



The Panther Paws

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 3

NOVEMBER 2010

Poplar Tree Elementary

13440 Melville Lane

Chantilly, VA 20151

703.633.7400 Office

703.633.7474 Attendance

703.633.7497 FAX



Sharon S. Williams, Principal

Hallie M. Dillon, Asst. Principal

Arian Hadley, PTA President

Kathy Dennis and Betsy Pettis, Co-Publishers

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Counselors' Caregram 2-3

School Notes 4 - 7

PTA President's Message 9

PTA Tidbits 10-12

FEATURED:

Principal's Message ~ Words of Williams



Autumn Greetings

Autumn greetings, whisper nigh,
 Welcome leaves,
 Of many hues,
 Swaying briskly in the wind,
 As they frame the autumn sky,
 Welcome days of much delight,
 Gracing evening's amber moonlight.
 Now, silhouettes of leafless trees,
 Dancing in the gloaming
 of an autumn night,
 Welcome sounds of peace—be still,
 Welcome **thanks** of bountiful **giving**.

~SSWilliams07

The holiday season is upon us! A special thank you to everyone for taking the time to make wonderful home-school connections during your Parent/Teacher conferences. I am certain you were able to glean a lot about your child's academic goals and the great teaching and learning discoveries that take place each day in the classroom and at Poplar Tree. An active partnership among our school community is an essential building block towards exceptional student achievement. Thus, having an ongoing collaborative dialogue with your child's teacher throughout the school year will help support this belief and ensure that indeed we are "Learning Together and Achieving Together..."

~Sharon S. Williams



Calendar of Events!

November 9	PTA Meeting	7:00pm	Cafeteria
November 11	Veteran's Day Assembly	9:30am	Gym
November 12	PTA Family Fun Night!		
November 18	Annual Thanksgiving Lunch		Cafeteria
November 24	Two-Hour Early Dismissal!		
November 25-26	Thanksgiving Holiday!		

Counselors' CAREGRAM by Mrs. Hoffman and Mrs. Hirsch

School Attendance, Absences and Tardies

Research has shown that there is a strong correlation between successful school performance and attendance at school. School engagement is everyone's responsibility. Parents have a responsibility to encourage, support and help children learn effectively, while the students have a responsibility to be active participants and to develop responsible behavior. The school staff also has a responsibility to address ways to intervene and help students who experience difficulty engaging in education.

Student absences and tardies are recorded as excused or unexcused each day. Please refer to the student handbook for the explanation of what defines an excused and unexcused absence. Tardies to school can also cause an impact on school performance. All students should be here at Poplar Tree no later than 8:40 a.m. Students are not counted as tardy if they are late due to a bus delay. We want students to be fully engaged in their school work and that starts with being here, on time and actively participating in all of the day's events. For more information on school attendance, check the FCPS website at: <http://www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/ssaw/attendance/> If you have any questions or concerns, please contact either of the school counselors, Shari Hirsch or Carol Hoffman.

Carol Hoffman
Grades K/1/3/5

Shari Hirsch
Grades 2/4/6

Parent Resources

We often have parents asking us for specific information on a variety of subjects. While we can provide that, there is already a wealth of information available right at your finger tips (or keystrokes) on the FCPS website for parents. Here are some examples:

Bully Prevention/Good Mental Health: <http://www.fcps.edu/news/bullyprevention/index.htm>
Internet Safety: http://fcpsnet.fcps.edu/it/offices/ito/nss/data_security/documents/InternetSafetyBrochure_r1.pdf

Upcoming Parenting programs:

Asperger's Syndrome & High Functioning Autism: Strategies for Improving Communication
Learn strategies to help your child improve communication at home and in school on Tuesday, November 9, 2010, from 10:00 a.m. - noon at Burke Centre Library. Techniques to improve social skills and help prevent bullying will also be addressed. <http://www.fcps.edu/cco/prc/documents/StrategiesforCommunication.pdf>

Positive Behavior Strategies: Tips for Parents The workshop will be held from 7:30 - 8:30 p.m. November 10th, Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, For more information <http://www.fcps.edu/cco/prc/documents/PositiveBehaviorLateNightflyer.pdf>

The ABCs of Good Behavior, Do you need help addressing challenging behaviors? This workshop will focus on strategies to help parents reduce challenging behaviors in early childhood. Explore your child's most challenging behaviors at home and learn practical strategies that can be used immediately. The workshop will be held on November 18, 2010 from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at Cardinal Forest Elementary School. Childcare will be provided. <http://www.fcps.edu/cco/prc/documents/FlierforNovember18.pdf>

For a complete list of all upcoming workshops and activities go to the PRC web site <http://www.fcps.edu/cco/prc/workshops.htm>

Just Say No Club

Our Just Say No club kicked off the school year with a great Red Ribbon Week for all the students at Poplar Tree. While everyone had a lot of fun with the various "spirit" days, we also hope the students received a strong message of choosing healthy and safe choices in their lives. Our next Just Say No Club meeting will be Wednesday, November 17, 2010 from 3:30 - 4:30. We appreciate all the parents being on time to pick up promptly at 4:30 p.m.

Panther P.E. Playbook



November will be a fun month in PE. We hope to be outside for grades 3 thru 6 playing lacrosse. Make sure you bring a sweatshirt or jacket. We will learn the basics of lacrosse including the cradle and the proper form of the lacrosse throw. Students will get to play in our lead up game called Zone Lacrosse. They will be evaluated at the end of the unit for their cradle and their throw.

Grades Kindergarten thru 2nd will be in an Implement Unit. We will be working with paddles and scoops. They will learn to play a fun game called Scoop Ball. Skills taught during this unit will be volleying a balloon with a paddle to a partner, scooping a ball from the floor and throwing it and bouncing a ball with a paddle. The kids always enjoy this unit.

The end of the month will feature our big event the Turkey Bowl. This annual tradition is a fun game where students will play a great game and celebrate Thanksgiving down in the gym. As always we will start each class with jogging and a fitness warm up.



TECH TIME with THIMONS

Our Computer Lab here at Poplar Tree has taken on a completely new look this school year. The lab has gone mobile. Our computer lab will now be rolling into the class instead of students travelling to the lab. Our 30 laptop computers have placed in a new computer cart allowing our students to utilize the computers in the classroom while still having access to classroom resources. We have also installed a new program on all of our laptops called Smart Sync. This program allows teachers to control all lab computers from a single teacher station. The can open programs on all the computers at once. Send a file to the computers for students to use, broadcast a video on all student screens, as well as open up a website on each student station. In addition to these functions teachers are able to monitor what each student is doing at any time helping keep the class on task. A few of our teachers have used this program and seen its usefulness already.





Brush Strokes —

Art News by: Mr. Watts and Mr. Clark

PAGE 5

I cannot believe first quarter is over. Second quarter launches us into new creations and possibilities.

Sixth graders completed their contour shoe drawings. They used black felt tip pens and colored pencils. The background was filled in with textures. Colored pencils shading on the shoe made the composition pop. All sixth grade students this year will complete a painting assessment. My classes have completed one of three assessment sessions.

Fourth grade completed working on their figure drawing. Their final art project involved two figures in an action pose. Drawing the human figure is always a challenge. I feel like we accomplished a lot. They started a Virginia region landscape painting. We learned how to create depth in a painting by using vanishing points, ground lines and overlapping.

Third graders are in the middle of a stitchery project. Each student is designing a compass rose. This integrates with classroom mapping skills. Be on the lookout—this project will be completed as art homework.

Second graders were introduced to Grant Wood's landscape paintings. They completed a fall landscape painting with a lot of details. We are in the middle of a paper weaving project.

Kindergarten classes continued working with shapes. We designed and built our own playground and learned about quilts and patterns. Each student created a paper quilt square for their class quilt.



News from the Library

Book Fair



The book fair is here! Students began browsing today. We've got some great books this year. Please stop by when you are in the building. There is a change in our usual routine for the book fair this year. Our community sales night will be Monday, November 8 instead of our usual Tuesday night. We will be open from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. on Monday night. Bring your children and your neighbors and find some new books for the long winter. The schedule for shopping at the book fair is listed below.

November 8-11, 2010

Purchasing Times!

Mon. Nov. 8: 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Tues. Nov. 9: 9:00 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

Wed. Nov. 10: 9:00 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

Thurs. Nov. 11: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.



SCA Officers 2010-2011
(Left to Right)

***Julia Brunner-Historian, Megan Meyers-Vice President, Caroline Barnes -President,
Lexi Rickard -Treasurer, Steven Risi -Secretary***



"ON BEAT"



Music is alive at Poplar Tree! On Thursday, October 21, fifty Poplar Tree 6th graders attended and participated in the 5th Annual Chantilly Choral Pyramid Concert. We are so proud of our students that participated in this wonderful event.

Sixth Grade Students will be participating in two County-Wide 6th Grade Music Authentic Assessments this school year. Poplar Tree will have the first assessment during music class during the week of November 15. The second assessment will take place in the Spring. The assessments were designed to measure the program effectiveness of our Music Program of Studies by the degree of student achievement on authentic assessments. The information gathered from these assessments will NOT be used to report individual achievement in the arts, nor will they be used to determine future placement in middle school and high school elective programs. Instead, it will be used to make instructional decisions regarding the Elementary Music Program of Studies and professional development decisions. The assessments have been created using the current FCPS staff from Instructional Services, pilot teachers, and assessment specialists at George Mason University. In these assessments, students will be asked to respond to real-life problems and situations with cumulative music knowledge gained in grades K-6.

Fifth Grade Chorus is diligently rehearsing in preparation for their Winter Concert, "December 'Round the World" on Wednesday, December 15th at 7:00 in the cafeteria.

On Wednesday, November 11, all Poplar Tree students will participate in the school-wide Veterans Day Assembly. All kindergarten through sixth grade students will sing a military medley to include the Army, Navy, Marine, Coast Guard and Air Force songs in addition to "The Star Spangled Banner" and our school song, "Rockin' Panthers."

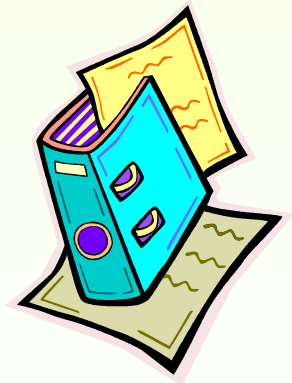
November Song-of-the-Month: "Over the River and Through the Wood"
By: Mr. Ring, Mrs. Noble, and Ms. Pramstaller - General Music Teachers



Pictures from the 5th Annual Chantilly Choral Pyramid Concert – October 21, 2010

Literacy Link

Thank you to the wonderful volunteers who have helped get the Reading Room inventory completed. We are more than halfway done!!! I certainly appreciate all the help. With that said, there is a new procedure regarding parent check-out of books. Should you be in need of books on your child's reading level to be used at home, please email me (JLMajkowski@fcps.edu) to schedule a time to learn the new check out system. Parents will be asked to pull from a particular selection of books. I appreciate your willingness to use the new system. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.



PTA President's Message



Thank you to everyone who donated to our No-Fuss fall fundraiser this year. Your generosity provides the PTA with the resources we need to support the students, staff and families of Poplar Tree.

I want to draw your attention to several events coming up in the next month. You can find more information on these events in this newsletter and in Friday folder flyers.

Family Bingo Night is scheduled for Friday, November 12th at 6:30pm. Come join us for pizza, prizes and the thrill of yelling “BINGO!” Tickets must be purchased in advance.

Poplar Tree is one of only five elementary schools chosen to pilot the new **GLOBAL afterschool Spanish language program**. Open to students in grades K-6 and designed for all levels of Spanish speakers, this new program is aligned to class curricula and SOL standards and is more comprehensive than the FLEX program we have been offering. Classes will start in February. **A Parent Information session will be held on November 30th at 7pm in the cafeteria and registration for the classes will start that night.**

Winterfest is coming!!! On December 4th, come on down to Poplar Tree for Winterfest – a fabulous family event that includes the opportunity to get some holiday shopping done. There will be a Lego challenge, chili cook-off, crafters, live music, door prizes and the **Silent Auction**. This year’s auction will be bigger and better than ever and will include online bidding! The committee has been working hard to make this a super family event. We look forward to seeing you there!

I encourage you to visit <http://www.fcps.edu/fts/planning/southwesternstudy/index.htm> for more information on the southwestern boundary study. Two of the options presented by the school system would change Poplar Tree’s boundaries and move students from Poplar Tree to other schools. The school system will be publicizing revised boundary plans and sending out a community survey in mid-November.

Our next PTA meeting is November 9th at 7pm in the cafeteria. We’d love to see you there! As always, feel free to contact me with any comments and ideas.

Happy Thanksgiving to everyone!

Arian Hadley

Arian Hadley
 PTA President
hadley@mindspring.com
 703-817-0296



It's a Wrap!

The No Fuss Fundraiser has come to an end. Thank you to all the families that helped to make it a success. At our final tally, the PTA raised \$12,380.00 that will all go directly towards helping the students and teachers make Poplar Tree great. We were thrilled to see so many people enthusiastic about this easy, painless way to raise funds for our school. A special thanks to those families that tried the new Pay4SchoolStuffOnLine.com website. It has been a great success and we will continue to give you on line payment options for other PTA activities.

Save the Date

Language Learning at Poplar Tree Elementary K-6
Parent Information Night



November 30th, 2010 at 7:00PM in the cafeteria

Global Language Opportunity Benefitting All Learners (GLOBAL) is an approach to language learning that allows students to develop basic communicative skills in a language.

Why choose this program?

- ◆ Instruction reinforces grade level Standards of Learning (SOL) objectives while teaching Spanish.
- ◆ Curriculum is aligned with the Foreign Language in Elementary School (FLES) program that is taught during the school day.
- ◆ Teachers are employed by Fairfax County Public Schools and are trained specifically for the Global Program and FCPS Best Practices in Teaching and Learning.

After school classes will begin in February 2011.

Look out for more information in the coming weeks.....



WINTERFEST!!!

Watch for Winterfest News – Coming Soon!

The new home of Poplar Tree's popular annual silent auction is Winterfest. Join us on Saturday, December 4; along with the annual Lego Challenge and Chili Cookoff, door prizes and live entertainment. New at the auction this year will be the opportunity to bid online! More information will be available soon in your child's backpack. Don't miss out on a fabulous opportunity to find a great deal on a holiday gift! If you are interested in helping with or donating to this project, please contact Elizabeth Zielinski at ezielinski@cox.net



Are you a Room Parent or Interested in Volunteering?

Room Parent/Volunteer Orientation is on
November 4th at 7pm in the SACC Room.

Mark you calendar and find out how you can help your child's class and
Poplar Tree!



COME ONE, COME ALL TO THE POPLAR TREE PTA

Family Fun Night!



FRIDAY, NOV. 12TH IN THE CAFETERIA
6:30 pm - Registration Begins
7:00 pm - Pizza & Sodas Served!
7:30 pm - Bingo Begins

*Tickets are \$3/person and includes 5 games of Bingo, 1 can of soda and snacks.
Pizza is \$2/slice and must be pre-ordered below.
Registration is limited to 320 people due to space considerations.*

Don't miss it! Please buy tickets for ALL persons attending Family Fun Night to ensure seating. NO tickets will be sold at the door. This event does sell out!

Questions? Call Jen Brunner (703) 378-2276 or Lori Barnes (703) 815-5854.

Family Fun Night Registration

Please fill out and return to school as soon as possible.

Make checks payable to Poplar Tree PTA. Thank you.

Students' Name _____ Teacher _____

Number of People _____ @ \$3.00 each = \$ _____

Slices Cheese Pizza _____ @ \$2.00 each = \$ _____

Slices Pepperoni Pizza _____ @ \$2.00 each = \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____