Bingo/Bake Sale**

February 11, 2011  
6:00 PM TO 9:00 PM, School Cafeteria

Dinner is available from Monaco Wood Fired Pizza.  
Your choice of sandwich; roast beef/cheese, ham/cheese, or turkey/cheese, a bag of chips and 16oz water bottle **or** Large Garden Salad, roll, 16oz water bottle each for \$7.00.

\*\*\* Bingo is \$1.00 a round or 6 for \$5.00 \*\*\*



PLEASE return this form to box in main office, along with payment to GFES PTA, "bingo" in memo section.

Attn: Connie Colabatistto

PLAYERS NAME	DINNER (Please specify type sandwich or salad)	DINNER TOTAL	Bingo (6 rounds for \$5.00)	TOTAL
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT</b>				

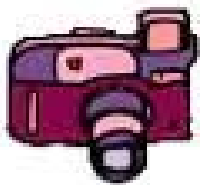
**PARENT PERMISSION:**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PRINT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

**COME TO MAIN LOBBY CHECK IN TABLE TO OBTAIN BINGO CARDS AND DINNER.**



Get your pictures in the yearbook! The Yearbook Staff invites students and parents to submit photos for the yearbook. If you've got great photos of school/PTA events, we'd like to see them. Our photographers can't be everywhere. Help us get as many photos as possible to create a terrific book everyone will want to have.

Here is how you can submit photos online:

• Go to: <https://images.schoolannualonline.com/login>

- If it does not automatically log you into the site, enter username: 400054386 and password: GFES
- Browse to select the photo(s) you wish to upload.
- Enter information about the photo and provide contact information in case the staff needs additional information.
- Click "Save Details".

It's that easy! Submit your photos today! The last day to submit photos is 02/28/2011.



*from* **Art Enrichment**

Look out for this month's tiny treasures – little paintings made with Q-tips in the impressionistic style of Monet.

You can always see some of Monet's most famous works in the permanent collection at the West Building of the National Gallery of Art.

**Great Backyard Bird Count - February 18-21**

Be a "citizen scientist" in the National Audubon Society's Great Backyard Bird Count, a national program in which kids and adults count birds in their backyards. For details, go to [www.birdsource.org/gbbc/](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/). The bird count is part of Great Falls Studios' Campaign to Elect a Great Falls Bird, which will include an election right here at GFES later on this spring! For details on the election, go to [www.GreatFallsStudios.com](http://www.GreatFallsStudios.com).



Fun at Claude Moore!  
GFES Swimming and Rock Climbing Night a Fun  
Night for all!



### All Hands on Deck -- Volunteers Needed!

We are mid-way through the school year and our PTA has many fantastic activities planned for our students and families. We are in need of lots of volunteers to ensure that these events are successful and safe. Please consider helping with one or more of the activities below:

**After School Activities** -- Kickoff for the new session is Monday, February 7 and we need two adults each day after school (Monday - Thursday) to help guide students to their after school programs. Total time needed - approximately 15 minutes after school.

**Bingo Night, February 11** -- Bingo Night is back by popular demand! Volunteers needed for check in, bingo card sales, bake sale and dinner distribution. Please see the specific shifts below:

- Bake sale table -- 5-7 pm and 7-9 pm
- Check in table -- 5:30 - 7 pm and 7-8:45 pm
- Dinner table -- 5:30 - 7 pm

\*Please bake and/or bring an item for the bake sale (popcorn, cookies, brownies, pretzels, treats, etc). Please individually wrap (zip lock bags) small items, and group them in 2 or 3 per bag. Individually prepackage grocery items are acceptable for those who do not want to cook. Drop off at school cafeteria by 5:30 on 2/11  
Bake Sale contact is Connie Colabatistto [conniecola@msn.com](mailto:conniecola@msn.com)

**Fun Fair, March 6** -- Fun Fair has returned and the kids can't wait! Volunteers needed for set up, running carnival games, cupcake walk, check-in table, concessions, auction and clean up. The Fun Fair is from 1-3 pm on Sunday, March 6th. We need set up help from 10 am -12 pm and then need one hour shifts for all other on-site events from 1-2 pm and 2-3 pm. Please consider spending a little time helping us keep this large event running smoothly.

**Talent Show, April 29--** Always a school favorite, we will need lots of helping hands for the Spring Talent Show. Notices will go out closer to the event for specific needs, but right now, Karen McPhail could use one or two people to help her in the preparations. This is a perfect opportunity for parents who may want to co-chair the talent show in coming years to get hands-on experience.

If you can volunteer for any of these spots, please contact Rebecah Shepherd at [rshepherd67@cox.net](mailto:rshepherd67@cox.net).



**WHEN: Sunday, March 6, 2011**  
**WHERE: 1 PM to 3 PM**  
**LOCATION: GFES**

Don't miss out on an afternoon of CLASS ANDTEACHER AUCTIONS, vendors, fun foods, games, amusements, music, prizes and more!

Come join in the fun and support our school in getting an improved playground and better technology in the classrooms!!!!

#### New Addition to the Fun Fair this Year: A Vendor Fair!

The Fun Fair returns this school year on Sunday, March 6th from 1:00-3:00. New to the Fair this year is a Vendor Fair! Do you own a business that you'd like to market at this event? If so, we'd love to have you! Space is limited, only a limited number of tables will be sold. The participation fee is \$50 a table, along with a very small portion of any sales, to be donated to GFES. The funds will be used as a much appreciated fundraiser for our school. The Fun Fair is always a highly attended event, with approximately half of the school's families attending. What a great and easy way to get the word out about your business to approximately 300 families. If you are interested, please contact Shannon Fox at [shannonfox@verizon.net](mailto:shannonfox@verizon.net) or 703.328.6562 for further details. Thank you for your support of our school!