

The Waples Mill Connection

A Monthly School and PTA Newsletter

October 27, 2009

The Waples Mill Connection is online at:

www.fcps.edu/WaplesMillES/InformationforParents/PTA.htm

DATES TO REMEMBER

November's Character Trait: Resourcefulness/Problem-Solving

Oct. 26 – 30 Red Ribbon Campaign Against Drugs

Oct. 28 Wear Red Day

Oct. 29 Picture Day

Oct. 29 Hole-a-Ween Golf Tournament

Oct. 30 Annual Ice Cream Social 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Nov. 2 – 3 Student Holidays

Nov. 3 Kids against Drugs Bake Sale

**Nov. 4 Grade 1 Field Trip
E.C. Lawrence Park 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.**

**Nov. 4 PTA Reflections Reception
Cafeteria 3:00 p.m.**

**Nov. 4 – 5 Grade 5 Chesapeake Bay Trip
8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.**

**Nov. 6 Preschool Field Trip
Cox Farms 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**Nov. 10 Sally Foster Pick Up
Cafeteria 3:30 – 8:00 p.m.**

Nov. 9 – 13 Library Book Fair

**Nov. 13 Sally Foster Prize Party
Cafeteria 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.**

**Nov. 17 The Art of Inspiration Assembly
Gym, Richard Hight 1:30 p.m. & 2:30 p.m.**

**Nov. 20 Grade 4 Field Trip
Jamestown 6:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.**

Nov. 20 Kindergarten Dad's Day 11:30 a.m. & 2:45 p.m.

Nov. 24 Kindergarten & Grade 1 Thanksgiving Feast

Nov. 25 2 Hour Early Dismissal 1:55 p.m.

Nov. 26 & 27 Thanksgiving Holiday (School Closed)

On Matters of Principal

Dear Waples Mill Parents and Guardians,

Each year teachers and administrators extend our learning and planning, as we meet to analyze student achievement data, instructional practices, and staff development. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 presents us with a set of challenges to educate all children using data-driven decisions within a standards-based system. These challenges have created the explicit need for educators to work collaboratively to develop plans and adjust instructional practices to meet the academic needs of all children. As a result, every year we create a School Improvement Plan. Our school goals are written to increase student achievement, as we support the FCPS goals of academics, essential life skills, and responsibilities to the community. At Waples Mill, after meeting and analyzing data, we created two academic goals to increase achievement as measured on SOL and other county and state assessments in math and in reading. We also have an essential life skills goal to instruct and guide students to become safe, respectful, responsible, and resourceful citizens. Our final school-wide goal is to increase awareness of service-learning in supporting the community. This goal is directly linked to the FCPS goal of accepting responsibility to the community.

Our School Improvement Plan (SIP) lays the foundation for our academic focus and continually guides our instructional decisions. Since completing the plan, we have submitted it to our Cluster Office and will meet with Dr. Fabio Zuluaga, the Cluster VIII Assistant Superintendent, and Dr. Jane Dreyfuss, Cluster VIII Director, for feedback. If you would like more information about our SIP, I am always happy to talk with you and you are welcome to read through it on our school Web site at www.fcps.edu/WaplesMillES/

In a few weeks, you will have the opportunity to talk with your children's teachers and learn about the successes and strengths your child demonstrates within the classroom. November 2 and 3 are teacher workdays, and the time is set for meeting with you. Teachers have also pre-arranged conferences throughout the week to offer more options for meeting. I strongly encourage everyone to take the time to come to Waples Mill to have a conversation with teachers to understand what your children are learning and doing in class and how you can reinforce those experiences at home. The book *Beyond the Bake Sale* reveals that "Engaging families in children's learning has a positive effect on student achievement and . . . the more a program is expressly designed to improve student achievement, the more impact it will have."

Thanks for all your help as we have settled into the Kiss and Ride routine. Our lines are moving along and we appreciate your help. It will be safer for the students if you remain in your car and if they do not need to cross in front of the lines of traffic.

Please join us November 11 for our next Principal's Coffee at 9:30 a.m. in the library classroom when Kathleen Snow, our Public Health Nurse, will share health updates that pertain to our school. Kathleen is our link to Fairfax County Health Department and as the year progresses and children become ill, she helps us remain in constant contact with FCPS regarding health concerns and H1N1. The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), has produced two videos to inform parents, educators, and school nurses of steps they can take to prevent the transmission of H1N1 influenza (also known as "swine flu") and seasonal influenza. The video, "H1N1 for Parents," is available for viewing on the VDOEH1N1 influenza Web site at:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/influenza/index.shtml.

As our first quarter of the year draws to a close, I appreciate the focus that you have towards learning. Your modeling guides your child's attitudes and habits. Our children are striving to meet our FCPS achievement goal that "All students will obtain, understand, analyze, communicate, and apply knowledge and skills to achieve success in school and life." Your involvement and commitment to our school supports the volumes of research that in schools where there are high levels of parent involvement and support, student mastery of curriculum is exceptional and the level of critical thinking and problem solving excels.

Thanks again and we look forward to seeing you in our building and leading our children to be independent thinkers who "lead responsible, fulfilling and respectful lives."

~ Linda Thetford, Principal

Conservation Science Update

Scientific events continue to unfold at Waples Mill on a daily basis. Second graders recently raised 11 monarch butterflies and released them with identification tags as they headed off to the wintering grounds in Mexico. They also sent colored butterflies with Spanish messages to school children who live nearby as part of our FLES program. Google "MonarchWatch" and "Journey North" if you would like more information. Speaking of Journey North, 1st graders will soon be planting Red Emperor Tulips as part of a continent-wide program that tracks the arrival of spring via blooming flowers.

Fifth graders have been visiting Chesapeake Bay via a skipjack trip that teaches the children about watersheds and habitats as well as map reading and a bit of sailing. They also have learned about the role of oysters in keeping the Bay clean and how each individual person is responsible for helping preserve our environment.

Stuart Rock, an OHS senior and Waples Mill graduate, recently completed his Eagle Scout project, a fancy pergola bird feeder situated in the northeast corner of the schoolyard (beyond the gym). Close to 10 species are already visiting, as is a fat-cheeked chipmunk! It is apparent that winter is fast approaching, as some of the species (White-throated Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco) have just arrived from the north, literally with the first frost of the year on Monday, October 19. Thanks to the Corridon family and Corridon Electric for providing professional services in the construction of the pergola.

Anyone interested in helping create a handicap-access garden in front of the school is encouraged to contact Sean Duffy ASAP. After two years of planning for planting, pathways, stone walls, raised beds, and a host of other components, we are nearing the day when we begin actual construction. Anyone with tools to loan, especially a roto-tiller or bulb planters, is encouraged to be in touch as well.

~ Sean Duffy, Outdoor Science Coordinator

Library News

The Spring Book Fair will be held November 9 – 13. During the first two days of the Book Fair, students will browse through the library, filling out a "Wish List" to take home to discuss with their families.

Anyone who wishes to make purchases may do so either by sending cash or a check made payable to Waples Mill PTA, on the last three days of the fair, November 11 – 13.

Parents and family members are welcome to visit the book fair during school hours starting at noon on Wednesday through 2:00 p.m. Friday, November 11 – 13, and during evening hours on Wednesday, November 11 from 4:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Cash, check, or charges will be accepted. Twenty-five percent of the proceeds collected from the Book Fair will support our Waples Mill library in many ways (e.g., purchases of technology, guest authors, and/or student magazine subscriptions).

This is a great opportunity to stock up on some wonderful gifts and winter reading selections while supporting your school!

~Cathleen Payne, Librarian

Library Volunteer Opportunity

Thanks to all our fabulous parents, of all the twenty-eight time slots in the library volunteer schedule, only one slot remains open: Wednesday, 11:20 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., during "B" week. If you would like to join our ranks, enjoy the unique privilege of being able to check out library books for your own use, and lend a helping hand, please contact Brooks Moran at Brookstom87@aol.com or 703-715-0050.

Reflections—"Beauty is..."

All the entries have been submitted and it is now time to recognize the participants. We will be having a Reflections reception in the cafeteria on Wednesday, November 4 at 3:00 p.m. Cake and ice cream will be served. Every participant will be given a certificate that will be presented by Linda Thetford (our Principal) and Sue Weaver (our PTA President). We would also like to invite the families of the participants and remind you to bring your cameras. Thank you to all who participated.

~ Lisbeth Moore and Suzanne Chanesman—
Reflections Coordinators

GRACE Art

The October Artist of the Month is **Leonardo Da Vinci!** Grades K – 6 will be learning about what made Da Vinci a true Renaissance man. Look for your child's artwork on display

throughout the school over the coming month. Please check out the following books, Web sites, or galleries to learn more about this amazing artist.

Leonardo Da Vinci, Diane Stanley, FCPL JB Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo Da Vinci, First Impressions, Richard McLanathan, FCPL JB Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci for kids: His Life and Ideas, Janis Herbert, FCPL JB Leonardo

Art For Children: Leonardo da Vinci, Ernest Raboff

Leonardo da Vinci, Famous Artists, Antony Mason, FCPL J709.2 Leonardo

Leonardo da Vinci, Lives of the Artists, Antony Mason, FCPL JB Leonardo da Vinci

Web sites:

<http://www.mos.org/leonardo/>

http://www.leonardo3.net/leonardo/home_eng.htm

Visit local art:

Ginerva de' Benci, National Gallery of Art

"Da Vinci-The Genius: A Traveling Exhibit" at the Maryland Science Museum until January 31, 2010.

<http://www.mdsci.org/exhibits/davinci.html>

The next portfolio presentation meeting on Edgar Degas is Wednesday, November 4, at 7:30 p.m. in the little theater.

If you have any questions please contact Liz Litvany at liz@litvany.com.

Odyssey of the Mind

There will be a coordination meeting for parents on November 5 at 7:30 p.m. in the library classroom.

Please come to this organizational meeting if you are interested in having your child participate in Odyssey of the Mind. We will be organizing volunteer assignments and forming teams. Please contact Anne Suh at anne.suh@gmail.com or 703-938-8573 if you have any questions.

Important Information for all PTA Volunteers

The goals, code of ethics, and school rules and regulations that all PTA volunteers are expected to uphold have been updated and are accessible on the PTA Web site beneath the "Forms, Flyers and Downloads" button. This is an important piece that all volunteers, new and veteran, should review. Questions such as "Who needs a background check before volunteering?" and "When can I park in front of the school?" are answered within. Hardcopies are available in the VP Volunteers inbox in the school office. Please send any questions or comments to Brooks Moran at Brookstom87@aol.com or 703-715-0050.

Scouting for Food

Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts will be in the Vale area neighborhoods on Saturday, November 14 collecting food donations as part of Boy Scouts of America's annual Scouting for Food Good Turn Initiative. The National Capital Area

Council, BSA currently partners with Safeway, WUSA-News 9, the Capital Area Food Bank, and local food banks to provide more than 850,000 pounds of food annually to shelters, needy families, and the elderly. Through the combined efforts of Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts more than 1 million Scouting for Food collection bags will be distributed to homes across the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. These bags will be collected on Saturday, November 14. If you received a grocery bag, please place your filled bag outside your door before 9:00 a.m. and a Scout will pick it up for delivery to local food banks. Any non-perishable food items are acceptable, but please no glass containers. **Please Help the Boy Scouts to End Hunger.**

Chalk for Peace

Our Chalk4Peace photographs are in the C4P main photo gallery between Germany and the San Jose Children's Museum. It's a nice site because you can e-mail the photos to friends and family. After you view the photos, please look for the comment section at the bottom of the page. Comments are considered a vote. If WMES receives a certain amount of comments/votes, WMES will be in the finals for the global Chalk4Peace 2009 photos. This is quite an honor considering the amount of entries. Please vote!

<http://modernarf.smugmug.com/Art/CHALK4PEACE-2009>

~ Marilyn Miyamoto, Art Teacher

To submit items for *The Waples Mill Connection*, please e-mail items to Debora Flora at daflora@cox.net before 12:00 p.m. on the deadline date shown in the *Dates to Remember* box. Hard copy items, along with a contact name and telephone number, may be placed in *The Connection* In-Box in the front office before 12:00 p.m. on the deadline date. Debora Flora can be reached by telephone at 703-539-8214.

Make sure you are registered to receive important announcements from Fairfax County Public Schools through the new Keep in Touch (KIT) notification system. For further information, go to <http://www.fcps.edu/kit/>.