

Whiting Wire



Whiting Lane School 47 Whiting Lane West Hartford, CT 06119 Telephone 860-233-8541 Fax 860-236-9367
Dr. Nancy DePalma, Principal

Greetings from the Principal

June 18, 2009

"I watched a small man with thick calluses on both hands work fifteen and sixteen hours a day. I saw him once literally bleed from the bottoms of his feet, a man who came here uneducated, alone, unable to speak the language, who taught me all I needed to know about faith and hard work by the simple eloquence of his example."

(-- Mario Cuomo, former Governor of New York State)

When I first started teaching, it was in an elementary school where Mario and Matilda Cuomo sent their children. They were a wonderful family with values deeply rooted in an Italian-Catholic heritage. You simply cannot match that degree of parochial guilt! From my initial encounter with him, I could immediately relate to Mr. Cuomo's ancestry because my dad was very much like his. Whenever our fourth grade class does their unit on immigration, I get the chance to renew my father's passage at age 12 from Italy to America. I am immediately reminded of a man who, from virtually nothing, quite literally made a good life for himself and his family. In the very worst of my life's moments, my dad's struggles have served as a source of pure inspiration and motivation for me. I miss him terribly and often turn to memories of times when he managed the most difficult of challenges - and there were many. As we honor our little community's dads this Sunday, it is my hope that our children will always honor their fathers and acknowledge the life lessons discovered through "the simple eloquence of...example."

While this was the year that seemed never ending, somehow it now looks like it's whizzing by before my eyes. Our fifth grade class will be moving on in less than 8 days. Our loss truly is their middle school's gain. As I prepare to write my speech for the Recognition Ceremony, reflecting on some of the more significant moments they've experienced always helps. I'm quite certain that, in the memories they recall years from now, few will top their witnessing Barack Obama's presidential victory. At some point in their futures, they will likely discuss where they were (in Whiting Lane School) and what they were doing (listening as a group to President Obama's stirring inaugural speech in Mr. Lucey's room). On that historic day, I asked the fifth grade students to complete a form that I would include in my June ceremony remarks. Time constraints will not permit me to recount all responses on June 24th. It seems appropriate to share a few in this message. The students were asked to complete this statement: "The one thing I will always remember about the inauguration of President Barack Obama is..."

- I was witnessing history as Barack Obama became the first African-American president. (**Andy Xaysittiphone**)
- the caring and better relationship he has brought to America. (**Amari Bartley**)
- it proves that anything is possible and even someone whose ancestors didn't have equal right can still become president. (**Lillian Beal**)
- the diversity and size of the crowd and the part in his speech when he said 'Just 50 years ago, my father was not allowed to be served in a restaurant.' (**David Clewes**)
- he put his hand on the very bible that Abraham Lincoln used when he took the oath of office. (**Elinor Cohen**)
- how he would change things like global warming, homelessness, job losses if we come together as one. (**Kyle Exum**)

Get ready middle school; Whiting Lane students are on their way!

I cannot let the year go by without sincerely thanking the individuals committed to helping our children learn and grow in every best possible way. These include our wonderful **PTO**, our diligent **custodial and cafeteria workers**, our most welcoming **main office staff**, and of course our **teachers, paraprofessionals, and teaching assistants**. Just yesterday, a new family stopped by to announce that their children would be coming to Whiting Lane next year. After their visit they commented through their eldest son who was translating for them, how warm and welcomed they felt by the treatment they received. I cannot think of better way to bring our year to a close!

Happy Daddy's Day to all our WL Pops! Thanks for all you do to keep our children feeling loved, happy, healthy, safe, and captivated in the adventures of learning. One last thought to consider this Sunday...

"I talk and talk and talk, and I haven't taught people in 50 years what my father taught by example in one week."

(-- Mario Cuomo, former Governor of New York)

Until next time, **READ, READ, READ with your children this summer!**

Nancy ☺



**A Great Thank You Gift
for
Your Child's Teacher**

Searching for just the right gift for your child's teacher at the end of the school year? The Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools' **Teacher Thank You Gift** program is a great way to acknowledge a wonderful and talented teacher.

Here's how it works: A family makes a tax-deductible donation to the Foundation of \$10 or more per teacher. The Foundation then sends the family/or the teacher a special certificate that says a gift has been made in the teacher's honor. The funds raised from these **Teacher Thank You Gifts** go to our Teacher Grant program. Every donation will go back to helping teachers teach our students!

The Foundation is dedicated to raising money from the community to give back to the public schools. We are non-political and town-wide. For more information on the Foundation, call 561-8755, email fwgps@westhartford.org, or write to 50 South Main Street, #420, West Hartford, CT 06107.

**Teacher Thank You Gift
Order Form**

I would like to acknowledge the great work of my teacher(s) this year through a donation to **The Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools**.

Enclosed is my gift of \$_____.

Parent's Name _____

Student's Name _____

Address _____

_____ Zip _____

Teacher's Name (s) _____

School _____

Send certificate to me OR Send to my teacher

Please make checks (\$10 minimum per teacher) payable to Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools and send to 50 South Main St., Room 420, W. Hartford, CT 06107. Contributions are tax-deductible.

DEADLINE: Friday, June 19, 2009

From the Health Room

Please pick up all medications, including inhalers, from the nurse's office before the end of the school year. An **ADULT** must pick up medication from the health room. Any remaining medications will be discarded on the last day of school.

Have a happy, healthy summer!

Susan Petty-Bailer RN, Nancy Driska RN
Whiting Lane Nurses
Lisa Nowak RN, ELC Nurse

**Calling All
Library Books!**



The library will be closing at the end of the school day TODAY to allow the library media staff time to conduct inventory.

Bills will be sent home from the library for books that have not been returned. **Lost or damaged books must be paid for before students receive their final report cards.**

From the Cafeteria

Please make sure there is enough money in your child's cafeteria account to last until the end of the school year.

Children who owe money on their cafeteria account will not receive their final report cards.

Informational Flyers/Booklets

Please check the parent self help rack in the main office for the following informational flyers and booklets:

- ⇒ 2009-2010 Whiting Lane School Directory form
- ⇒ June calendar and lunch menu
- ⇒ 2009-2010 School Calendar
- ⇒ Summer Options for Kids catalogs
- ⇒ West Hartford YMCA - Spring 2009 Program Guide
- ⇒ Connecticut Family Theatre
- ⇒ Girl Scouts of Connecticut - Summer Camp 2009
- ⇒ JCC Youth Connection 2009-2010 (After School Care for Children in Grades 6 - 8)

When Is The Last Day Of School ?

The official last day of school is **Friday, June 26, 2009** with a regular **3:20 pm** dismissal on **Thursday, June 25th** and **Friday, June 26th**.

Attention 5th Grade Parents

The 5th grade outing to Camp Chase will take place on **Monday, June 22nd from 8:45 am - 1:50 pm**.

The Grade 5 Recognition Ceremony will be held on **Wednesday, June 24th at 9:15 am**.

From the Health Room to 5th Grade Parents

Physical examinations for grade 6 students are required for entry into grade 6 and must have been done between **September 1, 2008 & August 31, 2009**. Your child will not be permitted to start the school year without this completed form. Please call the school nurse if you have any questions about these health requirements.

Susan Petty-Bailer RN, Nancy Driska RN
Whiting Lane Nurses

To All Parents:

Please complete and return the "2009-2010 Whiting Lane School Directory" form to school as soon as possible. It is very important that you return this form so we have the most current information for next year's school directory. Thank you for your help.

Are You Moving?

If you are moving to another address in West Hartford (even within the neighborhood), you must contact the Residency Office (561-6620) located in the Town Hall at 50 South Main Street. Addresses cannot be changed in the school office without notification from the Residency Office.

Dates to Remember

6/18	7:45 am 8:30 – 9:30 am 1:00 – 3:00 pm 3:20 pm	Volunteer Breakfast/Library Grade 4 International Breakfast/café Grade 4 (Sinatro) to A.C. Peterson's Library closes for Inventory
6/19	7:45 – 8:30 am 9:30 am 2:45 pm	Choir/Band Convocation Practice Grade 1 Plays/classrooms Birthday Party – June & August/café
6/22	8:45 am – 1:50 pm 1:00 – 3:00 pm	Grade 5 to Camp Chase Raindate - Grade 4 to A.C. Petersen's
6/23	10:00 am – 1pm 1:30 – 2:30 pm	Grade 4 (Beckley) to Vanderbilt Park Grade 1 Summer Reading Party
6/24	9:15 – 11:00 am 9:00 – 10:00 am	Grade 5 Recognition Ceremony Grade 1 Board Fun Day/classrooms
6/25		Grade 2 Beach Day Grade 4 Beach Day Grade 1 Talent Show/Auditorium 1:15 pm
6/26	7:45 – 8:30 am	Choir/Band Convocation Practice Grade 3 Beach Day LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

HAPPY SUMMER!!!



Enrollment

In order to get the most accurate numbers as possible for next year's enrollment, we need your assistance. If you will be moving out of the Whiting Lane School district for the 2009-2010 school year, please call the office at 233-8541.

Parents of Grade 5 students: If your child is not going to be attending one of the WHPS middle schools, please notify the office so we can forward student records to the appropriate middle school. Thank you.

Save the Date!!!

The first day of school for the 2009-2010 school year is **Monday, August 31, 2009**.

Music News...



It is hard to believe that the end of the school year is already here and that we will all be starting our summer vacations in a week! Thank you to all of the students who have been coming in on Friday mornings in preparation for Convocation. We will continue to rehearse until the last day of school to make this a performance the best that it can be!

Rehearsals still start at **7:45 am**...please be on time.

Also, please remember that we will be rehearsing on **August 24th** and **25th** from **9-10 am** at Conard High School. A reminder will be sent out via email over the summer.

While the summer is a time to relax and not think about school, make sure you continue to have wonderful musical experiences. If you have your instrument at home, make sure that you keep practicing! Just a few times a week will keep your musical memory sharp and help you when you return in the fall.

Below are some other great musical activities that you can do during the summer:

- Take instrumental lessons during Summer School. For more information or to register call (860) 561-6900.
- Attend the Hartford Symphony series at Talcott Mountain Music Festival. For more information visit www.hartfordsyphony.org/concerts-tickets/season.talcott-mountain-music-festival/ On July 2nd and 3rd, they play patriotic music. Bring a picnic!
- Summer Arts Festival is a musical produced at Hall High School. They will be performing "Singing in the Rain" from July 29th – August 1st.
- There is live music at Elizabeth Park. A great place for a picnic and concert! The concerts will be held on the Lawn of the Rose Garden, every Wednesday beginning June 24th through August 26th, 6:30 pm until 8:00 pm. If it rains, the concerts will be held in the Pond House hall.

Third grade parents – please be on the lookout for instrument assignment letters. They will be sent home this week with your children.

Have a wonderful and safe summer vacation!

Veteran's Day

The 2009-2010 school calendar has been modified to reflect that school will be open on Veteran's Day, **November 11th**. You can find copies of the calendar in the parent self help rack in the office or visit the whps.org website.

Autism Awareness Updates



Miss Shopey's 2nd grade class won the *Autism Speaks* Puzzle Piece Challenge and will be enjoying a special pizza luncheon party on **June 19th**.

The winners in the *West Hartford Wizards* "Thank you Drawing" were: the Villanueva Family - gas grill; the Pagani Family - a gift certificate to Coldstone Creamery; the Milliman family - a necklace; and Hannah Manolis - a pair tickets to Lake Compounce.

Thank you to all who supported the team. Go Wizards!

Whiting Lane raised over \$2500 for *Autism Speaks*!!!

Inter-El Track and Field



Congratulations to the following Whiting Lane students who participated in the Eleventh Inter-Elementary Track and Field Duquette Invitational held at Conard High School on Monday, June 15th:

Amari Bartley, Elinor Cohen, Kyle Exum, Owen Farley, Sean Farley, Gabriella Ferreira, Chance George, Elisabeth Grondin, David Higgins, Kiearra Hollis, Brendan Kearney, Sydney Lyons, Declan Moylan, Carolyn Roche, Tyler Strickling, Chantelle Swaby and Mary Zeng.

Mrs. Wilcox said they all did an awesome job!

Lost and Found

There are still unclaimed items in the "lost and found" - please check the tables in the hallway behind the cafeteria or in the office (for jewelry, glasses and other valuables).

Any items not claimed by the last day of school will be donated to charity.

We have an assortment of dishes and utensils that were left in the staff lounge after Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week.

Please check the faculty room if you are missing any serving dishes/utensils.