

November, 2011

West Hill School Newsletter



from the **PRINCIPAL**

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of West Hill School Students:

October proved to be an eventful month! I thoroughly enjoyed watching the vocabulary parade and was very impressed by the students' creativity. The turn-out for the Spirit Night was outstanding. The power outage was not!

Many questions have come up about how the district is going to make up these missed school days. The Board of Education is making the decision during the November 17th meeting. Whatever the outcome, we will make certain to share the information with you as soon as the details become available. Please make sure you continue to check the website as we provide the most current information using the West Hill website.

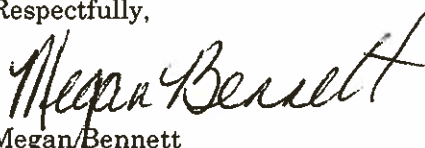
As we are moving forward, there is no change to the report card dates and upcoming conferences. Please make certain you have scheduled a conference time with your child's teacher during the December 7-9th conference window.

Mrs. Cohen will be sharing information about the PBIS model during the November PTO meeting. You are always welcome to contact the school at another scheduled time to learn about our positive behavioral support program. The staff works to promote positive behavior and addresses poor behavior appropriately. It is important your child feels safe at school. Please notify the school if you have any concerns or encourage your child to speak to an adult if a situation is making them feel unsafe at school. We are proud to have a positive environment here at West Hill. Students have earned a number of rewards thus far including: Pajama Day, extra recess, no homework and Crazy Hair Day. Their next goal is for Mismatch Day.

As we move into the holiday season, we have much to be thankful for. Our student council and school will be supporting a variety of charities. Please watch for flyers and the website for details.

I want to thank all of the parents for your support in our events and activities at West Hill School. The staff and I truly appreciate your respect of the school day and allowing them to remain focused on the students during academic time. As always I welcome any feedback so we can better serve the students of West Hill.

Respectfully,


Megan Bennett

mark your CALENDARS

- Nov. 8 No School for Students – Professional Development for Teachers
- Nov. 11 Holiday – No School
- Nov. 15 PTO Meeting – 7:00 PM
- Nov. 16 Picture Retake
- Nov. 16 ESOL Family Night - 7:00-8:00PM
- Nov. 17 Board of Education Meeting – Town Hall –7:00 PM
- Nov. 18 Grades Close- 1st marking period
- Nov. 18 Harvest Ball – 6:00-8:00 PM
- Nov. 23 Early Dismissal Day – 12:30 PM
- Nov. 23 Grade 1 Thanksgiving Program- 9:30
- Nov. 24-25 Holiday Recess – No School
- Nov. 30 Book Fair – 8:30 AM-4:00 PM
- Dec. 1 Book Fair- 8:30-4:00, 6:00-8:00 PM
- Dec. 2 Book Fair – 8:30-4:00
- Dec. 5 Report Cards go Home
- Dec. 6 Kindergarten parent/teacher conferences
- Dec. 7-9 Grades K-5 parent/teacher conferences – Early dismissal – 12:30
- Dec. 14-16 Snow Days Make up for Conferences
- Dec. 15 Board of Education Meeting – 7:00 PM
- Dec. 19 KAM Holiday Program – 9:45-10:30
- Dec. 19 KPM Holiday Program – 2:00-2:45
- Dec. 21 Select Chorus to Emeritus – 12:30
- Dec. 23 Grade 2 Holiday Program – 2:00 PM
- Dec. 26-30 Holiday Break – No School

INSIDE this issue

- News You Need to Know #2-#4
- PBIS Counts!
- Parent Corner
- Reading Corner
- Student Council
- Early Dismissal
- Curriculum Counts
- West Hill Community Happenings #5-#8
- From Our PTO President
- Thank You
- Fundraising Overview
- Community News
- Book Fair
- Help Wanted
- PTO Board and Chairpersons
- Calendars #9-#10

NEWS you need to know

PBIS counts!



West Hill came together as a family on Annual Spirit Night on October 28th!! Mingling with a crowd dressed in West Hill clothing, a roaming "yesometer" and our mascot "yestang" rallied the parents and children. They all had fun with raffles with prizes, face painting, rock climbing, cool treats and art! "We are Family" was also the Spirit Night theme for community art. Using markers on 6" squares, students, parents, and even alumnae created small portraits of family and pets! A large display like a quilt will be displayed in the school hallway.

November Parent Corner by Merle Cohen

Hello everyone! I hope everyone has sufficiently recovered from our crazy October storm and is ready for the month of November, which will hopefully be less eventful as far as the weather goes.

This month we had an evening parent program scheduled on Nov. 3rd which will be rescheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 15th. The program will discuss how to be an effective communicator with your children. Please look for a new Flyer to come home shortly.

In addition, I will be speaking at this month's PTO meeting (Nov. 15th) about "PBIS", including the philosophy and the goals of the program and how West Hill has used this model to promote a more positive school climate.

I hope to see some of you this month!

Reading Corner

Are you wondering what to buy for your child for the holidays? How about a book? Or lots of books? Children who have books in the home stay in school longer! Researchers at the University of Nevada, under the direction of sociologist Mariah Evans, concluded a twenty year study following children in twenty-seven countries. In the United States, the effect of having 500 books in the home, propels children 2.4 years further in their education. In a related study, Dr. Richard Allington, reading professor at the University of Tennessee, demonstrated that disadvantaged students who were allowed to choose and take home twelve "free" books for the summer, beat the summer "slide" when they returned to school.

It will always be thus. The more children read, the better they read. Surround them with books.

Happy Reading!

Sharon Truex

Student Council

Student Council had an active October and participated in "Make a Difference Day" at the end of the month. We had 20 Student Council students who stayed after school to work on improving our school by painting over some of our 4- Square courts, finishing the painting of the black top near the front door, and painting the handball wall out on the far playground. So, thank you to all of our Student Council Students who helped out!

We will be doing a community service project in November and will be sharing that information in Flyers, so keep your eyes open!

Mrs. Cohen and Mrs. Laing

□

Early Dismissal for November 23rd

KAM

8:25 – 9:55

KPM

11:00 – 12:30

Grades 1-5

8:25 – 12:30



CURRICULUM counts!

Kindergarten

November is flying by. We have learned about how weather can affect us. We also discovered how important electricity is to us. We are learning about conserving energy in science. The children seem to understand energy conservation much better after losing power themselves.

In Kindergarten, we will be celebrating Thanksgiving by sharing homemade butter and cornbread with the other classes. We will learn about the first Thanksgiving and talk about how Thanksgiving is now. We will talk about being thankful.

Grade 1

The first graders are continuing to have a wonderful year. This month we are talking about all the things we are thankful for. Please remember to save the date for our Thanksgiving show. Our show will be Wednesday, November 23 at 9:30. We hope to see you there!

In reading, we are reading about different themes. These include "Animal Families", "Helping Out", "Where Animals Live", "Singing and Dancing", and "Let's Laugh". We are reading many fiction and non-fiction texts that go along with these themes. Please continue to read every day with your children!

In math, we are learning about grouping and counting, and how to measure with standard and non-standard units. At home, students can practice measuring objects with rulers and other items.

Grade 2

Second graders are utilizing our Treasures reading program that contains both fiction and nonfiction text. We're using a variety of graphic organizers to help with character, setting, plot, main idea and details, and sequencing events. The words first, next, then and last help us organize our thoughts and ideas when telling a story in order.

In math, students are estimating and measuring with nonstandard and standard lengths. We'll be measuring how far a matchbox car rolls from the top of a ramp. This activity highlights estimating, measuring accurately, recording data, and making sure the experiment is fair. Keep practicing the Triangle Flash Cards for addition facts!

Students are learning how to make healthy, nutritious choices for snacks. They are becoming acquainted with the food pyramid and the new plate. The children are realizing that exercising daily is part of staying healthy.

Grade 3

The third graders are squeezing a lot of learning into this shortened month! We are working our way towards the end of our second unit in Treasures and continuing to explore the characteristics of persuasive writing. Students have also been working hard on summarizing fiction and nonfiction text.

In math, students will begin exploring place value concepts with numbers through the thousands. This work helps lay the foundation for addition and subtraction of larger numbers, which will come soon. We will use base-ten pieces to help children develop a deeper conceptual understanding of the place value concepts we'll be studying. To support the work in the classroom, encourage your child to continue practicing addition and subtraction facts at home.

CURRICULUM counts!

Grade 4

In November, Grade 4 science students will continue investigating erosion and deposition in the Land and Water Unit, and then culminate their studies by planning how to build a dam to keep a town safe from a powerful river. Math topics include improving fluency with multiplication facts, exploring the relationship between multiplication and division arrays, as well as identifying composite and prime numbers. Reading classes find students verifying facts and distinguishing them from opinions, examining the problems a character encounters, the events that lead to a solution and determining details that help the reader make inferences about the character. Grade 4 teachers are proud to report a noticeable improvement in our independent Home Writing Project. We have seen an improvement in mechanics and elaboration. Our objective is for students to decrease their use of general details and add a greater level of specificity to their writing.

Grade 5

Fifth grade students continue to build their reading stamina and record their thoughts and books read in their reader's notebooks. In the process they are combining information and details from their reading selections with their own prior knowledge to make inferences. Fifth grade students will be blogging within the classrooms about their thoughts on their independent reading and Treasures passages they have read.

In math students are completing a unit on fractions and ratios. They have worked with mixed numbers and improper fractions and have also ordered and estimated fractions using pattern blocks and dot paper. Practicing their multiplication facts is important so they can apply that skill when working with fractions. Mrs. Bennett visited every 5th grade classroom and taught a lesson leaving the fifth graders with a challenge to tackle. Students will continue applying their knowledge of fractions by creating ratios. We will also begin a unit on long division, collecting and analyzing more data, and calculating the area of shapes.

Students will begin their third rotation in science and social studies. Each rotation lasts about four weeks.

Specials (Art)

October art in grade 1 focused on primary colors and color mixing. Children loved the books Mouse Paint and Mouse Shapes which went along with the lessons. We swapped a lesson on color wheels with Mrs. Bennett's former school in Massachusetts. Some of their projects will be on display as visiting artists, and ours will be on display at Taunton Elementary School – a long distance collaboration! A patterned paper collage was also created to go along with the book, Where the Wild Things Are.

Grade 2 students displayed Grandma Moses Country Plates. Now they are working on a nutrition connection with their science unit. We looked at the art of Giuseppe Arcimboldo with his famous portraits of people created out of fruits and veggies. Students made a collage and did a writing assignment called "You Are What You Eat!"

Grade 3 is currently writing a letter to The Paris Art Dealer to go along with their sunflower paintings. Vincent van Gogh did this in his own letter writing in the 1800's.

Grade 4 students use proportion like Leonardo da Vinci to measure and create their self-portraits. When complete, they will write a Bio Poem in their classes. They also finished and displayed small non-fiction sketchbooks going along with their Treasures reading series.

Grade 5 made clay glyphs and masks after making many sketchbook drawings in their art journals. They have studied the Mayan civilization in social studies. They are also beginning their Explorer study and will make a shadowbox collage of explorers of space, land or sea.



From our PTO President

Dear West Hill Families,

Wow!! I cannot believe what a fantastic turn out we had for Spirit Night. Records were set to a new high with the number of volunteers and attendance. There were 92 volunteers that helped make everything from the "Minute To Win It" games, dilly bars, popcorn/water, face painting, art project, scrips gift card sales, Spirit Wear sales and raffle such a success. The attendance was well over 750 people. **In total we were able to raise enough funding to support the purchase of one and a half SMART boards!!** We are on our way to meeting our goal for the year!!! An enjoyable time was had by all. I can't wait until next year.

Since our "Minute To Win It" games were a big part of our Spirit Night entertainment, we contacted representatives of the network TV show's host, Guy Fieri, to see if we could raffle off any of his personal merchandise. Mr. Fieri's office was kind enough to send along two of his signature kitchen knives, which served as prizes for a special parent volunteer raffle. The winners: Colleen Cosker and Karen Backiel. Congratulations and thank you to all of our parent volunteers!

We also had a very generous donation of five \$10 gift cards from Target that we used as a raffle for all of the twenty-one teacher volunteers. The recipients were: Lee-Ann Flynn, Ann Gombotz, Laura Newman, Bitsy Skelly, and Evelyn Vuernick. Congratulations and thank you to all of our teacher volunteers!

We were also able to help the families in Rocky Hill by collecting 160 food items for the local Food Bank. Just remember that those donations are needed year round. Please contact Nancy Stockman for more information.

Thank you for all of your support.
Nicki Holt

For help answering questions or to give any feedback please contact me at nickiholt3@att.net

West Hill PTO Mission...

Enrich the educational experience of our students through:

- * Programs that support curricular goals
- * Family events and parent education programs
- * Raising funds to support PTO programs and school needs

Thanks

Nicki Holt and Ann Polites would like to thank the following Spirit Night volunteers:

Mika Aleksandrowicz	Marlene Glover	Stacey Moore	Mrs. Skelly
Lisa Anderson	Emily Gombotz	Kathy Morgan	Donna Spada
Karen Backiel	Mrs. Gombotz	Meredith Myers	Nancy Stockman
Mrs. Bennett	Miss Griffo	Michele Nanci	Katherine Stockman
Dawn Boyle	Gina Guerrera	Ermela Ndoni	Mrs. Sweeney
Jong Byen	Karla Harding	Miss Newman	Mrs. Symington
Gabriella Cardillo	Danielle Hollister	Laura O'Connell	Cheryl Tafas
Kelly Carlone	Brianna Hollister	Caroline O'Connell	Ericka Thurman
Marie Carucci	Curtis Holt	Mrs. Vicki O'Keefe	Karen Tuozzo
Mrs. Cohen	Tracy Indomenico	Mrs. Eileen O'Keefe	Amy Turner
Colleen Cosker	Chris Kainamura	MaryAnn Oostendorp	Mrs. Tyler
Jill Cusano	Tom Kainamura	Mary Oszurek	Carmela Veneziano
Mrs. Dillon	Josie Kamansky	Jyoti Patel	Marissa Violette
Brandy DiMartino	The Khanna Family	Mona Patel	Miss Vlahopoulos
Alessandra DiMascio	Mrs. Laing	Mrs. Phair	Mrs. Vuernick
Lorna Donofrio	Jody Lukens	Caleb Place	Jenn Whelan
Brian Donovan	Ben Lukens	Karen Potter	Bruce Wynn
Annie Ensign	Mrs. Lynch	Amena Rahim	
Shelley Faber	Shtipa Malpani	Nancy Rolfe	
Mr. Faienza	Mrs. Marinelli	Angelo Rotigliano	
Andrea Ferrucci	Tom Martino	Mrs. Rotondaro	
Miss Flynn	Lina McKinney	Lia Safalow	
Sandy Gau	Mrs. Meyers	Mrs. Sanders	
Mrs. Giansanti	Ms. Michel	Aggie Scalise	
Angela Gilberto	Maddy Monti	Vinny Sessa	

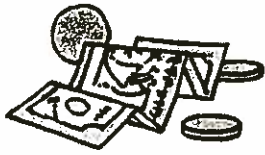
A huge THANK YOU to everyone who donated to our raffle!

Congratulations to the five teachers who won \$10 Target gift cards as part of the teacher volunteer raffle:

Congratulations!

Lee-Ann Flynn
Ann Gombotz
Laura Newman
Bitsy Skelly
Evelyn Vuernick

And the two parent volunteers who won Guy Fieri knives that were donated to our school by Guy Fieri himself:
Karen Backiel
Colleen Cosker



West Hill PTO Fundraising - Annual Overview

Many of you will be asked by many organizations to help with fundraising this fall. The West Hill PTO also needs your help. The economy has impacted fundraising over the last several years, with significant reductions. With that in mind, we continue to seek innovative ways to raise money. Here's what you can expect this year:

- **Gift card Sales** (all year): Retailers sell gift cards at a discount, you purchase them at face value, and the PTO raises funds with the difference. Consider purchasing for your regular shopping. Order forms will be distributed at the start of each month.
- **Box Tops for Education** (all year): The PTO receives \$\$ just for clipping "Box Tops" from popular items! 3 campaigns are planned this year: two classroom competitions with a pizza or ice cream party prize, and one individual contest with a gift certificate raffle.
- **After School Karate**: Serves as both an after-school enrichment program, and a fundraiser! Villari's of Newington donates the full registration fee to the PTO. Several sessions are planned.
- **Book Fair** (11/30-12/2): Proceeds from the 'fall/winter' Book Fair are shared with the library to purchase books. Timed perfectly for holiday shopping!
- **Original Works** (spring): Parents may purchase their children's drawings on notecards, t-shirts, bags and many other items. Timed perfectly for Mother's and Father's Day gifts!

We want to hear from you! Please send suggestions for additional fundraisers to Nicki Holt at nickiholt3@att.net or 860-716-5216!



Community News



2011-12 PTO Meetings: PTO meetings provide an open forum for discussion with our new principal, Parent Education (topics TBA) and opportunities for parents to guide the direction of PTO programs.

Meetings will take place on Tuesdays at 7:00 pm in the West Hill Library on the following dates: Jan 17th, Mar 13th and May 15th.

A+ School Rewards Program...did you know? West Hill is part of the school technology programs at **Price Chopper and Stop and Shop!** All you need to do is connect your saving card for each store with the school's number which can be found online or at the stores themselves. Once registered a portion of your purchase total goes towards the school of your choice – West Hill!

Box Tops...Keep clipping!



- Congratulations to Mrs. Viggiano's class who won an ice cream party for the most box tops!!
- Track West Hill's Box Top earnings or enter your name for chances to win thousands of Bonus Box Tops for our school each month. Or just Earn eBoxTops™ for our school when you shop online Please visit: www.boxtops4education.com to sign up.

2011-12 Directories: Please proof read your information in the directory as we have been notified of a few errors. Please notify nickiholt3@att.net of any corrections. An "electronic" version will be sent out via email with all of the updates by the end of November.

TO THE BOOK FAIR AND BEYOND!

Reading Is Out of This World!

SAVE THE DATE
November 30th to December 2nd
West Hill Fall Book Fair

Our Scholastic Book Fair is coming soon and will transform the gymnasium into our very own book store. There you will find hundreds of books from new and favorite authors, popular series, cool posters and school supplies, and fun for everyone! The Scholastic Book Fair will be here from 11/30/2011 to 12/02/2011 and everyone is invited! Visit our school book fair website at <http://bookfairs.scholastic.com/bookfairs/cptoolkit/publish/westhilles>

Book Fair Hours: Wednesday, Nov. 30th 8:30 am to 4pm
 Thursday, Dec. 1st 8:30am to 4pm, 6pm to 8pm
 Friday, Dec. 2nd 8:30am to 4pm

In our continued school-wide effort to make West Hill greener, we would like to refrain from giving out plastic bags. Please bring your own reusable bags to the book fair to carry your purchases home in. There are also a limited number of reusable West Hill School logo bags which will be available to purchase. See you at the fair!!

Volunteers are still needed for the book fair – please contact Karen Backiel backielkml@sbcglobal.net or Nancy Rolfe nprolfe@cox.net to volunteer!



Kudos to the West Hill community! In conjunction with Spirit Night, we donated almost 160 items to the Rocky Hill Food pantry. Thank you!

Thank you to Lowe's of Newington, especially, Kelly Paskowski (Customer Service Manager) and Curt Harden (Store Manager) for donating 6 pumpkins to West Hill School!

A special thank you to PTO President Nicki Holt for all of her hard work with Butter Braids, the directory, karate, Spirit Night, Jeannine, etc.!!!



PTO Volunteers and Committee Chairs Needed!

The following volunteers and PTO chairs are still open. Please contact Maryann Oostendorp (mboosten@cox.net) with questions and interest.

Example of Volunteer Responsibilities	Day	Evening	Flexible	Time of Year	Contact
Ice Cream Social/Game-Sports Night: Run a 'station': sign in, ice cream & drinks, etc. or oversee one of the games. Prior to event, shop, plan games, track registrations, etc.		X	Prep	January/February	Julia Eisenhour juliaeis@att.net Glen Rowland gungi07@cox.net
Book Fairs (Fall and Spring): Support 'shifts' during Book Fair hours (could be day or night). During Fair, check out purchases; help students with selections/wish lists. Before & after the Fair, help set up displays or to breakdown.	X	X		Nov 30-12/2 Spring dates to be set	Karen Backiel backielkml@sbcglobal.net Nancy Rolfe nprolfe@cox.net
Gift Cards: Sell gift cards from Scrip's booth at designated school events.	X	X		Varies with event	Lucyann Capasso lucyanncapasso@cox.net Lee-Ann Flynn FlynnL@rockyhillps.com
Original Works: assist with distribution of art orders.			X	Spring	OPEN

2011/2012 PTO Board and Chairpersons

PTO Board-2011/2012

President: Nicki Holt
Vice President: Marissa Violette
Secretary: Gina Guerrero
Treasurer: Kathy Morgan
Membership: Maryann Oostendorp
Enrichment: Jen Montalto
Communication: Eileen Bozzi & Marissa Violette
Marketing Supervisor: Ann Polites

Services:

Beautification: Marta Rostowski
Newsletter: Eileen Bozzi
Student Directory: Lori Moleiro
Going Green: Nancy Stockman

Fundraising

Spirit Night Raffle: Dawn Boyle, Andrea Ferrucci, Lee-Ann Flynn & Marlene Glover
Giftcards: Lucyann Capasso & Lee-Ann Flynn
Jeannine Fundraiser: Nicki Holt
Butter Braids: Nicki Holt
Box Top for Education: Jennifer Khanna
Book Fair-Fall: Nancy Rolfe & Karen Backiel
Book Fair-Spring: Jen Brownstein
Original Works: OPEN

Programs and Events:

After School Activities (Karate/Watercolor/Pottery): Nicki Holt
Spirit Night: Nicki Holt & Ann Polites
Harvest Ball: Lisa Marotta & Dita Wenceslao
Spring Fling: Lisa Marotta
Ice-cream Social/Sports Night: Julia Eisenhour & Glen Rowland
Field Day T-shirts: Alessandra DiMascio, Gina Guerrero, & Marissa Violette
Teachers Appreciation Day (May): Dawn Boyle & Andrea Ferrucci
Teacher Appreciation Luncheon (August): Alicia Castanho
Fifth Grade Events: Ina Lawrence & Lisa Marotta
Whale Night: Michelle Swanson

November 2011



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Day 1	8 No school for students—professional development for teachers	9 Day 2	10 Day 3	11 Holiday—No School	12
13	14 Day 4	15 Day 5 PTO Meeting—7:00 PM	16 Day 1 Picture retake; ESOL Family Night—7:00-8:00	17 Day 2 Board of Education Meeting—7:00 PM—Town Hall	18 Day 3 Harvest Ball—6:00-8:00 PM; Grades Close	19
20	21 Day 4	22 Day 5	23 Day 1 Early Dismissal—12:30; Grade 1 Thanksgiving Program—9:30	24 Holiday—No School	25 Holiday—No School	26
27	28 Day 2	29 Day 3	30 Day 4 Book Fair—8:30 AM—4:00 PM			

December 2011



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Day 5 Book Fair— 8:30—4:00; 6:00-8:00 PM	2 Day 1 Book Fair— 8:30—4:00	3
4	5 Day 2 Report Cards Go Home	6 Day 3 Kindergarten parent/teacher conferences	7 Day 4 K-5 Parent Teacher conferences—early dismissal—12:30	8 Day 5 K-5 Parent Teacher conferences—early dismissal—12:30	9 Day 1 K-5 Parent Teacher conferences—early dismissal—12:30	10
11	12 Day 2	13 Day 3	14 Day 4	15 Day 5 Board of Education Meeting—7:00 PM;	16 Day 1	17
18	19 Day 2 KAM Holiday Program—9:45; KPM Holiday Program—2:00	20 Day 3	21 Day 4 Select Chorus to Emeritus of Rocky Hill	22 Day 5	23 Day 1 Grade 2 Holiday Program—2:00 PM	24
25	26 No School - Holiday Recess Jan 2—Holiday	27 No School - Holiday Recess Jan 3—Day 2	28 No School - Holiday Recess	29 No School - Holiday Recess	30 No School - Holiday Recess	31
Jan. 1						