



THE panther paws

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 2

OCTOBER 2010

Poplar Tree Elementary

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Sharon S. Williams, Principal

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## FEATURED:

PTA REFLECTIONS CONTEST 11

PTA Family BINGO Night 13

## Principal's Message ~ Words of Williams



### Autumn Charm

*I saw a leaf with glimmering hue,  
 Drifting all around,  
 It flew with ease against the wind,  
 And nestled to the ground,  
 I sniffed a leaf with scents of fall,  
 That lingered in the air,  
 It reached above the ruffled leaves,  
 to feel the sun's warm glare,  
 I heard a leaf,  
 Sing a lullaby,  
 A precious nature song,  
 It left a note that summer is gone and  
 Autumn has brought its charm.*

SSWilliams'03

Fall is indeed upon us. As I reflect back to the first day of school, as the children's minds approached the doors of learning, we can definitely say that their minds are at work. We are now entering the season of 'thanks' and 'giving'. We would like to thank everyone for two wonderful Back-to-School Nights. We enjoyed meeting and talking with you. As we move along to another great year, please continue to give thanks to the teachers who strive to make a positive difference in the lives of our children. Please continue to give thanks to our children for doing their best each and every day. We will continue to give thanks to you for helping to build a community that embraces the educational artistry of a school fully committed to meeting the diverse needs of our students...TOGETHER. *Autumn Charm* is here...reflect on the warmth of the colors and the subtleness of the season.

Sharon S. Williams  
Principal

Hallie M. Dillon  
Assistant Principal



## Calendar of Events!

|            |                                                                          |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| October 8  | First Quarter INTERIMS go home!                                          |
| October 11 | Columbus Day Holiday—NO SCHOOL!                                          |
| October 12 | Sixth Grade Field Trip, Hemlock Park<br>PTA Meeting, 7:00pm, LA Room     |
| October 21 | Picture Day :)<br>Chantilly Pyramid Choral Concert, Chantilly HS, 7:00pm |

# Counselors' CAREGRAM by Mrs. Hoffman and Mrs. Hirsch

The school year is off and running!

Students and teachers are settling into their routines. Our first guidance lessons are part of the Students Responsibilities & Rights on bullying. We remind students what bullying behaviors are and more importantly, what each student can do to respond. Students were reminded that there are three important people in any bullying situation—the “bully,” the bystander and the victim. Students began to learn and practice how each of those people can help to make Poplar Tree a safe place to learn and grow. Older grade levels also began to learn about the concept of relational aggression.

For more information on bullying behaviors and what to do as a parent, try these websites:

[www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)

<http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org/>

[www.relationalaggression.com](http://www.relationalaggression.com)

## **Parent Resources:**

**Free tutoring** is available through the Saturday morning tutoring programs, **STEP**, at Chantilly High School, and **BITS**, at Westfield High School. These programs are for grades 3 – 12. They occur three Saturdays a month and are free, but do require a commitment to attend on a regular basis. For more information, contact either Mrs. Hirsch or Mrs. Hoffman.

**Parenting programs** are available through Fairfax School's Family and School Partnerships. For information on these, check out this website: <http://www.fcps.edu/cco/fam/classes.htm> Other parenting tips can be found at Strategies for School Success: <http://www.fcps.edu/cco/fam/ptips.htm>

**Carol Hoffman**  
Grades K/1/3/5

**Shari Hirsch**  
Grades 2/4/6

## **Just Say No Club Information**

All students in grades 4 – 6 are invited to join our after school “Just Say No” club. The focus of the club is to teach students positive alternatives to using alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Our first meeting will be Wednesday, October 20th. Information and an application have gone home with all 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade students. Copies are available in the office. Those who are interested in joining must complete the application along with parent permission. Forms must be returned by Friday, October 15<sup>th</sup> in order to attend the first meeting. Students must have arrangements made for pick up at 4:30 p.m.

Parents, we will need your help too with providing healthy snacks and juice for our meetings. Also an additional adult/parent volunteer each month helps us as well. Information on volunteering is on the application. For more information, please contact Carol Hoffman at [carol.hoffman@fcps.edu](mailto:carol.hoffman@fcps.edu).

# Panther P.E. Playbook



October is a fun month in the gym and on the field. We love this Fall weather. We want to get outside all we can in the cool, crisp air. Grades 3-6 will be playing Carolina Football which is a modified version of Football. In this game everyone who catches the ball becomes the new passer. It is a mix of ultimate Frisbee, team handball, and football. Grading will be done on the 5 components of a good overhand throw: Side Orientation, throwing arm up and back, rotate at hips, step with opposite foot and follow through.

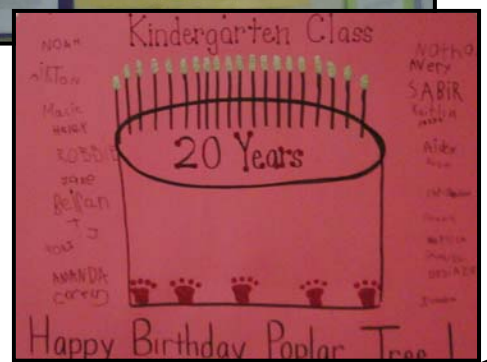


Grades K thru 2 will be working on overhand throws as well. We call their skill the "ScareCrow Throw". Have them demonstrate it sometime at home. We will play lots of fun games using the scarecrow throw: Clean your Room, Ghostbusters and more.

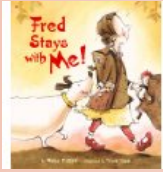
All students will run the Pacer Run in late October. This will help us assess their Effort grades. Last but not least is the kids' favorite Halloween Obstacle Course! Always a treat!



Happy 20th Birthday, Poplar Tree!



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**Poplar Tree Fall Book Fair  
November 4-12, 2010**



**The Book Fair is coming!**

The Fall Book Fair will be here soon. We are in need of parent volunteers to work different shifts during the book fair. Please fill out the section below and send it into the library with your child if you can volunteer or call the library office to let us know. (703) 633-7411 or 7412. Jill Maison is the book fair coordinator for the fall. She will contact you to see what time you are available to work after you send this sheet back to the library.

Thanks!

**Cindi Uncles, Librarian & Tracy McMillan, Library Assistant**

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Volunteers are needed at the following times:

Set up on Thurs., Nov. at 9:00 a.m. \_\_\_\_\_

Take down on Friday, Nov. 12 at 12:00 p.m.

Friday, November 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Monday, November 8 \_\_\_\_\_

Monday Evening Sales \_\_\_\_\_ (6:45-9:00 p.m.)

Tuesday, November 9 \_\_\_\_\_

Wednesday, November 10 \_\_\_\_\_

Thursday, November 11 \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the dates you are available above and fill in the information below. Return it to the library. Thanks!

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Child's Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)



## *Brush Strokes —*

**Art News by: Mr. Watts and Mr. Clark**

We are off to a great new year. This year in art I will be teaching kindergarten, second, third, fourth, sixth and some special needs classes. Mr. Clark will be working with the first and fifth grade classes and a few special needs classes. My kindergarten classes have been learning about the important role shapes play in creating art. We created a self portrait out of recycled objects, then our creation was photographed. Second grade is learning about overlapping as we work with construction paper on a “Me and my Friend composition”. Third grade completed their planning matrix before starting their paintings. Drawing people in action poses is a lot easier using wooden twelve inch mannequins. I think most fifth grades will agree. Sixth grade is working on contour drawing with texture using their shoes and colored pencils.



## TECH TIME with THIMONS

The school year is off to a great start and the students at Poplar Tree Elementary School are getting connected with technology. This month students in kindergarten will be focusing on improving their math skills while learning about Pixie, an interactive drawing program that allows students to create visuals to help them learn. Students in grades 1 – 4 will be starting a year-long learning process in which they will be building skills to help them create a technology/curriculum product. First grade will be working to create and publish a digital book. Second Grade will be working toward creating a book of knowledge related to habitats. Third graders will be working toward creating a class encyclopedia outlining the ancient civilizations they learn about in social studies. Our fourth grade students will be publishing websites related to the science units covered this year. Fifth grade students will spend the year developing the skills that will help them create their global awareness projects at the end of the year. Our students are soaring through the use of technology this year at Poplar Tree.





# "ON BEAT"



Poplar Tree Sixth Grade Students will sing at the Annual Chantilly Choral Pyramid Concert on **Thursday, October 21 at 7:00 pm** in the Chantilly gymnasium. The concert is free and open to the public. It is an exciting event that includes choirs from the elementary and middle schools that feed into Chantilly High School.

The Chantilly Pyramid is well known for its outstanding music programs in its schools. It is one of the few school pyramids in Fairfax County to offer this experience for its students. Our sixth graders will perform along with Brookfield ES, Greenbriar West ES, Greenbriar East ES, Oak Hill ES, Lees Corner ES, Rocky Run MS, Franklin MS, and Chantilly HS. This concert is a wonderful opportunity for our students to see the Middle School and High School choirs that will be available to them in future years.

Fifth Grade Chorus rehearsals will begin Wednesday, October 6 and will meet once a week during their teacher's planning time. They will perform their Winter Concert titled "December Round the World" on **Wednesday, December 15 at 7:00** in the cafeteria. Please reserve that date on your family calendars.

We are looking for donations of concert clothing for chorus. If your children have outgrown any white blouses or white collared shirts and any black skirts or pants that would fit this age group, please send them in to Mr. Ring or Mrs. Noble.

The music program of studies requires students in grades 3-6 to receive instruction on the soprano recorder during the school year. Poplar Tree purchases soprano recorders for all third graders free of charge. Students in grades 4-6 who have lost their recorder will need to replace their recorder. Replacement recorders are available through the school at \$5.00 each.

All students will be learning the Military Medley (Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, & Air Force songs) during the month of October in preparation for the upcoming Veterans' Day assembly on **Thursday, November 11**.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that our fourth graders will be going on a music field trip to the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. to hear the National Symphony Orchestra on **Thursday, October 21**. The title of the concert is "Beethoven."

**Mr. Ring, Mrs. Noble & Ms. Pramstaller**  
**Poplar Tree Music Teachers**

# Literacy Link

## “Why Can't I Skip My Twenty Minutes of Reading Tonight?”

Student A reads 20 minutes five nights of every week.  
Student B reads only 4 minutes a night...or not at all!

Step 1: Multiply minutes a night x 5 each week.

Student A reads 20 minutes x 5 times a week = 100 mins. a week.

Student B reads 4 minutes x 5 times a week = 20 minutes.

Step 2: Multiply minutes a week x 4 weeks each month.

Student A reads 400 minutes a month.

Student B reads 80 minutes a month.

Step 3: Multiply minutes a month x 9 months a school year.

Student A reads 3600 minutes a school year.

Student B reads 720 minutes a school year.

Student A practices reading the equivalent of ten whole school days a year.

Student B gets the equivalent of only two school days of reading practice.

By the end of 6th grade, if Student A and Student B maintain these same reading habits, Student A will have read the equivalent of 60 whole school days. Student B will have read the equivalent of only 12 days. One would expect the gap of information retained will have widened considerably and so, undoubtedly, will school performance. How do you think Student B will feel about him/herself as a student?

Which student would you expect to read better?

Which student would you expect to know more?

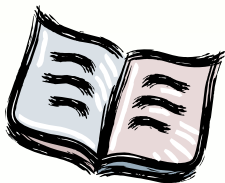
Which student would you expect to write better?

Which student would you expect to have the better vocabulary?

Which student would you expect to be more successful in school...and in life?

Which student are you?

\*Article borrowed from Mrs. Barth, 2nd grade teacher, Resurrection School, KY



# PTA President's Message



Happy October!

It was great to see so many of you at the Back to School nights. I am sure you enjoyed getting to meet your child's teacher and learning more about what he/she will be doing this year, learning about the special programs at Poplar Tree and hearing the latest PTA news.

Thank you to all the PTA volunteers who have been working hard this past month getting many programs up and running. I can't say often enough how grateful I am for the many volunteers who support the PTA's activities.

**The 'No-Fuss' Fall Fundraiser is underway.** Thank you to everyone who has donated so far. There is still time to contribute. We need help from every family to reach our goal of \$15,000. The money we raise will be spent on every child at Poplar Tree.

I want to alert you to some important community meetings coming up in October.

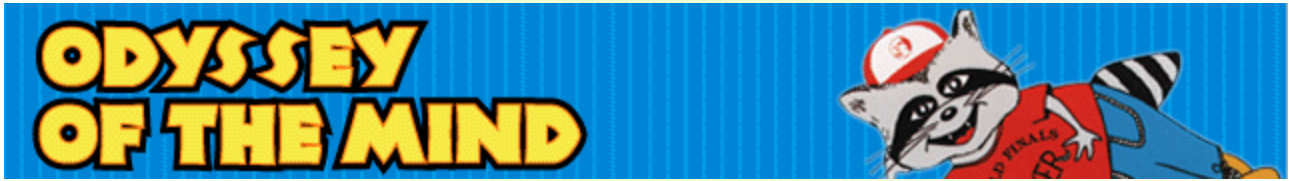
**The Southwestern Boundary Study:** Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) is starting a boundary study to reduce overcrowding at elementary schools in the Southwestern part of the county. Poplar Tree is included in this study. That means that our student population could be affected by changes to school boundaries. FCPS will have public meetings on October 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> to get community feedback on potential boundary changes. It is VERY important that we have a lot of Poplar Tree families at these meetings so that our concerns are heard. Look elsewhere in this newsletter for meeting times and locations.

**Fairfax Education Summit:** On October 16<sup>th</sup>, FCPS is having an education summit that is open to all community members. Attendees will have the opportunity to discuss and provide feedback on what FCPS needs to do to help better prepare our students to succeed in the future. This is a unique opportunity to be involved in the future of education in Fairfax County. Details about the summit are provided in this month's newsletter.

The next PTA meeting is Tuesday, October 12<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Language Arts room. Please come out and join us.

*Arian Hadley*

Arian Hadley  
PTA President  
[hadley@mindspring.com](mailto:hadley@mindspring.com)  
703-817-0296



There is an exciting program called Odyssey of the Mind, which provides an opportunity for students to solve problems creatively and perform in front of others. We are currently looking for coaches and participants for the Poplar Tree Panthers' team(s). If you are interested in coaching (provide guidance to a team and a place to meet) or have a child who would like to participate, contact: Laura Moorhead, Advanced Academic Resource Teacher, at [laura.moorhead@fcps.edu](mailto:laura.moorhead@fcps.edu). Additional information can be found at the website: [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com).

## FLEX

**FLEX registration deadline is October 1st**

*Spanish Classes beginning October 12th*

The Poplar Tree PTA, in conjunction with Fairfax County Public Schools Adult and Community Education, will offer a Foreign Language Experience (FLEX) Spanish program. The classes are held immediately after school for one hour on Tuesdays (1-3<sup>rd</sup> grade) and Thursdays (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade) for 15 weeks beginning **October 12th**, 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade and **October 14<sup>th</sup>** 4-6<sup>th</sup> grade.

Class confirmation and emergency forms will be sent in your child's backpack the week of 10/5.

If you have questions please feel free to contact Chelese McClain at [cpmclain715@yahoo.com](mailto:cpmclain715@yahoo.com) or 703.802.3044.



# **Southwestern Boundary Study**

Fairfax County Public Schools is starting a boundary study to reduce overcrowding in the elementary schools in the southwestern part of the county. **Poplar Tree is included in the study.**

Community engagement and dialog meetings for the Southwestern Boundary Study have been scheduled on October 25 and 26, 2010, at the following elementary schools from 7 to 9 p.m. in the school cafeteria:

## **Monday, October 25, 2010 - 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.**

- ♦ [Greenbriar West Elementary School](#) located at 13300 Poplar Tree Rd, Fairfax, VA 22033
- ♦ [Union Mill Elementary School](#) located at 13611 Springstone Dr, Clifton, VA 20124
- ♦ [Virginia Run Elementary School](#) located at 15450 Martins Hundred Dr, Centreville, VA 20120

## **Tuesday, October 26, 2010, - 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.**

- ♦ [Colin Powell Elementary School](#) located at 13340 Leland Road, Centreville, VA 20120
- ♦ [Fairview Elementary School](#) located at 5815 Ox Rd, Fairfax Station, VA 22039
- ♦ [Willow Springs Elementary School](#) located at 5400 Willow Springs School Rd, Fairfax, VA 22030

Go to [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu) and click on Southwestern Boundary Study for more information and to sign up to attend one of these meetings.



# Celebrate your talents



Do you express your creativity through dance, music, story or poetry?  
Do you dream of having your drawings displayed in a special exhibit?  
Do you enjoy taking photographs or videotaping your friends?

Put on your dancing shoes, grab a camera, or pick up a pen or paintbrush and create! Have fun participating in the **PTA's Reflection Program!**

Join other students as they create entries based on the 2010-2011 theme,  
**"Together we can..."**

Think about the theme. Then select a category:

- |                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Film Production     | Photography |
| Dance Choreography  | Visual Arts |
| Musical Composition | Literature  |

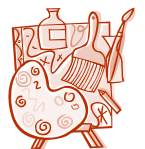


Check out what children did last year by visiting the Reflections Program Gallery online at [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

Entry Forms and Rules/Regulations can be found in the Front Office or online at [www.poplartreepta.com](http://www.poplartreepta.com) All entries receive recognition. If you have any questions, please contact the Reflections Committee Chair, Christine Klosky at 703.378.3136 or [reflections@poplartreepta.com](mailto:reflections@poplartreepta.com)

**ENTRY DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2010**

Please submit entries to the Front Office.





## What Do Our Kids Need to Succeed in the World After High School?

The Fairfax Education Summit will tackle this topic on Saturday, October 16, at Robinson Secondary School from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. Sponsored by the Fairfax County School Board, the event will feature a keynote presentation by Ken Kay, a nationally known leader in bringing 21st century skills into education and preparing every child to succeed in the new global economy.

In this lively summit, all participants--parents, teachers, principals, students, business leaders, civic leaders, PTA leaders, and college and university leaders--will be discussing how FCPS can better prepare our students for the future. <http://www.fcps.edu/news/summit.htm>



## The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Silent Auction Moves to December

Due to growing popularity, the Silent Auction has outgrown its former home as part of the Spring Carnival. Look for it as a bigger and better-than-ever Winter event to be held on Saturday, December 4; along with the annual Lego Challenge and Chili Cookoff. New at the auction this year will be the opportunity to bid online! More information will be available in next month's newsletter and via separate announcements. 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](mailto:ezielinski@cox.net).

## Staff Appreciation Custodian Appreciation Week October 25<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>

On behalf of the entire school, I would like to extend a big thank you to our Building Supervisor, Gary King and his staff Suh Suh, Hector Chumpitaz, Woon Park and Dong Son. We appreciate all you do for our school! Please make a special effort to show your appreciation by encouraging your children to write a thank you note and drop it in the "Thank You" box located in the front office during appreciation week.

The PTA will host a special dinner from California Pizza Kitchen for Mr. King and his staff during the week. ☺

In addition the entire school staff will be treated to some Halloween goodies this month. ☺

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact Charlotte Matthews at 703-378-7904 or by email to [CharRMFan@verizon.net](mailto:CharRMFan@verizon.net).

Thanks,  
Charlotte Matthews, Chairman  
and Mary Yee, Co-Chairman

Come one...Come All  
Family Fun Night ~ BINGO!  
Friday, November 12, 2010  
Poplar Tree Cafeteria



Bring your family—and your good luck—to school for BINGO  
Registration form is below.

We look forward to seeing you at another great Family Fun Night!

**6:30: Registration Begins**  
**7:00: Pizza & Sodas Served!**  
**7:30: Bingo Begins**

Tickets are \$3.00 per person – Includes 5 games of Bingo, 1 can of soda and snacks.

Pizza is \$2.00 per slice—must be pre-ordered below.

Registration is limited to 320 people due to space considerations.

Please buy tickets for ALL persons attending Family Fun Night to ensure enough seating for all participants. NO tickets will be sold at the door. Don't miss out!

Please return your money and the stub below AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ... this event sells out quickly! Make checks payable to Poplar Tree PTA. Questions? Call Jen Brunner (703)378-2276 or Lori Barnes (703-815-5854)

Family Fun Night Registration—Please fill out and return to school.

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



\$ \_\_\_\_\_