



WIZARDS PTA NEWS

Woodlin Elementary Parent Teacher Association Newsletter

December 2010



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Shining Stars

(For November)

Shining Stars* is a program that was started last year at Woodlin to provide an opportunity for students to nominate their peers when they see them perform positive actions that are helpful to the school community. Shining Star nomination folders have been placed on each teacher's desk. Please encourage students to nominate their classmates when they observe Woodlin Wizards helping each other. Students who received Shining Stars last month include the following:

2 nd grade	3 rd grade
John Polito Zion Jackson Tiffany Hunt Aidan Kennedy Emily Lang Katherine McClendan Jack Stoddard Olivia Seeman	Mallie Schneider Sachi Sakaniwa Sam Bole Ravena Ramsaran

Compiled by Shannon Parkin (a parent representative on the GAC)



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PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

SARAH SIRGO

Trust your parenting instincts

A few years ago I picked up a book at the winter book fair that contained the quote, “*The minute you have children you forgive your parents for everything.*” My younger brother and his wife recently had their first child and he shared with me that he already found himself worrying about raising his son. “There are so many opportunities to make a mistake” he shared. My reply was, “It’s much easier to get it right than you realize, just trust yourself!” Perhaps these were just words of encouragement from a big sister to her brother? I went looking for answers and began to read a book called, “Instinctive Parenting: Trusting Ourselves to Raise Good Kids” by Ada Calhoun (she is also the founder of Babble.com). In the introduction of the book Ada states that “The key [to parenting] is focusing on the very few things that matter [making sure you are raising a kind person and making that person feel loved] and then doing whatever you want about the rest” (p. XVIII).

By virtue of having all been raised ourselves, we have very strong opinions about the way things should be or not be done. The plethora of information available is enough to make any person overwhelmed and at times feel inadequate. However, I truly believe that what is most important is to find what works for you, your child, and your family. Ada Calhoun states that what matters most is providing the few absolute essentials (love, food, shelter) while teaching your child how to be a kind, responsible human being. Rather than focusing too much on others' advice or trying to be the perfect parent, importance of nurturing, loving, and teaching your children tolerate will contribute to creating a happy, independent, and loving child, and a good adult.

Sean Platt, author of a blog called “Writer Dad” share’s some tips that I pass on to you:

1. **Let your child know you are excited to see them when they enter the room.** Be mindful of their presence by showing them your smile and greeting them warmly.
2. **Teach your child it’s okay to be bored.** As parents, it’s often our instinct to entertain our children each and every waking hour. Children have vivid imaginations that flourish upon nurturing.
3. **Let your child know they are more important than work** by giving them eye contact and attention. Your child doesn’t just need you around, they need you present. Play with your child, interact with them, find out what is important to them by asking questions and listening to their answers.
4. **Let your child make a few of the rules.** You don’t have to make them the boss to let them feel empowered. Often, power struggles with our children are the direct result of them feeling a loss of control. By at least appearing to give your child some of the control, you are helping them understand household law inside and out. This will lead directly to a willingness to follow.

Raising a happy child is hard work, but it is something that can and must be done. As I shared with my brother, once you focus on the needs of your child and ensure you are doing all you can to meet them, your efforts will be rewarded.

PTA PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE, CHRIS RUTLEDGE As we enter December and the holiday season, the Woodlin PTA Board would like to thank everyone who makes possible all of our wonderful activities and events. The Scholastic Book Fair, Fun Fridays, After School Clubs and a myriad of other activities demonstrate the commitment of Woodlin families to building not just a school, but an engaged and supportive community. It’s hard to believe the year is half over! We have had another busy fall semester! With activities ranging from Open House to Hispanic Heritage Month and Woodlin World Night, to this month’s Winter Book Fair, we strive to offer something for everyone! And there’s still more to come!

In January, we’ll all be putting on our boogie shoes, as we attend the annual Woodlin dance. **In February**, we’ll explore African-American heritage during Black History month. Also in February, we’ll enjoy a respite from a snowy winter at the Winter Festival and Silent Auction. **In March**, at the PTA meeting, we’ll celebrate Women’s History month. **In April**, we’ll cuddle up with a new volume that we buy at the Spring Book Fair. Finally, **in May**, we’ll welcome in the warmer weather with the Spring fair.

As we head into 2011, please think about the role you wish to play – at least three of the elected officer positions will be open, and there are committees that need chairing and lead volunteer slots that need filling. The PTA is run by families, for children and families, and whether you stand for election, chair a committee or lead a volunteer project, there is a place for everyone. If you have ideas on how we can make the PTA more welcoming and effective, please let us know. The PTA is an open door to our children’s school and future – please join us! Happy Holidays!



WOODLIN HALLOWEEN DRIVES BRING GLOBAL BENEFITS FOR UNICEF, OPERATION GRATITUDE

Huge, heartfelt thanks to all Woodlin students and families who collected funds for UNICEF. This year's remarkable total will be revealed at the December 6 Town Meeting, when the students form Team Soap, Team Clean Water, and Team Vaccination to search for the clues to identify the mystery total.

Here is the first clue for everyone! Our grand total is about \$1,000 MORE than Woodlin raised for UNICEF in 2009.

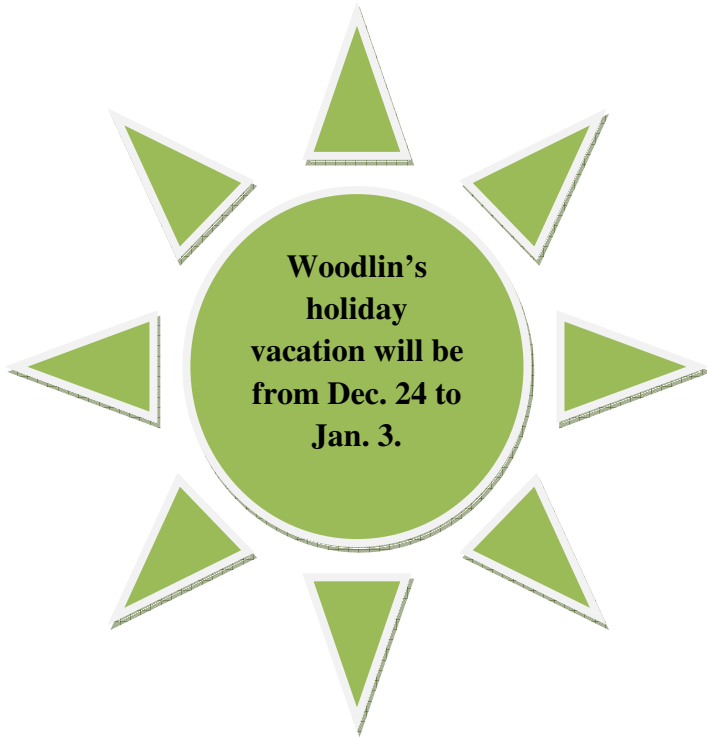
Our school will help save children's lives worldwide where threatened by war, natural disasters and other crises through the purchase of medicines, clean and safe water supplies for drinking and sanitation, food supplements to help malnourished children grow up strong and healthy, and clothing and shelter to protect children and families.

Here are examples of what Woodlin's 2010 contribution can buy:

- 5,000 bars of soap to fight cholera in Haiti or
- 83,575 vitamin/nutrient packets or
- 4,399 vaccines against polio or
- Vaccinations against 6 deadly diseases for 154 children or
- 380,000 water purification tablets or
- More than 1,000 packets of milk for boys and girls or
- More than 2100 high protein biscuits or
- 870 blankets to stay warm

For the past six years the U.S. Fund for UNICEF has been awarded a 4-Star (Exceptional) rating by Charity Navigator - America's top independent charity evaluator. The U.S. Fund for UNICEF is recognized for its fiscal responsibility and outperforming most other charities in America.

Woodlin families also contributed 70 pounds of Halloween candy plus 100 beanie babies for our troops to distribute to children in combat zones overseas. As a bonus, Fenton Family Dental donated \$70 to our PTA.



Woodlin Wizards – You Can Conquer the World!

Really! All you have to do is participate in the Geography Bee! All third, fourth, and fifth graders are encouraged to participate and there are plenty of ways parents can help, too. The competitions will be held at 2:00 pm on the following dates:

Grade	Date
3 rd grade	May 12
4 th grade	May 19
5 th grade	March 24

Packets will be distributed approximately 1 month prior to each Bee and all students are encouraged to complete theirs and get their chance to try out for their class team. Every student who does complete their packet will receive an official Woodlin Wizard Geography Bee water bottle! Even cooler prizes are in store for each class team member and the winning team for each grade.

Parents, encourage your child to complete their packet – it is a great way to do something fun together and gives your whole family a chance to brush up on their knowledge of the world. Parents are also needed to help run preliminary Bees in each class to determine which students will represent their class, and there is plenty of assistance needed the day of the event, too. To volunteer, email Jane Curtin at jane_curtin@yahoo.com.

The Geography Bee planning team will send out more information closer to packet distribution dates.

Get ready to conquer the world, Wizards!
 The Geo Bee Team: Atlas Anne Mutti, Geo Jane Curtin, and Latitude Lisa Tenley Alton



Support for parents of students on IEP or 504 plans

If you are a parent of a child with special learning or academic needs, Liora Moriel and Wendy Baumert invite you to a “meet and greet” with parents like you over coffee, tea and cookies at the home of Liora and Susan, 8905 Woodland Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20910. Please feel free to call 301-587-6379 for information, directions, and so on. Let's share our concerns, our dreams, and our vision so we can be the most informed and supportive parents we can be for our children. Allies always welcome!

Please rsvp to Liora at Lioram212@yahoo.com, or call her at 301-587-6379.



NOVEMBER BOOK SUGGESTIONS
FROM READERS' LUNCH BUNCHES

Several times a week, I met with some of the 3rd and 4th graders to read to them during their lunch times. I have listed some of their favorite books from these students.

3rd Grade Favorites

1. *Investigating Machu Picchu: An Isabel Soto Archaeology Adventure* Graphic Library by Emily Sohn
2. *Exploring Titanic An Isabel Soto History Adventure* Graphic Library by Agnieszka Biskup
3. *How Could You? Kids Talk About Trust* by Nancy Loewen
4. *No Fair! Kids Talk About Fairness* by Nancy Loewen
5. *The Magic School Bus Explores the World of Bugs* by Nancy White and Joanna Cole

4th Grade favorites

Myth Group

Red Pyramid by Rick Riordan

Novel Group

Kingdom Keepers: Disney After Dark by Ridley Pearson

Steel Trapp The Challenge by Ridley Pearson

Biography Group

Booker T. Washington Great American Educator Graphic Library by Eric Braun

Wilma Rudolph Olympic Track Star Graphic Library by Lee Engfer

By Shannon Parkin (volunteer reader and parent of Heather Parkin 4th grade and Carl Parkin 1st grade)

Volunteers Needed!

Please leave Feb. 13th open to help with the Winter Festival. This one takes a lot of dedicated people volunteering about one hour of time between 2-5 pm on that day. Please contact Laura Stewart at laurastewart@starpower.net to sign up to help.

Thanks for all you do.