

Principally Speaking

THE MISSION OF THE WHATELY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IS TO PREPARE OUR STUDENTS IN A SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY TO BE CONFIDENT, RESPONSIBLE, LIFE-LONG LEARNERS.

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Dear Whately Families,

As September comes to a close, I want to take this opportunity to thank some of the people that have helped to make our school and campus more beautiful!

Many of you have seen the beautiful murals in our Nurse's Office that were painted by our Office Superstars, Mary Lesenski and Lola Stone and by Pre-K Assistant Superstar, Nancy Leva. I also want to thank Lola Stone, her father Henri Blais, Mary Lesenski and Ralph Lovering for making our Whately Train look so beautiful! Thanks also go out to Mary once again for donating and planting beautiful flowers in the spot that once had the blue art sculpture. And ongoing thanks to Brent Young who has in the past and continues to bring beautiful plants and flowers to our campus!

These superstars are our local heroes! They know the value of having a beautiful, warm, and welcoming school and workplace! It brightens the days of our students and staff alike and visitors always comment on the beauty of our campus. A BIG THANKS to you all!



A congratulations and a tremendous thank you to **Ms. Hurley for 20 years** and **Mr. Lovering for 30 years** of service to Whately Elementary School.

Please take a few moments to review the articles contained in this month's newsletter as they each are important and may answer questions that you have about what we do and why we do it!

Looking forward to a fun and productive school year!
Best regards,

Mr. C
Principal

DATE REMINDERS...

Oct

- 3.....School Committee Meeting @ 7:00
- 5.....School Council @ 5:30 p.m.
- 5.....PTO Meeting @ **3:30.**
- 6.....Open House 6 – 7 p.m.
- 7.....Grades 1 & 2 to Northfield Mountain
- 10..... Columbus Day / NO SCHOOL
- 13..... Picture Day ☺ SMILE!!
- 16..... PTO Fall Family Fun Day – see flyer
- 29..... PTO Halloween Party

Nov

- 2-4 ½ days – Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 2-4 Scholastic Book Fair – volunteers needed



Volunteer Services

Needed @ Whately for lunch/recess

Safety is always at the forefront here at Whately Elementary. The better we supervise our children, the safer they will be. Mr. C would love to have a few more sets of eyes helping out at our Lunch and Recess times.

We welcome any parents or grandparents who may be available during the week between 11:15 AM and 12:45 PM to call Mary, 665-7826, and set up a time to meet with Mr. C to discuss your interest in this important volunteer opportunity.

Please Check-In at the Office

As mentioned before in *Principally Speaking*, we want all of our families to feel welcome and comfortable in our school building. We also have an important need to balance that welcome with **safety needs** and an uninterrupted work environment for our students and staff. We respectfully request that if you have business in our building during the school day, even if it is just dropping off a hat or gloves for your child, that you begin every visit by checking in at the Main Office where you will be asked to sign-in. Whenever possible, we would like to keep the classroom routine uninterrupted. If you have an appointment, we are happy to let that staff member know that you have arrived. These procedures also help us to know who is in the building at all times, thus maintaining safety for all staff and students. Thank you for your cooperation with this important matter.

Parent Contact Info/ Emergency Info

If you are a family that has more than one household where you would like mailings sent to, please make sure to call or see Mary Lesenski in our Main Office to make sure that we have all of the correct mailing address information and phone numbers. We also want to make sure that we have accurate and up-to-date emergency contact information. If there have been any changes to your contact information please let us know!



RECESS

Recess is a great way for kids to have some exercise, fresh air, and unstructured fun time during the school day. It is also the place where many age-appropriate dynamics, some positive, some not, will take place. Here are a few reminders that will make our recess times fun and happy for all! Please review these with your children.

- Children should be dressed appropriately for playing and for the weather: boots, hats and mittens when it's cold, sneakers and comfortable clothes when it's warmer.
- Teach your child things such as coming in as soon as they hear the whistle or bell, staying in designated areas, and notifying an adult of any accidents or bullying.
- Remind your child that playground supervisors are available at all times to help them with any questions or situation.
- Always COOPERATE with the directions of the supervisors respectfully.
- Always COOPERATE with the directions and rules of the games being played.
- Stay within boundaries of playground. Always be within sight of supervisors.

- Always use APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE and voice volume.
- Play safely. Keep all rocks, sticks, dirt, bark, snowballs and pinecones on the ground.
- Do not attempt to move anyone who may be injured- contact a supervisor immediately.
- All games are open to all students.
- If you build a snow fort or a twig fort or twig fairy house, it should be available for all students [to respectfully play with]. There is no guarantee that your fort or design will last beyond your recess period.
- Check in with supervisor before going to and returning from restroom.
- Consideration of others, HONESTY and FAIR PLAY is expected at all times.
- All games should be for the purpose of FUN, not about winning. You will have opportunities for competition in your recreation leagues and other places.
- Older children should always try and BE NICE and give extra opportunities to play to the younger children.
- Play fighting is not allowed. Fighting - There is ZERO tolerance for fighting, whether physical or verbal. All fights will be referred to principal.

Safety On The Bus!

Please remind your children that their behavior expectations on our school buses are the same expectations that we have for them in school. They should be seated whenever the bus is moving, their voice volume should be appropriate for chatting with a friend seated nearby, and their feet should remain out of the aisles, and hands, arms and heads should never be sticking out of a window.

Language on the bus should be appropriate at all times and the Bus Driver has the final say if he or she determines that a behavior is unsafe or if a student needs to move to another seat. It is also understood that writing on the seats or wall or throwing anything from the windows or any other forms of vandalism are strictly forbidden.



Reminder from the office:

Please be sure to date all notes that you send in to us.



Student Arrival Safety

The number of students dropped off by family vehicles in the morning is greater than ever before. It is important that we make SAFETY the priority for our children.

Here are some guidelines for keeping drop off time safe.

- You can always feel free to park in our lot **or** on the far side of the bus circle (away from the school building) and walk your child to the door.
- If your children are old enough and capable, you can drop them off and let them come in on their own from either the back parking lot area or anywhere along the bus turnaround circle.
- Between 8:30 AM and 8:45 AM, please DO NOT park or drop off students in the bus stopping area along the sidewalk in front of the school. Our buses tend to arrive right around 8:40 and having cars in that area will add to congestion and un-safe conditions.
- Please give your child regular reminders about traffic safety and the safest way to cross a street and our roads here in front of the school.

Student Dismissal Safety

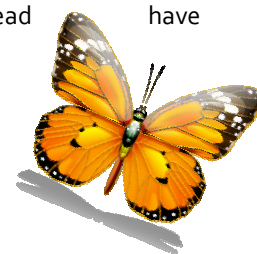
We do our best to keep all of our children safe during the course of the school day. We want them to be just as safe when we dismiss them into the care of family or caretakers and when they ride the bus. Here are a few reminders about the protocol we use to best insure student safety.

First, it's important for us to know if your child will be riding a bus home or getting picked up by an adult. For some families, this never changes. The kids are *always* picked up or *always* ride the bus. If you have a child that does both it will be necessary for you to **provide the student's travel schedule for an entire week at a time whenever possible**. This is best given to us in the form of **a note from a parent that is delivered to the Main Office**. We will then make it our priority to add or remove you student from the bus list on any given day and keep a record of when they will be picked up by an adult.

It's very important that we are informed of **any changes** in a student's dismissal arrangements. This includes **any change around riding the bus or not, any change about which bus stop the student will be getting off at, and any change about the adult picking up the child will be**. Please remember that any adult besides the parent that will be picking up your child should be on our **approved adult pick-up list**. Please feel free to stop by or call our office if you want to make sure that our list matches your approved pick-up providers. Please call Mary in the Main Office if you have any questions about this and thanks in advance for your cooperation!

News from Preschool... We have started our year off with six girls and four boys in our program. We have been busy learning our new friends' names through songs, pictures and books. Owls are adorning our welcome bulletin board and soon we will have each child's picture up there wearing an owl mask they made! We have read books about owls and have done some activities on the smart board also. We have made paper bodies of ourselves that we will use either as puppets or put them on our ALL ABOUT ME booklets. Gym time is one of our favorite activities. We love to meander through an obstacle course as we roll, go over bolsters, jump on trampolines, crawl through tunnels and run around cones. Pulling each other on scooter boards is also fun! Nancy has brought in chrysalis' that have begun to turn into butterflies. The children enjoy watching this life cycle in process. Then we release them outdoors, watch as they soar above our heads and try to catch them in flight. Painted hand and foot prints will soon be added to our walls. Sally, our Speech Pathologist, has brought some fun games into our room and we play them as a group or in small sessions. Mr. and Mrs. Potato Head have been a big hit. Soon she will lead us in Second Step, a curriculum about feelings. We love playing and learning in Preschool with our teachers.

Susan, Nancy & Sally



NEWS FROM KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten is off to a great start! We have been working hard to learn all the new school routines and everyone is doing a great job.

We began the year by focusing on nursery rhymes. The children enjoy reciting and singing them, retelling them using pictures, and acting them out. Nursery rhymes are wonderful for developing rhyming skills and spatial concepts such as over, under, in, on, and beside.

We recently began our Literacy Centers. During this time I work with small groups of children on literacy skills, such as phonemic awareness, reading, writing, and oral language. The children who are not working in a small group will choose to go to a Literacy Area. These areas are Library, Listening, Big Books, and ABC Area.

In the afternoon we have time for math. We used shapes to make pictures in art and have been sorting different materials such as buttons, beans, shells and even ourselves. Another important afternoon activity is Choice Time. The children can choose to go to Art Area, Legos, blocks, play doh, drama, or the easel. This is a favorite time of day!

An important goal for our kindergarten is to build a friendly and safe community of learners. During the first few weeks of school, all the areas of the room were introduced slowly so that the children could learn how we would be together as a class.

As part of the process, we created our own rules that we posted in the class and we all signed.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the Open House on October 6.

Ms. Vicki Sittig

NEWS FROM FIRST GRADE...

Welcome to the First Grade Classroom! This is my 29th year teaching at Whately Elementary School, so I'm beginning to encounter some familiar faces (former students who now have children in Grade One.) I taught Kindergarten for 7 years and then moved to Grade One. Whately is a very special community that highly values and supports education and I am honored to be teaching the children of this community.



Among the many exciting things happening in First Grade is watching the life cycle of the monarch butterfly! Observing and studying the transformation of a monarch caterpillar into a monarch butterfly has been our unit of study for the Life Science component of our Union #38 Science Curriculum. The first graders have been captivated by closely watching the life cycle stages: egg to caterpillar (larva) to chrysalis (pupa) to adult butterfly. They have also learned some impressive scientific words such as larva, pupa, chrysalis, metamorphosis, proboscis (drinking tube). By connecting 3 straws together we made our own proboscis and tried drinking like a butterfly! In studying the life of monarch butterflies we naturally had to use a map and a globe to find out why these butterflies leave us in the winter (change of seasons in the Northern Hemisphere) and where they go. We identified which of the seven continents we live on, located the North and South Poles and learned the cardinal direction north and south. We have been reading many books about monarch butterflies and found out that most fly to Mexico, so we located Mexico on the map and the globe. The first graders then discovered that if butterflies flew from Whately to Mexico they would be heading south to a warmer climate! Nurse Juli, who went to Mexico last year and visited one of the high-altitude oyamel fir forests that is a monarch wintering site, shared her beautiful photos of thousands of monarchs covering tree after tree! We also watched a docudrama titled **The Butterfly King**. The first graders learned that monarch caterpillars face a lot of dangers such as: lawn mowers (especially in large fields where a lot of milkweed may be growing), pesticides, spiders, wasps and tachina flies. Fortunately birds do not eat the monarch caterpillars or butterflies (the milkweed will make them sick).

Our Teddy Bears have come to school for the month of September and we are keeping them quite busy! We did individual rewrites of the poem **Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear** and drew illustrations to match the poem. Our bears love math and have helped us with graphing and recording their fur colors. We also used unifix cubes to measure how tall each bear is. We

recorded the height of all the bears on individual recording sheets. We got a lot of number writing practice doing this and we all have a permanent record of each teddy bear's height. We have read many, many books about teddy bears. Some favorites are **P.B. Bears Treasure Hunt** (a rebus story) and **Corduroy's Lost Button**. We have a fun game we play called "Who Has Corduroy's Lost Button? Another book, **The First Teddy Bear** by Helen Kay told us the story about the very first teddy bear and how it got its name. Do you know who the teddy bear was named after (hint: a U.S. President)?

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at Open House on October 6th. You will get to see all the hard work your child(ren) have been doing in first grade. I will have a sign up sheet out for November conference times so be sure to sign up before you leave.

We will be going to Northfield Mountain on Friday, October 7th, for the Woodchucks, Warblers, & Whirligigs Program. We will be going by bus, in the morning, and we will back in time for lunch at school.

Ann Collette



NEWS FROM SECOND GRADE...

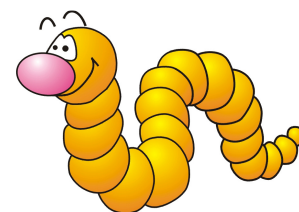
We have been off to a busy start in second grade. September has been a time to get reacquainted with one another and to really build our classroom routines. We have welcomed Savannah to our classroom as a new Whately student. Mrs. Pittelli also joins us after working in Deerfield last year. We are excited to have them join us!

The biggest area we have worked on is our literacy time. This year, we will be using a structure called Daily 5, during which the students will work independently while others are meeting in reading groups. The students can choose from reading, writing, word work, listen to reading, or computer. We had to start slowly and build our stamina for how long the class can work independently. Our class stamina began at just 3 minutes, but has rapidly built that work stamina to 20 minutes and sometimes more. They are very proud of this accomplishment.

Math has been mainly review thus far, again learning routines and working independently. The students were excited to have a math book to work from this year! In science we are learning about insects and life cycles. We are watching the life cycle of a mealworm and have just recently seen them change from the larva stage to the pupa stage. We will be taking a field trip to Northfield Mountain to add to our learning!

I look forward to seeing parents and families at our Open House on October 6!

Erica Fisher





News from Third Grade...Dear Parents,

Wow! It's hard to believe we've completed our first month of school together. I am thrilled to be working with such a bright and enthusiastic group of third graders! This year, we welcome back Ardis P. Ardis was a student here in preschool and has returned to Whately Elementary with her twin brothers Judson and Walker. Welcome back, Ardis! We have spent this past month getting reacquainted with one another and learning the routines of the day. The third graders have written their classroom rules, along with their personal "hopes and dreams" for the year. We have all agreed that it is important to use good self control and to be a kind "bucket filler," every day.

We recently completed a mini unit of study on leaves. We collected leaves from the school grounds, categorized them, measured them, and graphed the results. We even painted our very own leaf banners that have added a fall-like feel to our classroom. Do you know why leaves change color in the fall? Ask a third grader! We've now moved on to learning about simple machines. The third graders have learned that there are 6 simple machines that operate on manpower, only. We will be doing several experiments to find out how they help to make our work easier.

During our literacy time we have read several nonfiction selections from *National Geographic* and *Time for Kids*. These wonderful publications have helped us to activate prior knowledge while learning new information about sea life and lava. We discussed cause and effect using an article about hurricane Irene, then applied this same concept to the West African folktale, Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears, by Verna Aardema. We will be starting guided reading groups soon.

The third graders are becoming wonderful writers! So far, we have written Haiku and shape poems. Haiku is a Japanese form of poetry that consists of 3 lines. It follows a 5, 7, 5 syllable pattern. Shape poems consist of words strung together to form the shape of the poem's subject. Please stop by to see our hallway bulletin board featuring the "Top 5 Things You Need to Know" about each third grader.

Special thanks to Kathy Blodgett and Wendy Bobala for donations of class snack and classroom supplies. I am looking forward to seeing all of you at Open House on October 6th!

Jennifer Kellogg



NEWS FROM FOURTH GRADE...

We are off to a great start in 4th grade. What an energetic and enthusiastic group of 20 we have! We are having a great time learning about the Earth, sun, and the moon, as well as really big numbers. I am looking forward to seeing 4th grade families at Open House on October 6th. Please bring



your calendar so you can sign up for a parent conference time. I will keep the monthly newsletter article short and sweet since there is a weekly newsletter that comes home on the front of your child's Friday folder with detailed information about all the exciting learning taking place in our classroom. This classroom newsletter is also posted on our classroom web page if you do not have access to your child's Friday folder each week. Please feel free to contact me at school if you ever have a question or feel the need to give me information about your child that might affect their day in the classroom. My email address is apanells@wes.whately.ma.us. You can also call (665-7826) and I will get back to you if I am not available. Happy Fall!

Mrs. Apanell



NEWS FROM FIFTH GRADE...

Welcome George B. and welcome back Juddy and Walker P. to 5th grade here in Whately. We're delighted that you have joined our community. I am also excited to have Miss Lauren Chenausky working with our class this year. Miss "C" and I are looking forward to learning together with all these fabulous fifth graders.

Morning meeting begins each day. This part of our day gives us a time and place to explore and practice skills merging social, emotional, and intellectual learning. Morning meeting also nurtures empathy by allowing children an opportunity to practice caring for one another. We will incorporate this with our "character traits"; respect, determination, responsibility, perseverance, fairness, trustworthiness, honesty, citizenship, caring, generosity, and ambition. These traits are the basis for how we learn, work and play together each day as fifth graders.

Nature's Classroom was an unbelievable experience! The weather was fantastic, except for some rain on Thursday, certainly not enough to dampen our spirits or activities! We were able to do all the planned hikes and night experiences without worrying about the weather. The dining experience each day with the "Ort Report Baby" certainly gave us a better understanding of food waste, what is involved to get that food to our plates and what we can do to eliminate the waste. Did you know that the average American throws away 1.5 pounds of food each day? The "night experience" and Back to Basics, was a science, social studies and nature extravaganza and the TNL show was a HOOT! What actors and comedians we have in Union #38 schools! During transition time, "GaGa Ball" was a huge hit, along with the big slide, boulder room, basketball, whiffle ball, and just plain hanging out in the cabin was a lot of fun. In large part, the week's success was due to the partnership Conway and Whately chaperones developed. A great big THANK YOU to our Conway friends, Mr. Zagroda, Miss Sally and Mrs.



Bussler as well as our very own Mr. Capuano, for watching over the children and beyond!! It truly was an unforgettable week in so many ways. Thank you for putting your trust in us to care for your children.

The compliment chain has begun to grow! The fifth graders are working together as a community, to reach the floor with a chain of compliments (paper clips). When this happens they will be treated to a movie and popcorn in our classroom. Compliments are earned only when the whole class community has worked successfully together.

In mathematics, we are learning about place value with whole numbers and decimals and reading and understanding story problems. We are also learning how to explain, in writing, our thinking in math.

Classification and Invertebrates are headlining our science unit. We are learning about organisms in one of the five kingdoms by growing and observing mold on food. We are making observations each day and recording our findings on our lab sheets. We are also making a book, The ABC's of Invertebrates. Soon, we will be cleaning out our class garden to plant a fall crop of lettuce.

The beginning of the year is always filled with assessments of one kind or another. But we have managed to find time to write about our summer read, "All About Me" and begun to write about our Nature's Classroom experience. In reading, we are enjoying the myth each week in the Daily Hampshire Gazette, current events in our Scholastic News and great science in our National Geographic Explorer. What a great group of readers and writers we have!

Last week we met our Preschool Buddies for the first time. Each week we will go into PK and read to our buddies. It's such a special relationship that we will develop with these little people over the year.

Sometimes someone might forget a morning snack, or we feel like a little pick-me-up in the afternoon between math and writing; so, if you would like to donate a healthy snack to our snack cupboard, all donations are greatly appreciated.

I'm looking forward to meeting all of you at our Open House on Oct. 6th.

Thanks,
K. O'Rourke



NEWS FROM SIXTH GRADE...

We are having a fantastic start to the school year. The Sixth Grade went on an exciting team building adventure at Morse Hill last week and are now hard at work. For more detailed information, please see our weekly newsletter.

Dave Grout



NEWS FROM THE COUNSELOR'S CORNER...

This year I am truly wearing "dos sombreros", functioning both as the school counselor and Spanish teacher for grades K-6. It's very exciting to share my passion for this language and culture with almost the entire Whately student community.

Kindergarten students will begin Spanish in January, but all the other classes have already met and picked up where we left off last June.

Speaking as Whately's school counselor, I am always available to your family as a counselor, which is my first priority. Please feel free to contact me at the school via phone or email (shafrans@wes.whately.ma.us) anytime concerning your child(ren).

Stephanie B. Shafran aka Estefanía
School Counselor and Spanish Teacher



NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY...

Welcome back to the Whately Elementary School for some, and welcome to others. While Mrs. King is home enjoying baby Ella, I have the opportunity to work with the students in the library. This year will bring books, research, and technology skills to your students in the library. While many things in the library remain the same, Mrs. King ordered plenty of new books for your students' enjoyment this year, and there are also library projects, and an updated website,

<https://sites.google.com/site/whatelyelementaryschoollibrary/>.

Would you like to see any of the changes in the library, or remind yourself of pleasant earlier years? I am looking for some parent volunteers during the day, specifically for the younger grades. I am also looking for donations of craft supplies – pipe cleaners, ribbons, stickers, etc – which would be put to use. I have been enjoying all of the wonderful students and teachers at this gem of a school nestled in the country.

Mrs. Rigollaud

News from the Speech-Language Room

Hi! Hey! Yo! Hello! There are so many ways to say things. I wonder how we figure out which words work best in which setting. Most kids notice how people around them behave, talk and react. They learn by watching and imitating. Language is a socially based behavior. Our need for social connectedness makes us amazingly adept at noticing words, tone of voice and especially body language.

We are focusing on politeness here at Whately. Showing politeness is a way of making others comfortable. We make people comfortable when we do what is expected. We learn that some mannerisms, some jokes and some words are ok with friends and family. We may have other words, jokes and body language that we use at school. The way we talk to Mr. C

is different than the way we talk to our best buddies at a pizza party.

Of course, becoming expert at these different ways of talking is a process. It comes easier to some of us than to others. Making things go smoothly in the complex social world we live in is not always easy. We all make mistakes.

At Whately, we are learning that our words and our tone of voice can make someone feel respected. Our eyes and our smiles can show empathy. Small behaviors like chewing with your mouth closed, waving or holding a door matter. All of these tiny, seemingly mundane things we do every day help us make connections with our classmates and teachers. These acts are politeness.

Sally Rice
Speech-language pathologist

News from the Whately Peer Mediators – the Peacers

Our school is lucky to have a program started more than 10 years ago by Ms. Shafran and Ms. Hurley. It is called Peer Mediation. Peer mediators perform an important and challenging service at our school. When students are involved in a conflict and can't handle it themselves, mediators act as a third party to help them talk out the problem and come to a win/win solution. They receive extensive training and meet as a group throughout the year to gain new skills.

This year we welcome back our experienced sixth grade

Peacers:

Sam B.	Kelsey J.
Coleman P.	Brianna T.
Xena W. H.	

We welcome our new Peacers, who are being trained the last week of September:

Connor P.	Caitlynn D.
Larkin C.	Kelsey C.
Ryan L.	William P.
Josiah M.	Lillian L. S.

Thanks to all of these students who take time from their busy schedules and make Whately a better place to be.

Sally Rice, Peer Mediation Advisor

WHATELY PTO

The Whately PTO is back in full swing after a beautiful summer. For new families, our PTO is primarily a fund-raising organization, providing the school with money for each classroom teacher, the library, playground, scholarships and more. We also use our resources to hold several PTO sponsored events for our children. Come to our next



meeting on **October 5th at 3:30** to learn more.

October will be a busy time for the PTO and a great time to get involved in some way to help our school. On October 16th at 3pm we will be having our first ever Fall Family Fun Day. Join in for a hayride, bonfire, face painting, scarecrow making and pumpkin carving. Please see attached flyer.

Our first, and ongoing fundraiser is our quilt raffle. Tickets have already been sold at the Old Deerfield Craft Fair. If you have a business or event that you would like to sell tickets at, please contact the PTO and we can arrange it!

At the end of October, we will hold our annual Halloween Party, which will be on October 29th this year. Watch your email and backpacks for more info

We hope that everyone is back in the swing of school and off to a successful start! We hope to see you soon!

Scholastic Book Fair-Volunteers needed:

Michelle Rubin is chairing the Scholastic Book Fair. The Fair will take place in the afternoons, during the parent teacher conferences on November 2 -4th.

If you are able to assist with the Fair, please call Michelle at 773-8684.

Fire and Life Safety Corner

We are preparing for Fire Prevention Week here at WES. FPW is the week that Oct 9th falls in each year. Firefighter Jason will be here October 4th to hand out FPW materials during lunch. We will also be conducting fall fire safety lessons in November so look for "homework" from the fire department during those dates.

Commemorating a conflagration

Fire Prevention Week was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire, the tragic 1871 conflagration that killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres. The fire began on October 8, but continued into and did most of its damage on October 9, 1871.

According to popular legend, the fire broke out after a cow - belonging to Mrs. Catherine O'Leary - kicked over a lamp, setting first the barn, then the whole city on fire. Chances are you've heard some version of this story yourself; people have been blaming the Great Chicago Fire on the cow and Mrs. O'Leary, for more than 130 years. But recent research by Chicago historian Robert Cromie has helped to debunk this version of events.

The 'Moo' myth

Like any good story, the 'case of the cow' has some truth to it. The great fire almost certainly started near the barn where

Mrs. O'Leary kept her five milking cows. But there is no proof that O'Leary was in the barn when the fire broke out - or that a jumpy cow sparked the blaze. Mrs. O'Leary herself swore that she'd been in bed early that night, and that the cows were also tucked in for the evening.

But if a cow wasn't to blame for the huge fire, what was? Over the years, journalists and historians have offered plenty of theories. Some blamed the blaze on a couple of neighborhood boys who were near the barn sneaking cigarettes. Others believed that a neighbor of the O'Leary's may have started the fire. Some people have speculated that a fiery meteorite may have fallen to earth on October 8, starting several fires that day - in Michigan and Wisconsin, as well as in Chicago.



The biggest blaze that week

While the Great Chicago Fire was the best-known blaze to start during this fiery two-day stretch, it wasn't the biggest. That distinction goes to the Peshtigo Fire, the most devastating forest fire in American history. The fire, which also occurred on October 8th, 1871, and roared through Northeast Wisconsin, burning down 16 towns, killing 1,152 people, and scorching 1.2 million acres before it ended.

Historical accounts of the fire say that the blaze began when several railroad workers clearing land for tracks unintentionally started a brush fire. Before long, the fast-moving flames were whipping through the area 'like a tornado,' some survivors said. It was the small town of Peshtigo, Wisconsin that suffered the worst damage. Within an hour, the entire town had been destroyed.

Eight decades of fire prevention

Those who survived the Chicago and Peshtigo fires never forgot what they'd been through; both blazes produced countless tales of bravery and heroism. But the fires also changed the way that firefighters and public officials thought about fire safety. On the 40th anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire, the Fire Marshals Association of North America (today known as the [International Fire Marshals Association](http://www.internationalfiremarshals.org)), decided that the anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire should henceforth be observed not with festivities, but in a way that would keep the public informed about the importance of fire

prevention. The commemoration grew incrementally official over the years.

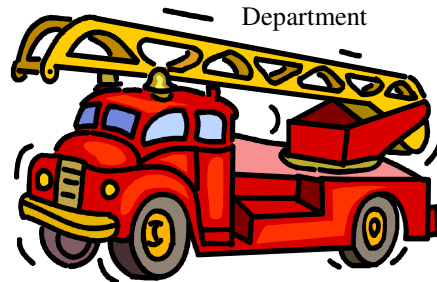
In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson issued the first National Fire Prevention Day proclamation, and since 1922, Fire Prevention Week has been observed on the Sunday through Saturday period in which October 9 falls. According to the National Archives and Records Administration's Library Information Center, Fire Prevention Week is the longest running public health and safety observance on record. The President of the United States has signed a proclamation proclaiming a national observance during that week every year since 1925.

Well that's enough for this month and as always if you have any questions or suggestions for programs email me at

Jason_dorval@comcast.net

Jason K. Dorval FF/EMT-P

Public Fire and Life Safety Education Coordinator
Whately Fire Department



Whately PTO invites you to:

Join other Whately Elementary families for a fun,
FREE day of Fall play!



Fall Family Fun Day
October 16, 2011 @ 3 p.m.*
Whately Elementary School

Scarecrow Making
Face Painting, Hayrides
Pumpkin Carving
Jack O Lantern Lighting at Dusk, & Bonfire
Refreshments courtesy of the PTO

*Weather permitting

Please detach and return this portion to let us know how you will be able to help make this event special.

Name _____ Phone _____
Email _____

Ways to help (circle any):

Pumpkin Donation, Candle Donation
clothes, pantyhose, hats & hay for scarecrows
bonfire (construction and wood donation)
Baking. set-up or clean-up

Please let us know if you have **any other ideas or ways to help
with this new event. Thanks!**

Questions? Please contact Niki Lankowski: 413-627-7322

or reggieandjem@concast.net





Free!! SOUTHERN FRANKLIN COUNTY PLAYGROUP

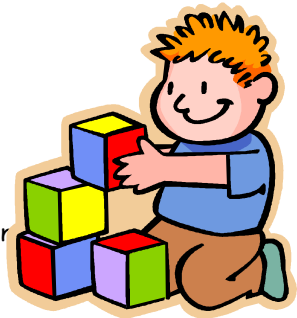
Come join the playgroup for an informal morning of play and conversation. Snack will be provided.
Starts Tuesday, Sept. 27 from 9:30-11:30

(Parents and caregivers with children 5 years and younger are welcome to join the playgroup.)

When: Tuesday: 9:30-11:30 Playtime and interactive literacy activities.

Friday: 9:30- 11:30 (In the gym)

(Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2011 - June 2012 except for school vacations and winter school closing)



Where: Sunderland Elementary School
After-School Room
Swampfield Drive

For information contact:

Karen Green, CFCE Coordinator, at 665-8928 or greenk@frsu38.deerfield.ma.us
or Francina Wisnewski, Franklin County Family Network, at 475-1553.

*Co-sponsored by Community Action's Family Network,
Union #38 Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant,
and Sunderland Elementary School*

Directions to Sunderland Elementary School:

At the intersection/lights at Rt. 116 and 47, take So. Main Street
(Congregational Church on corner), then take a left on Old Amherst Road. The school is on the left.

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