

HILLTOPPER

WESTERN HILLS ELEMENTARY
633-5900
www.wdm.k12.ia.us/whills

BETH THORNTON, PRINCIPAL
November 2, 2009

CHARACTER EDUCATION QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Problems are only opportunities in work clothes." Henry J. Kaiser

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER

- 2-6 Iowa Test of Basic Skills Grades 3-6
- 12 WH PTA Meeting in Media Center, 7 p.m.
- 13 Fine Arts Day
- 17 WH Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 19 WH Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 25-27 NO SCHOOL
- 30 School Resumes

CONFERENCES

Conferences are scheduled for November 17 and 19 at Western Hills. Teachers will be sending home notes soon to ask for your available time. Teachers will sign you up for conferences again this year; you do not have to come to the school to sign up.

SCHOOL CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Up-to-the-minute recordings about cancellations, dismissals and closings are available at **633-5555**. The WDMCS hotline is provided as a service for students, parents, staff and community members to call if school must be cancelled or dismissed early due to weather conditions or other emergencies.

ParentLink, the district's emergency notification system, will be used to notify families of cancellations, early dismissals or other emergencies. Calls are made to home phone numbers, cell phone numbers and/or work numbers as provided to the school and entered into the Infinite Campus data system.

This information is also shared with the local media on the following **television stations** KCCI (Channel 8), WHO (Channel 13) and WOI (Channel 5); **FM radio stations** KJJY (92.5), KIOA (93.3), KGGO (94.9), KHKI (97.3), KWQW (98.3), KZZQ (99.5), KSTZ (102.5), KAZR (103.3), KLTI (104.1), KPTL (106.3) and KISS (107.5); and **AM radio stations** KPSZ (940), WHO (1040), KWKY (1150), KRNT (1350) and KXNO (1460).

Student days missed due to school closing will be made up beginning June 3, 2010.

NO PETS, PLEASE!

We welcome members of our school family to visit our schools during the day. Our buildings are also open to the community for many activities such as youth organization meetings, youth sports contests, after school classes and adult classes.

However, we cannot welcome pets into our schools. Student safety and the cleanliness of the building are put at risk when animals accompany their owners for a drop-in visit at school. There are exceptions, of course. If your student is bringing a pet for show and tell or for a class project, please contact the principal for permission before the animal comes to school.

Animals which are kept at school for instructional purposes will be in good health with no evidence of disease, be of such disposition as to not pose a safety threat to children and be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner. Documentation of current vaccinations will be available for all cats and dogs. Pets/animals and/or their cages will not be allowed in kitchen, sinks or food preparation areas due to health and sanitation guidelines.

PTA NEWS

Western Hills Student Directories



Western Hills student directories are still available for purchase in the school office. They are \$2 each or three for \$5. If you misplaced your order form, you may send payment to school in an envelope marked student directory, noting how many directories you would like, along with your student's name and class section.

FINE ARTS DAY NEWS

Fine Arts Day will be held Fri., Nov. 13 with the theme Wild About Art. This day is an opportunity to instill a love of the arts while allowing our students to explore their creative talents.

Once again we are looking for volunteers to make the day a success. If you are interested in volunteering by assisting an artist for the day or by spending time with your child's class please contact Laura Wright at logan03@sprynet.com

The committee is also looking for food/drink donations for the day. We are in need of beverages, snacks, and desserts to keep our artists and volunteers well-fed during the day. We would appreciate any donations of soda pop, juices, water, snacks, chips and dessert. We encourage you to consider donating \$10-\$20 to help pay for the catered main course since we will not be asking for main dishes to be donated. We appreciate all financial contributions. Please contact Tammy Cline at 440-5601 or tammy@careerssearchassoc.com for more information.

STUDENT LUNCH FOR FINE ARTS DAY

We are asking each student to bring a lunch and drink from home.

SAFETY PATROL UPDATE

Very soon you will be seeing the orange vests of the fifth and sixth grade Safety Patrol members! Their priority is student safety so please show them your thanks by respecting their leadership and obeying the pillars of good character when coming to and going from school. Two quick reminders for parents:

- One role of the safety patrol will be helping with before and after school car pick up. Along with the staff who are on duty each day, Safety Patrol will be helping your student exit your car in the morning and getting in after school.
- Safety Patrol will also be helping keep walkers and bike/scooter riders safe before and after school. Please remember **to refrain from using the west** (or main office) driveway for car drop-off in the morning. This will be more strictly enforced. Remember it would only take one incident of a parent quickly trying to pull through the west parking lot and encountering a student and this matter would have all our attention. Also, enforcing the walking of scooters and bikes onto and off of school property is a role of the Safety Patrol. Please remind your student of this expectation.

The Safety Patrol is looking forward to a great year of making Western Hills a safe and welcoming place to be every day!



SCHOOL PLAY NEWS

Like magic? Like lamps? Like to sing or act? Then you will love our sixth annual all school play! Western Hills will be performing Aladdin Jr., the musical this upcoming spring! We will be holding auditions in December so keep looking in the Hilltopper for more information. Also, tell your parents to check out our new All School Play link on the Western Hills website. It will give you updated information like audition dates, painting times, etc.

We would also like to invite those of you who might have an interest in joining us on this journey to an informational meeting on Sun., Nov. 15 at 2 p.m. in the Western Hills library. One of our three wishes is to secure committee leads as well as committee members sooner rather than later! A five-year history has proven that it takes many, many volunteers to pull off this production. So we can anticipate whom to expect, please let Terry Soto know if you'll be attending by sending an email to sotot@wdmcs.org. Known committees at this time include:

- All things music/singing and dancing (would split if makes sense)
- Costumes and make-up
- Set (including multi-media and sound-mics, speakers, etc.)
- Props
- Social (cast party, rehearsal goodies, etc.)
- Promotion/Communication
- Admin (finances, free will, set-up, clean-up, etc.)
- Wranglers

Thank you for advance for considering joining in the fun. We look forward to hearing from you/





WEST DES MOINES
COMMUNITY
S C H O O L S

informal

For the Parents of the West Des Moines Community Schools
Office of School/Community Relations

Nov. 2, 2009
www.wdmcs.org

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

At the meeting Oct. 26, the Board of Education:

- heard results of the Iowa Youth Survey from Curriculum Director Dave Blum
- reported on the Western Hills open house, Academic Awards Night at Valley, a visit to first graders at Western Hills and congratulated the fall sports teams
- adopted a resolution designating law enforcement units facilitate the exchange of information per the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- authorized the amendment to the Polk County Empowerment agreement
- conducted a hearing on Valley High School softball and baseball dugout improvements
- approved change orders for Indian Hills and Crestview and the accepted work as complete by a contractor at Indian Hills and Western Hills
- approved the student teaching and practicum agreement with Iowa Wesleyan College
- approved the one-year contract with Parlant Technology to provide ParentLink emergency messaging services
- recognized outstanding accomplishments of district students and staff during board recognition
- reviewed open enrollment applications

**Next meeting: Mon., Nov. 9
7 p.m.
Indian Hills Junior High**

ONLINE LIBRARY SYSTEM

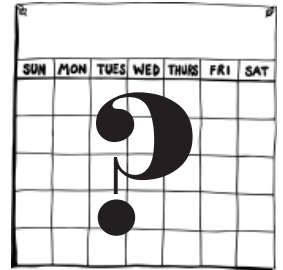
Destiny is a completely web based, automated library system. Parents and students can use any computer with Internet access to view the catalog for their school's library. You can search by keyword, title, author, subject and series. Just click on the Destiny icon to get started. You can find the link on our homepage at www.wdmcs.org.

TAKE A CLASS WITH LEARN_{west}

Don't miss out! There are still several LEARN_{west} classes being offered this fall. We know you'll find something that fits you, whether it's knitting a holiday stocking, pet massage, ballroom dancing, Microsoft Word 2007 Advanced or making a button bracelet. There is a wide variety of classes to take with LEARN_{west}. For a full listing of all LEARN_{west} classes, call 633-5001 or visit our website at <http://www.wdmcs.org/district/commed/learnwest>.

CALENDAR OPINIONS WANTED!

Don't miss this opportunity to offer your opinion on options for the 2010-11 school year schedule. A survey is posted on the district web site (www.wdmcs.org) and will be available until Fri., Nov. 6 at 4 p.m. Three choices are offered, reflecting differing start dates, winter break dates and the last day of school (without weather cancellations).



The district Calendar Committee – staff members and parents – has been meeting for several months to develop the calendar options. The survey of district staff and parents will be used by the committee to develop a recommendation to the Board of Education. The 2010-11 school year calendar will be presented to the Board for approval in early 2010, along with a tentative schedule for 2011-12.

THE GREAT COOKIE WALK



The sixth annual Great Cookie Walk benefiting the Youth Justice Initiative of West Des Moines will be held Sat., Nov. 28 from 9 a.m. to noon at the West Des Moines Christian Church fellowship hall located at 4501 Mills Civic Parkway.

Hosted by the Young Energetic Seniors group of the WDM Christian Church, the Great Cookie Walk is known for fresh, homemade, gourmet holiday cookies. Last year, more than 250 cookie varieties and 1,200 cookies were sold, awarding YJI more than \$4,500. In the past five years, the event has donated more than \$18,000 to YJI, which is a publicly funded, restorative justice program that positively and effectively redevelops young offenders.

Cookie pre orders and additional information are available at www.wdmcc.org/cookiewalk or by calling 515-225-0464.