



# Whiteley Cat Tales

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Illinois PTA, District 37

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Frank C. Whiteley PTA newsletter

2007 Illinois PTA Newsletter Award of Excellence

## PTA President's message

It has been years since we've had a snow day and this year we had TWO. I found out that many families weren't aware of our "snow day" procedures. Well, this being my first year as PTA President, I apologize for not getting the word out about the procedure. Next year I will be sure to put it in our newsletter before the winter weather arrives.

Just in case, it happens again (let's hope not), here's what you can expect:

- Mrs. Szuch waits to get a call from the district stating there is no school. (This call can come as early as 5 a.m.)
- Once she receives the call, she immediately calls the PTA President to activate the phone chain.
- The PTA President calls our Room Representative Committee Chair
- The Chairperson calls their co-chair then they both call the room parents on the phone chain.
- One room parent from each classroom gets a call from one of the committee chairs.
- The room parent who received the call from the committee chair is responsible for calling their co-room parent.
- Once the co-room parent is called, each room parent is responsible for calling their "half" of the class. (The room parents decide who calls which parents at the beginning of the year. The "youngest or only" child of a family in each class is called to avoid getting multiple calls from classrooms.)

Unfortunately everyone is not called at the same time. Families should expect a call anytime between 5:30 a.m. and 7 a.m. Please know that all the news stations post school closings and all school closing are listed on their Web sites as well as the District 15 Web site. What is posted on the news and/or the Web is accurate so if you see that school is closed and you haven't heard from your room parent, don't fret. You will get the call to confirm what you already knew.

As I'm sure you are aware, our Fun Fair is coming very soon. It's scheduled for Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup>. No doubt about it, kids love the Fun Fair. There are many games for all ages to play including the Cake Walk (where you can win some sweet treats) and the Book Walk (where you can win a new book). In addition there will be gift baskets and food. If you haven't been to our Fun Fair, please come. Kris Constantino has been planning this event for a long time and without volunteers, we couldn't have a successful event. See page seven of this newsletter for more information about the event.

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## Calendar of Events

- 2/29—Fun Fair Volunteer Requests due
- 3/3—Pennies for Patients & Box Tops begin
- 3/5—Basket Donations & Advance Ticket Sales Forms Due
- 3/7—Report Cards
- 3/9—Spring Ahead Daylight Savings Time
- 3/10—AR begins
- 3/11—Waste Free Lunch
- 3/12—Board of Ed mtg. Manna orders due
- 3/14—Whiteley Spirit Day Fun Fair 5:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.
- 3/20—PTA meeting—7 p.m.
- 3/21—NO SCHOOL Spring Break Begins
- 3/31—School Reopens
- 4/2—Market Day pickup
- 4/9—Board of Ed mtg.



**Did you see what was posted on the Whiteley PTA Web site?**

**Whiteley  
PTA®**

everychild.one voice.®

## From the Principal's desk

Dear Parents,

First of all, thank you to our Room Parents for planning and organizing wonderful Valentine's Day parties. As I went from room to room, it was apparent that everyone had a great time.

I want to thank the parents who drop off and pick up his/her child in the front circle. I appreciate your effort to pull as far forward as possible to allow for the maximum number of cars to enter the drop off/pick up area.

The snow and cold weather continue to be with us. Whenever possible, I try to have the students outside for fresh air and movement for at least 20 minutes. During the lunch recess 20-20-20 schedule, students have twenty minutes outside, twenty minutes in the classroom and twenty minutes in the lunchroom. Please watch the weather report to make sure that your child is dressed appropriately. I follow the District 15 guidelines to determine the amount of time students will spend outside. The temperature needs to be above 0 degrees to allow for at least 20 minutes of time outside. When the temperature is above 15 degrees, students are outside for 40 minutes. At times, the number of minutes outside may be reduced because of limited blacktop space due to snow, water, or ice.

Our students are excited about the BMX cyclist for our second P.E.P. (Positive Expectation Program) activity/assembly on March 18, 2008. Students have been making positive behavior choices and look forward to this special guest.

Please let your neighbors know about the **Kindergarten and Open Registration** for all students who will be new to Frank C. Whiteley School for the 2008-09 school year. It will be **Tuesday, April 8th** in the morning, afternoon and evening. It is especially important that any students who will be new first graders register in April and May. This may impact the number of sections for first grade during the 2008-09 school year.

Please mark your calendar:

-**March 3rd through 14th** is ISAT testing for students in grades 3-6.

-**March 14th** from 5:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. is the Fun Fair.

Students must be accompanied by an adult. Volunteers are still needed.

-**March 21st through March 28th** is Spring Vacation – No School

-**March 31st** School will reopen.

Thank you for your support!

*Mrs. Mary Szuch, Principal*

*This issue of the Whiteley Cat Tales was sent via email on **Saturday, February 23rd** to 177 Whiteley families, 64 FCW staff members, 56 PTA Presidents/editors/webmasters and nine Board of Education/D15 administrators.*

*Approximately 227 Whiteley families will receive their copies on Wednesday, the 27th or later.*

*Sign up to receive the e-newsletter and receive your news faster and **IN COLOR** at:*

[www.fcwpta.org/whiteley\\_cat\\_tales.htm](http://www.fcwpta.org/whiteley_cat_tales.htm)



***Find out for yourself at [www.fcwpta.org](http://www.fcwpta.org)***

## PTA President's Message—continued from page one

Our next PTA meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup>**. We invite all general members to attend our meetings. The next three meetings are particularly important for our PTA.

**March**—nominees of open board positions are presented and a vote to change a section of the bylaws needs to be taken

**April**—members can vote on candidates of the open board positions

**May**—PTA Open House, new board members are installed and a vote to approve updated bylaws needs to be taken

So, if you are interested in learning “things” about our PTA, please stop by. We love getting new parents involved in our many PTA committees.

**Currently we have these committees open for 2008-2009—**

Book Fair Co-Chair, Feature Creature, Fun Fair, Health and Safety Co-Chair, Room Representative Co-Chair, Sixth Grade Activities, SPARK, Spiritwear and Teacher Appreciation.

Beginning on page four of this newsletter is a complete description of all of our committees. Is there another committee you are interested in? If so let me know and I'll introduce you to the committee chair so you can work together on building a stronger committee.

As always, if you have any questions, feel free to contact me at [nnemecfamily@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nnemecfamily@sbcglobal.net)

- Jennifer Nemeč, PTA President



## Join the fight against Leukemia

Did you know that more kids die from leukemia than from any other cancer? The kids at Whiteley School can help to change that. Whiteley will be participating in the “**Pennies for Patients**” program from March 3rd until March 20th. The campaign is run by *The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society* and the proceeds help to fund blood cancer research and patient services for children. Each classroom will have a collection box where change and dollar bills can be deposited. The money will be picked up twice a week and counted. The classroom that raises the most funds will win a pizza party.

You can also help by purchasing a Paper Penny for \$1 at the Fun Fair on March 14th for the “Whiteley Wall of Fame”. Those students whose names are on the “Wall” will have the chance to participate in something fun at Whiteley.

Together we can make a difference.

- Korene Palazzo, PTA Volunteer Coordinator



# Just what does the Whiteley PTA do?

## Take a look at these committees and get involved

### **Birthday Book Club—**

Work with the Resource Center Teacher in distributing Birthday Book Club order forms once a week.

### **Book Fair—**

Held annually in November during teacher conferences. Committee is the liaison between the school and the book company. Responsible for set up of the book fair, finding volunteers to help at and breakdown when over.

### **Box Tops for Education—**

Collects Box Tops from teachers, counts each classroom's submission, sorts into groups of 50, submits to General Mills and organizes a Box Top party for the winning classrooms. Contests are held three times a year.

### **Calendar—**

Responsible for publishing the school calendar. Majority of work is done over the summer, collecting event dates and plugging them into the calendar program. Committee decides on the theme of the calendar. When the calendar is completed they send to the printer and distribute to the entire school.

### **Community Outreach—**

Organizes the children's gift drive in December and other outreach activities as desired.

### **Directory/Membership Drive—**

Responsible for membership drive and soliciting local businesses to join PTA. At the end of the membership drive, responsible for creating the PTA directory and having it printed.

### **Environmental Education—**

Creates awareness of environmental issues through promoting recycling programs, waste free lunches, etc. Time commitment is ongoing, depending on how much the committee wants to do.

### **Feature Creature—**

Do you ever stop to see what kind of critter is in the case outside of the Resource Center? These critters are rotated in and out by this committee. This committee is also responsible for caring for the critters.

### **Fun Fair—**

Organizes the annual Fun Fair event from contacting the company to managing volunteers. Requires a large commitment during the planning period.

### **Health and Safety—**

The Health and Safety committee works with the school nurse at Vision and Hearing screenings and the PE teacher with Jump Rope for Heart and Field Day. Recruit volunteers, collect donations, order thank you gifts and distribute the gifts for Jump Rope for Heart. For Field Day, recruit volunteers and monitor the games throughout the day.

### **Kindergym—**

This committee runs the Kindergym Program (October – April) and works in tandem with the PE teacher. Coordinates volunteers and organizes the Kindergym Olympics.

### **Manna—**

Gift card program where schools can earn a percentage on each gift card that is ordered. Responsibilities include distributing order forms to families, collecting the order forms, summarizing all orders, placing the order with Manna and distributing the gift cards.

### **Market Day—**

Distributes Market Day forms, collects them, makes sure orders are placed and are at school each month with other volunteers to unload the truck and take care of sales. This is a fundraising opportunity for PTA.

### **Multicultural—**

Responsible for Whiteley's Multicultural event. This is a chance for the diverse cultures, present in our school, to share food and entertainment from their country while teaching and familiarizing students about their culture. This is a great way to get involved in the diverse community at Whiteley.

**Newsletter—**

Collect articles from various sources via email and arrange on newsletter format, coordinates printing and distributes copies. Maintains list of email addresses for those requesting e-newsletter. Also maintains lists and sends out periodic e-News Bulletins informing parents of upcoming events/deadline dates.

**PCEE Representative—**

Attend PCEE (Parent advisory Committee for Educational Excellence) meetings which are held three times a year and are hosted by the Superintendent and reports back to the PTA. Each school can send up to three people.

**Reading Program—**

Works with Six Flags in distributing reading log sheets to all children, collects the log sheets, requests free tickets from Six Flags for all students that completed the reading program and then distributes the tickets.

**Reflections—**

Distributes entry forms and submits entries for the statewide PTA reflections contest. Contest offered to students each year giving them the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings on a specific topic in any one of several different formats such as writing, art, photography, music or poetry.

**Room Representatives/Call Chain—**

Responsible for making sure that each classroom has two room parents who plan the Halloween and Valentine's Day parties. Also sets up a call chain system to get the word out in case of school closing for weather, etc.

**Scholarship—**

Applies for lifetime memberships and state awards offered through the Illinois State PTA. These awards are generally given to retiring teachers or PTA parents who have made a significant impact in the day to day lives of our students. Also responsible for distributing Shop and Share coupons.

**School Board Liaison—**Attends District 15 School Board meetings and reports back to PTA.

**School Pictures—**Oversees and coordinates picture and re-take day in fall and spring pictures in April.

**School Supply Kits—**

Responsible for contacting a company, sending out order forms, placing an order with the company and distribution of the supply kits.

**Sixth Grade Activities—**

Generally this is a group of 6<sup>th</sup> grade parents who plan the year-end-party for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade class. Works with the 6<sup>th</sup> graders to earn money for their end of the year party and design the current year class t-shirt.

**SPARK—**

SPARK (Special Education Parents Accessing Resources and Knowledge) representative is our liaison with the district SPARK committee. This committee was formed in response to the growing needs of families whose children learn differently or have special needs.

**Special Projects—**

Assemble and distribute welcome bags to incoming Kindergarten students and purchase engraved bricks for retiring teachers.

**Spiritwear—**Sends out order forms for Spiritwear and distributes items when they come in.

**Student Recognition—**

Gives each student the opportunity to express his/her ideas, thoughts and feelings on paper regarding a specific topic. These papers are posted as a class on the bulletin board outside the cafeteria.

**Teacher Appreciation—**

Plans an event for each day for one week in May. Events for the teachers include a teacher's luncheon and a coffee/tea cart that travels to each classroom providing treats.

**Volunteer Coordinator—**

Collect, tally and organize volunteers from the Volunteer Request Form in early September. Inform PTA committees of potential volunteers for their committees.

**Website—**Responsible for maintaining our PTA website.

**Yearbook—**

Takes pictures at school events, creates collage pages for the yearbook, sells and distributes the yearbook.

## The mission of PTA is to ...



- Support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children.
- To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children.
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

Reprinted from [www.illinoispta.org](http://www.illinoispta.org)

## You may be surprised to know that the



- is the largest volunteer child advocacy organization in the U.S. with nearly six million members.
- was founded in 1897 as the National Congress of Mothers by Alice Birney, a twice-widowed working mother, who served as president, and Phoebe Hearst, mother of publisher William Randolph Hearst, who served as first vice president. Second vice president was Mrs. Adlai Stevenson, wife of the vice president of the United States.
- originated with a mission statement that called upon parents “irrespective of creed, color, or condition,” creating a commitment to tolerance long before issues of diversity came into focus.
- as early as its first convention in 1897 has advocated for sex education to be taught to children in order to decrease teen pregnancies and stop the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.
- had a voice in government even before its predominantly female members could vote. The National Congress of Mothers was a leading voice in lobbying for child health and safety issues. Their efforts were instrumental in establishment of the Children’s Bureau of the U.S. Public Health Service, passage of the 1906 Food and Drug Act, which revolutionized our nation’s food industry, and the enforcement of child labor laws.
- has acted as a media watchdog for almost 100 years. In 1910, the PTA passed a resolution recommending the supervision of motion pictures and vaudeville because of the influence these entertainment forms have on children. In 1998, PTA passed a position statement on technology safety to voice its belief that parents, the online industry, technology companies, the FCC, and content providers have a responsibility to monitor and provide quality content for children and youth.
- offers practical resources for parents and teachers on a broad range of topics ranging from strengthening family communication to dealing with TV and media violence and helping children deal with a school bully.

Sources: *The PTA Story: a Century of Commitment to Children*, published by the National PTA, 1997; *Where We Stand*, National PTA, 2000. [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

## It's all about the FUN—Friday, March 14th

. . . . And the volunteers. It is not too late to sign up and help make it a FUN night for our children. There are three shifts available and many opportunities remaining:

First: 5:15 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Second: 6:15 p.m.—7:30 p.m. Third: 7:15 p.m.—8 p.m.

Also, the earliest time that we need help is during set up from 3:30 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. and lastly there is always the clean up time from 8:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Volunteer forms have been sent home and are due by Friday, February 29th. Lost your form? There are extra copies available in the office and available on our PTA Web site.

### Just a few more reminders:

Don't forget to send in your donations for the gift baskets. The children always get so excited to see what is available in the raffle. If you signed up to donate baked goods, the cake walk chairman will be calling you soon and those donations are to be brought in the day of the Fun Fair and left on a table near the PTA workroom. Book donations should be sent to the school labeled "Book Walk for Fun Fair" and dropped off at the PTA office before or the day of the fair.

When planning your early ticket purchases, don't forget that the pop, water, and juice that night will be sold by the Sixth Grade Committee and you will need CASH for those purchases. Food purchases will require tickets.

**Advance ticket sales are going on now through Wednesday, March 5th.**

Any questions, please contact Kris Constantino at 847-358-6310 or [constantino14@comcast.net](mailto:constantino14@comcast.net).



## Donations to the classroom baskets graciously accepted through March 5th

In addition to the basket themes listed below, several local companies are donating gift baskets. Be sure to check out these wonderful baskets before the Fun Fair and pick your favorites. A flyer will be sent home indicating the date and times available for the preview.

**Crafts and Activities** (Kindergarten classes)

**Hot Wheels, All Things Girl and Puzzles** (Stanis, Strong and Abbott's first grade classes)

**Lego/Clicket, Sponge Bob and Disney Channel** (Croak, Williams and Bolger's second grade classes)

**Star Wars, Webkins, Books Galore and Chicago Sports** (Stevens, Ehrhardt, Miller and Danielczyk's 3rd graders)

**Books Galore** (Dolson's class)

**Brain Teasers** (Armamentos' class)

**Family Game Night, Scrapbooking and Nickelodeon/Nick Jr.** (McAvoy, Muehlfeld and Tomczyk's 4th grade classes)

**Art and Drawing, Candy Craze and Slumber Party** (Hyla/Versario, Zeman and Zeivel's fifth graders)

**Willy Wonka, Movie Night and All Things Music** (Bartnicke, Quinn, Slavicek & Kovarik's classes)

If you have any questions or would like to donate a basket yourself, please contact Amy Langston at [alangston@comcast.net](mailto:alangston@comcast.net)

# Fantastic th grade

Whiteley's fifth grade teachers include Cindy Zeivel, Shari Zeman, Kathy Hyla and Renee Verisario.

## News from inside the classrooms—

In social studies, we are fighting the Revolutionary War. The students are discovering so many connections between what happened in the colonies in the 1700's and what is going on in our world today. We love that they make these connections because, as George Santayana said, "Those who do not learn from history are destined to repeat it."

In science, students are mad scientists as they experiment with powders and crystals. After they discovered how all the materials respond to water, vinegar, iodine, and BTB then they use their detective skills to identify what specific substances are hidden in Mystery Mixtures. Chemistry at work.

As in every grade level, the biggest challenge facing students in the fall is rising to the increased expectations of that grade level. We work very hard to bring history alive in social studies. We begin our year with an exciting simulation about exploration called The Spanish Galleon. As we "colonize" we turn our classrooms into Colonial Williamsburg so that the students can get a feel for colonial times. The students then participate in a taxation simulation to know what the colonists felt when they were taxed without having a voice. If you walk past a 5<sup>th</sup> grade class, you might hear "No taxation without representation!"

In order to make the school day run smoother, students can consistently use their assignment notebook. What we sometimes discover is that we write the assignments in as a class, but then students fail to check it when they get home to ensure that they are doing the correct assignment and haven't forgotten to do something. While we expect students to do this independently, parents can help by giving reminders when necessary.

## Highlighting our teachers—

### Favorite subject, time of day or activity?

**Zeivel**— How could I pick just one?! Teaching elementary is wonderful because I get to teach it all. If I was forced to pick just one, it would be science because I think it makes the students look at the world through different eyes.

**Hyla**—My favorite subjects are math and social studies. I enjoy social studies because the 5<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum is hands-on and exciting. I enjoy math for a different reason. Math was my most difficult subject as a student and I vowed to make it accessible to all students when I became a teacher.

**Verisario**—My favorite subject to teach is science because of all the experimentation. I love seeing the light bulbs go on in the students' minds as they discover something new.

**Zeman**—My favorite subjects are social studies and writing. During social studies, I enjoy watching the students have their "Ah ha!" moments as they connect the past with the present. In writing, I enjoy watching students grow as writers and helping their stories come alive.

### Most unusual thing about your classrooms this year?

The most unusual thing about the 5<sup>th</sup> grade this year is that we are all blessed with smaller class sizes.

Whitley's fantastic fifth grade teaching team.  
Left to right: Kathy Hyla, Renee Verisario, Cindy Zeivel and Shari Zeman

### **Decision to become a teacher—**

**Hyla**—Growing up with troubled foster children in my home inspired me to originally become a special education teacher. I moved to the regular education classroom upon realizing that I could connect and meet the needs of ALL students.

**Verisario**—Ever since I was a little girl, I have always known that I wanted to be a teacher. I was so focused in my decision that the only college I applied to was the University of Illinois in the College of Education. Fortunately, this worked out.

**Zeman**—Since 3<sup>rd</sup> grade I wanted to be a teacher. I have always enjoyed helping and teaching those around me.

**Zeivel**—I did not always want to be a teacher. I earned my Bachelor's degree in Recreation and Park Administration because I loved working actively with children. One course I took was Outdoor Education which planted the seed for a later Master's degree in education.

### **One thing your students may not know about you that you would like to share—**

We share so much with our students that we would be surprised if they don't know everything already but...

**Verisario**—I ran in the San Diego and Chicago marathons.

**Zeman**—I am a huge disco fan, and I even have a disco ball in my basement.

**Zeivel**— On my grandfather's farm my favorite things to do were bring the cows in from the pasture, milk them and clean up after them. Oh yes, I loved my grandpa.

**Hyla**—My husband proposed to me in front of my class right here at Whiteley School.

*- Interviewed by Marnie Bushmole, Staff reporter*

## Whiteley scores at district 2-Ball competition

The end of January was a very good time for the 6th grade boys and girls who participated in the annual 2-Ball Basketball Shooting Competition. It was held at the Palatine Community Center on January 29th for the boys and the 30th for the girls.

The teams are made up of two people shooting at eight different numbered spots on the gym floor for one minute. Each team gets to compete twice. The shots must be alternated between the two participants and then the total score of both rounds is added up for their total score.

The boys teams were:

**Nathan D** and **Brandon B** - 99 points and **1st place**

**William H** and **Charlie K** - 65 points

**Andrew S** and **John F** - 61 points

**Sean L** and **Thomas M** - 50 points

**Max R** and **David O** - 49 points

The girls teams were:

**Alissa W** and **Hanna B**

**Tracy W** and **Samantha D**

- these two teams tied for **2nd place**

with 72 points each

**Kailey L** and **Caitlin M** - 55 points

**Alina P** and **Taylor D** - 45 points

**Emma F** and **Karlee B** - 42 points

I was extremely proud of everyone who participated and want to thank all the parents and teachers who came out and cheered them on.

*- Bob Harris, PE Teacher*



## February additions to the library

Whiteley students once again showed their love of books with the donations made in February. Mrs. Langston and I would like to thank all the students and families for their generous gifts to the Birthday Book Club.

<b>Dylan C</b>	<i>I Love Our Earth</i>
<b>Katherine W</b>	<i>Madison Finn</i>
<b>Yazmin R</b>	<i>The Lemonade War</i>
<b>Gyueun S</b>	<i>The Invention of Hugo Cabret</i>

I would also like to thank **Nicholas and Carson V**, the **Scharm family** and **Andrew B** for their generous donation of books. Our Resource Center certainly benefited when they cleaned off their bookshelf. Students will enjoy another *Bone* book, holiday books, several autographed copies and many others. Thanks also to **Sean L** for donating *Nightmare Hour*, **Thomas B** for *Danger after Dark*, and *Glory and Other Things on My To Do List* from **Caitlin M**. A special thanks goes out to the Korean PA.

**Mrs. Cheong** presented me with a check for \$200 to be used towards books. This will go directly towards the purchase of the new Caudill and Monarch books for the 2009 contest.

Thank you so much for your generosity.

- Julie Saez, LRC Teacher

## Illinois agriculture comes to the fourth grade

On Wednesday, February 20th, Mr. Jim Bloomstrand from the Cook County Farm Bureau presented a lesson on "Agriculture in Illinois" to all the students and teachers in fourth grade (and even a few parents).

He spent about an hour and fifteen minutes in each of the four classrooms. During that time, he shared many interesting facts about Illinois farms and agricultural products.

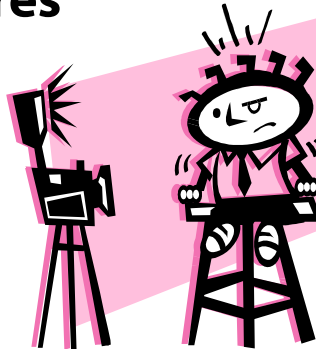
Did you know that clothes can be made from corn? Well, according to Mr. Bloomstrand, it can. And after his presentation, we believe him. Thanks Mr. Bloomstrand.

- Kathy McAvoy, Fourth grade teacher

**Right:** Fourth grade students, match up "Names to Grains" after a Cook County Farm Bureau presentation in class. Students are from right to left Madison M, Sarah K, Cole F and Joy K.

**Start preparing now**

**Spring pictures  
will be taken  
Thursday,  
April 10th**



**Further details and  
order forms will be sent home in a few  
weeks**

**and the PTA  
sponsored dance  
event is April 18th**

## *Spring* Break Ideas

If you are one of us who are without a vacation destination this spring break, then here are a few ideas to keep you and the kids entertained that week.

### **Watch a Movie—**

Whether you decide to rent or view an award winning Oscar film, make sure you know ahead of time if its okay for the kids.

Check out these sites for movie reviews:

[www.kidsinmind.com](http://www.kidsinmind.com)

[www.commonsemmedia.org](http://www.commonsemmedia.org)

### **Visit a museum or zoo—**

Plan a trip downtown or stay in the suburbs. Museum and zoo Web site listings can be found on the Parent Education page of our Web site at

[www.fcwpta.org/parent\\_ed.htm](http://www.fcwpta.org/parent_ed.htm)

Be sure to visit their sites ahead of time for hours of operation and what exhibits will be open.

## **Next SPARK program—March 31st**

### **Topic: Sexuality and Our “Kids”: A Candid Conversation**

**Location:** Winston Campus from 7 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.

**Speaker:** Linda Preston, an expert in the field of sexuality and children with disabilities

It’s an issue that a lot of us aren’t ready to wrap our brains around when it comes to “our kids”. Well, get ready for this candid conversations. Bring your simple and complex questions to Linda for wonderful and sensitive answers and approaches to this sometimes daunting issue.

SPARK programs are free and open to all parents and educators. For more information, contact Lisa Traina at 847-358-7828. SPARK is a Northwest Suburban Council of PTSA Committee serving families and children with special needs in District 15.

## Spring is coming—News from Environmental Ed

Are you as ready as we are for the snow to disappear and warmer weather to arrive? With the thoughts of Spring, we often think of flowers, rain and spring cleaning (usually not with much joy). If your home is like ours was, you probably have a plethora of window, bathroom and kitchen cleaners, sprays and powders under your sink. Have you ever thought of using natural products you most likely already have in your home for cleaning purposes? What did our ancestors do before they could go to the store to buy Windex, Bam, Tilex, 409 etc...? They used items like baking soda, vinegar, rubbing alcohol and cornstarch.

Did you know that vinegar dissolves dirt, soap scum and hard water deposits? Or, that it is a natural deodorizer and cuts detergent residue, softens water, cuts through grease and removes mildew, yet is gentle enough to use on wood floors? Baking soda has a mild abrasive action and natural deodorizing and cleaning properties; which makes it an excellent environmentally friendly replacement for harsh commercial scouring powders. Isopropyl alcohol is an excellent disinfectant and produces the shiniest mirrors and windows when used for cleaning.

Not only is the use of natural products better for the environment...less toxic chemicals into the water stream to be processed and less plastic in the landfills... it is easier on the pocketbook. Once you get into the practice of using natural cleaning methods, it becomes easier and easier.

Here are some web sites to check out if you are interested in learning more:

[www.organizedhome.com](http://www.organizedhome.com)    [www.vanessagift.com/cleaning\\_recipes.htm](http://www.vanessagift.com/cleaning_recipes.htm) (my favorite)

### No Streak Window Cleaner

¼ cup white vinegar, 1 Tbsp cornstarch, 1 quart warm water    Combine and mix well, use in a spray bottle, keep for later

\*\*\*\*\*

Equal parts white vinegar and warm water.    Combine and mix, use in a spray bottle, keep for later

\*\*\*\*\*

Equal parts isopropyl alcohol and water.    Combine and mix, use in a spray bottle. Keep for later

### All Purpose Cleaner

½ cup vinegar, ¼ cup baking soda (or 2 Tsp borax), ½ gallon water

Combine, put in a plastic bottle (or spray bottle) and keep to use

Earth Week is coming in April.....keep your eyes open around Whiteley during the month of April.

- Abby K and Korene Palazzo  
PTA Environmental Education Committee

Junior Girl Scout Troop 3648  
(THE Environmental Educational Committee at  
Whiteley) pose with their various recycling bins  
between the front doors of the school.



## provides funds for PTA programs

To date, Market Day has made over **\$1900** for Whiteley PTA. This is very close to our target goal of \$2000 for the year and we still have three more Market Day deliveries to come..

Our thanks to all those Whiteley families who have supported us with their business and also to the volunteers who have been so dedicated in helping us over the past few months.

These include: **Tomoko Kinoshita, Colleen Fear and Clarissa Pawlikowski.**  
We are a success thanks to you.

*- Judi Offord and Barb Downing  
PTA Market Day Chairpersons*

## Manna gift card program update



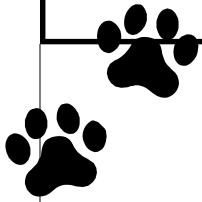
Thanks so much to all the families who have supported the Manna Program so far this year. It is a great way to raise money for PTA by simply buying gift cards to make your usual purchases at stores, restaurants, gas stations... PTA benefits the moment you purchase the gift cards and the gift cards/certificates are the EXACT ones you would get if you bought them directly. Purchasing through Manna saves you in gas money because the cards/certificates are delivered right to your child's classroom.

### Here are some ways that others have told me they use Manna:

- \* "I knew I was going to buy a new TV, so I purchased Best Buy gift cards through Manna and bought the TV with them."
- \* "I always know I'm going to shop at Jewel, so I just purchase a few \$100 gift cards and take them with me when I shop."
- \* "I buy Kohl's gift cards and use them at the store to pay off my Kohl's credit card."
- \* "I'm going to Disney over spring break, so I'll get Disney cards to pay for part of the trip."
- \* "We purchase restaurant cards so we remember to plan some fun time out for our family each month."

We have earned **\$773.47** in profits through the Manna program so far this year! Our next order will be **due on March 12th** and will be delivered in time for Spring Break. Let's shoot for \$1,000 for PTA this year.

Questions about Manna? Contact Mary Whiteside at 847-991-6036 or [mary.whiteside@comcast.net](mailto:mary.whiteside@comcast.net)



## A Wildcat thank you goes to ...

**Whiteley room parents**—for the organizing and implementing wonderful Valentine’s Day parties for our students and answering the “call” and manning the phones during our recent snow days.

*- Jennifer Kiobassa and Rachel Scharm  
PTA Room Representatives/Call Chain Committee*

**Ms. Muehfeld’s (4th grade) and Ms. Williams’ (2nd grade) classes**—who were our January box tops winners. Ms. Williams second graders collected 499 box tops and Ms. Muehfeld’s fourth graders collected 424 box tops. The second graders chose to have a fruit rollup party and the fourth graders will enjoy a brownie party.

*- Denise Pitcher, PTA Box Top Coordinator*

**Everyone who volunteered**—to count the children “jump” during our JumpRope for Heart campaign. A special thank you to those who volunteered for several classrooms, with or without their own children in them. It shows our PTA is working together for all of the children at our school.

*- Candy Borst and Sue Priebe, PTA Health and Safety Committee*

## March Madness is here—Are you ready?



Congratulations to all the students who helped make our last campaign a success.

**Each student has the chance to win this month.** Watch your backpack for a special shamrock challenge along with additional information on where else you can find box top points.

**Save 10 and win!** You can win more than one prize, enter often. Be sure your child fills in his/her name and teacher’s name.

Any time your page is filled, bring it to the rainbow and wishing well near the library. Prizes will be awarded at the end of March. (Extra copies of the challenge form can be found near the front doors.)

A new contest will start the first week of April. Be sure to watch your upcoming newsletter.

Savings box tops does help. Thanks for your support.

*- Denise Pitcher, PTA Box Top Coordinator*





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2007 IL PTA Web site Award of Merit  
2007 IL PTA Newsletter Award of Excellence  
2006 IL PTA Newsletter Honorable Mention

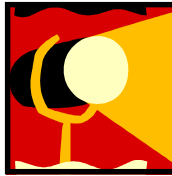
## Stay up-to-date on what is happening with school start times for next year—

Bell schedule proposals and bus route plans will be posted on our PTA Web site as soon as they are made available to the public from the District's Web site.

Be sure to bookmark—  
[www.fcwpta.org](http://www.fcwpta.org)



and check  
back often.



# Spotlight on the Board Notes from the District 15 School Board meetings

*Spotlight on the Board* is a synopsis of notes and recordings taken at the District 15 School Board meetings by Frank C. Whiteley PTA's school board liaison, Jennifer Mondy. They are meant to help parents and staff who are unable to attend the Board meetings on a regular basis to keep informed about the issues and plans affecting the district. These Notes are not endorsed by District 15 or the Board of Education.

Highlights from the February 13th Regular meeting—

### Recommended 2008-2009 Transportation Plan

A revised flexible three-tier bell schedule proposal, with four start times within each tier, was recently presented to the Board. Concerns over student safety at several schools were raised to the administration by parents. Board members requested additional information on costs, afternoon route times, the length of time between routes and projected cost savings. Further discussion was halted and a motion to postpone the vote on the recommended plan was approved 5:1. The transportation department will refine the proposal for Board approval at the March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

To view: [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15\\_FY09\\_bell\\_schedule\\_proposal.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15_FY09_bell_schedule_proposal.pdf)

### Discussion of Appropriate Fund Balances

Continuing a discussion initiated at the January meeting, further explanation was provided for the rationale of a Board policy for maintaining fund balances between 25% and 33% as a guideline for budget making. Board concerns expressed were that there was no need for a policy, the district may elect to build funds over time for capital projects and fund balances should be a decision made by each Board.

### Authorize Finance Committee to Review and Suggest Cost Saving Measures – Including Health Care/Wellness Options

The Finance Committee's goals, as well as a specific task to look into healthcare options, were put forward for Board approval. Several Board members opposed the plan citing concerns over budget assumptions being made and the appearance of an Executive Committee. Finance Committee members countered the objections stating that voting did not take place; its goal was to facilitate bringing cost saving measures to the Board and proposed a change to the charter to come to a resolution. A motion to authorize the charter failed 4:2.

### FY2008-2009 Tentative Budget – Version V

The tentatively approved balanced budget includes an increase in student fees, assumes a three-tier transportation/bell schedule, average class sizes of 24.3 (grades K-3) and 25.6 (grades 4-6) and no capital improvements. Hearings and adoption of the budget are scheduled for the March meeting.

Full detailed notes for this meeting and all past meetings can be found at [www.fcwpta.org/board\\_notes.htm](http://www.fcwpta.org/board_notes.htm)

The next scheduled Regular Board of Education meeting will be held **Wednesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m.** at Sundling Junior High on Smith Street in Palatine.