

# Panda Press

Westminster Elementary School  
"Learning Today for Our Tomorrow"

County Internet Address: <http://www.carrollk12.org>

WES Internet Address: <http://www.carrollk12.org/wes>

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Tracy M. Belski  
Principal

Karen S. Barnes  
Assistant Principal

# November 2009



## From the Panda Bear Main Office

We're back to November, my favorite month! This year, we are celebrating American Education Week during the week of November 16-20. Having so many visitors does present a challenge for the open space school, but we will endeavor to accommodate everyone who'd like to come and visit. I'm so very proud of the staff and students here, and I really encourage you to come observe and support your child and his or her teacher.

A schedule will come home the week before American Education Week begins. Please know that the schedule is merely a guideline, and you are welcome to visit when it works best for your schedule. Please make sure you sign in and pick up a nametag at the table in the front lobby so we can keep track of how many visitors we have. We are asking parents to sign out, also. As you sign out, you'll see a form where you can fill in something you really enjoyed about your visit. We'll make sure those forms are distributed to the correct teacher. Because of space issues, if you can make arrangements to eat lunch out of the building, it would be greatly appreciated.

I'm very proud to be part of the WES community. As usual, I am available to listen to any concerns you have, and I encourage open communication to resolve problems. Feel free to contact me via phone at (410) 751-3222 or email at [TMBELSK@k12.carr.org](mailto:TMBELSK@k12.carr.org).

Yours in Education,

Tracy M. Belski  
Principal  
Westminster Elementary School



## WES WEBSITE

Have you seen the Westminster Elementary School website? Our website, including the Panda Press, is a valuable resource for families as it contains, event dates, breakfast and lunch menus, and much more. The Panda Press and menus will be posted by the first of each month. Please help us to "go green" by reading our information on-line. Our web address: [www.carrollk12.org/wes](http://www.carrollk12.org/wes)

## WES CALENDAR

### NOVEMBER

- 3 Field Trip, 4<sup>th</sup> Gr, Mt. Vernon, 8am-5pm
- 5 Picture Re-takes, 9-11am  
Conference Night, until 7:00 pm  
Volunteer Training, 6:00 pm
- 9 Early Dismissal
- 10 PTO Meeting, 7:00 pm
- 13 Movie Night, time TBA
- 16-20 American Education Week
- 18 Volunteer Training, 7:00 pm
- 19 Grandparent's Day
- 20 PTO Holiday Shopping Spree, Cafeteria,  
3-5pm - staff, 6-9pm - parents, families, friends
- 23-27 School Closed for Students
- 30 Vision and Hearing Screening

### Looking Ahead...

### DECEMBER

- 1-4 Vision and Hearing Screening
- 1 Holiday Tree Lighting (band plays),  
Carroll County Office Bldg, 5:30-7pm
- 3 Early Dismissal
- 17 Winter Concert, 7pm
- 22 Winter Concert, snow date
- 23 Early Dismissal
- 24-31 Schools Closed

## MUSIC NOTES



Winter Instrumental and Choral Concert: Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. SAVE THIS DATE!!!

It's hard to believe that we've already made it to November! The beginning students have made it through their first month of lessons and continue to make great strides. The first squeaks and squawks are starting to become quite recognizable sounds. Kudos to all beginning students and parents for making it through the first month! I think we'll be in fine shape for the winter concert.

The 5<sup>th</sup> grade intermediate instrumentalists are gearing up for not one, but TWO December performances. Our 5<sup>th</sup> grade intermediate band and intermediate orchestra will be performing at the Carroll County Holiday Tree Lighting on Tuesday, December 1, at 6:00 pm at the Carroll County Government Office Building on Center Street. More details will be given out to students involved as the date gets closer. I encourage everyone to come out and support our 5<sup>th</sup> grade musicians as they represent WES in front of Carroll County that evening. Hopefully it won't rain like it did last year!

## NOTES FROM THE NURSE



Cold and flu season is upon us. Here are some important tips to remember:

Kids can catch 3 to 12 colds a year. Colds are caused by viruses and they go away on their own.

Signs of the **COMMON COLD** can be: stuffy, runny nose (the mucus may be clear or colored, depending on the stage of the cold), sore throat, fever, cough, watery eyes and feeling tired. It takes a week or more to completely get over a cold. **DO NOT ASK YOUR DOCTOR FOR ANTIBIOTICS. THEY DO NOT WORK ON COLDS.**

The only way to treat a cold is to treat the symptoms. All drug stores carry medications for common cold symptoms. Encourage rest and fluids.

Signs of the **FLU** can be: fever, headache, fatigue, weakness, chest discomfort, cough, general aches and pain. It can take several days to several weeks to get over the symptoms of the flu. **DO NOT ASK YOUR DOCTOR FOR ANTIBIOTICS. THEY DO NOT WORK ON THE FLU.**

**Children must be fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication in order to return to school.**

Cold viruses can spread from hard surfaces as well as direct contact with a sick person. Touching a doorknob or telephone, for example, and then touching your nose or eyes can transmit the virus. The flu is rapidly spread by coughs and sneezes. Obviously good hygiene is the key to prevention. Cover your nose and mouth with your elbow when coughing or sneezing and wash hands and hard surfaces frequently.

Regular soap is as effective as antibacterial soap for washing germs off your hands.

Sore throats are common. Signs of **strep throat** include bright red tonsils, pus on the tonsils, fever and swollen glands in the neck. Kids will sometimes get a sandpaper-like rash.

Kids with **strep throat** usually do not have other cold symptoms like a runny nose or cough. **Strep throat DOES need to be treated with antibiotics.** Ask your doctor if your child needs a strep test before any antibiotics are prescribed.

Treat sore throats by mixing ½ teaspoon of salt with an 8 ounce glass of warm water. Have the child gargle with the mixture several times a day.

Students may carry non-medicated cough drops to school. A favorite is **Hall's Fruit Breezers**. They soothe an irritated throat and taste good! Please send some in with a note to your child's teacher.

## NOTES FROM MRS. McCORMICK SCHOOL COUNSELOR

### Clothing Drive Nov. 9 - 17th

M-A-C Recycling is sponsoring a clothing collection drive. Collection boxes will be located in the school lobby. Clothes, shoes, and blankets and linens will be accepted. The school receives 10 cents per pound of clothes collected. MAC Recycling will also make a donation to the local DARE program. Tax receipts ARE NOT available. The proceeds will be used to support the WES Character Education program.

Any questions, please contact Cathlin McCormick, School Counselor, at 410-751-3222.



## Physical Education News

Fall Fitness & Fall Sports - Great job to all students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 who showed some great football skills in our fall unit! Many students mastered the spiral pass & catch as they implemented creative pass patterns. Ask your child how fast they ran the mile! A GOOD time (according to Carroll County fitness standards) is 12:00 minutes or less.

During the 1<sup>st</sup> week of November, students will take the Push up, Curl up Test and Pacer Test as part of the FitnessGram Program!

Talk about THROWING!!! - Students in grades 1 and 2 wowed the PE teachers with great overhand throws - both for distance and accuracy! Help your child to maintain their skills by practicing throwing and catching at home.

Also, ask your 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> grader how fast they ran the ½ mile. A GOOD time is 6:00 minutes or less.

Please consider signing up to volunteer during the Gymnastics Unit which runs from November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 18<sup>th</sup>. If you would like us to send a schedule home with your child to sign up, please print, fill out, and return the bottom portion of this page to school. You may also call the school and leave a message for Mrs. Donovan stating that you are interested in volunteering for the Gymnastics Unit, or e-mail her at [jvdonov@k12.carr.org](mailto:jvdonov@k12.carr.org). A schedule will then be sent home with your child.

No experience is necessary...we LOVE volunteers!  
Thank you very much!

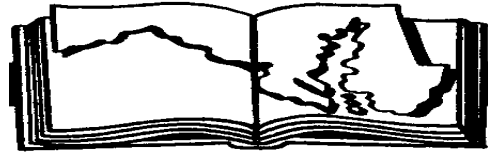
Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would like to help in the gym during the Gymnastics Unit. Please send home a schedule with my child to sign up.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I have completed the Volunteer Training.

# ANNOUNCING



State Of Maryland International  
Reading Association Council







SoMIRAC's 2009 – 2010

## Young Authors Contest Grades 2-5

**Who:** Students in Grades 2-5

**What:** Write a Poem or Short Story/Essay



-  Entries must be original work.
-  All entries with no less than 12 point font using either Times New Roman or Comic Sans font.
-  Short story/essay entry may range from a minimum of two (2) paragraphs to no more than three (3) typed pages
-  Each poem entry will consist of a single poem, which may be any style or length
-  Entries must not include graphics.
-  Include a completed "Cover Sheet" signed by the student author and sponsoring teacher.

Additional details and Guidelines contact:

Sarah Andrews

410.751.3222

seandre@k12.carr.org

**Entries due by Friday, January 8, 2010**

## NEWS FROM THE PTO

### A Note from the President

Fall is in the air and school is well underway. So is your Parent Teacher Organization! Please don't forget our meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the Media Center. However, we will not have a December meeting. If you are unable to attend a particular meeting and have concerns, we encourage you to contact us via e-mail or phone to voice your opinions. Our contact information may be found on our website as well as the PTO bulletin board located in the school lobby. [sites.google.com/site/pandapto/](https://sites.google.com/site/pandapto/)

Last school year, our theme was, "We're fishin' for new ideas!" Well, this year those new ideas are coming to a plentiful harvest. Thank you to all our volunteers who are hard at work making plans and working as a team to provide successful experiences for our school and community.

The PTO Executive Board wants to thank all of you who contributed to the Hospitality Committee by providing food or snacks for teachers during parent / teacher conferences. The faculty and staff have expressed their appreciation in a huge way! The board would also like to thank everyone who supported Fun Run. This event provides the funding for all the wonderful things PTO does at WES. Your help and support makes things possible and the children thank you!

The Directory has been sent to the printer company. As soon as the bound copies come in, PTO will prepare the pdf version and deliver and/or e-mail the directory to those who chose to participate. Thank you for your patience.

PTO funds recently purchased a new chair for the Ben Carson Reading Room located in the Media Center. Children and volunteer readers use this area to cozy up and share a love for reading. This area has a soft rug, bean bags and now the new chair! Happy Reading!

Molly McDonald (PTO President)

**Fun Run** - We had an incredible week leading up to our 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Fun Run on Friday, October 2. Everyone enjoyed our spirit days, including some of the staff. School Spirit Day was capped off with our most successful restaurant night ever. Roy Roger's was packed with WES Families, and because of everyone's participation we earned an unbelievable **\$562**. Thanks to everyone who dined in or carried out to support our school!

During Spirit Week we also announced the winner of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade t-shirt design contest. Dakota Kelly's design was picked for this year's shirt. Dakota's name was announced during 5<sup>th</sup> grade lunch period and she was awarded a huge assortment of art supplies. After all of the excitement of Spirit Week, Fun Run day was a blast as always. The students had a fabulous time running our new beach themed course. We owe many thanks to all of the donors, volunteers, students, families, teachers, staff, and administration for their continuing heartfelt support of the Fun Run. Without all of you, our success would not be possible. We have had a good return of envelopes, but if you still have one, it's not too late. Please turn it in to the office. When the prizes arrive, we will get them sorted and delivered to the students as quickly as possible.

**Movie Night** - WES PTO is getting ready for our annual Family Movie Night on Friday, November 13th. Yes, let's all gather together for our own "Freaky Friday Movie Night". Come dressed in your pajamas and cuddle up with your favorite stuffed animal or Panda! Bring blankets, pillows, bean bag chairs, etc. Make your plans now to attend this affordable, entertaining event! Movie selection is to be announced. Please look for a flier to come home soon. Doors open at 6:30pm and the movie will begin at 7pm. Pizza, candy and drinks will be available to purchase.

**Holiday Shopping Spree (Vendor Night)** - November 20<sup>th</sup> - Doors open to the public from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. for your shopping convenience. Come do your holiday shopping early while helping your school. There are a variety of vendors from which to shop. A flier will be coming home with more details.

**Players Birthday Party Program** - Are you planning on hosting your child's birthday party at Players? Just mention Westminster Elementary when booking your party and the PTO will receive \$10.00 for each party booked. What a simple and easy way to help support the Westminster Elementary PTO!

### **Upcoming Events:**

Nov. 6 - The Miraculous Magical Balloon (sponsored by the Cultural Affairs Committee)

Nov. 10 - PTO meeting @ 7pm in the school Media Center

Nov. 13 - Family Movie Night - Doors open at 6:30 pm, movie starts at 7 pm

Nov. 20 - Holiday Shopping Spree (Vendor Night) - Doors open from 6 pm to 9 pm for shopping

Note: There will be no December PTO meeting  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM YOUR PTO