



West University Elementary School

Spring Edition, Volume 4
January 26, 2015

The Pony Express



Principal's Place

Hats off to our International Festival Organizing Committee under the leadership of Co-Chairs Delphine Trogneux (Daube) and Enrica Vagliani (Gray) for another stellar program last week! Well done!

While I'm handing out congratulations, another big Hats Off to our Kindergarten teachers and students. We received our Kindergarten Iowa Test scores last Friday and the results are fantastic. The Iowa reports scores a little differently than our former Stanford Early School Achievement Test. The scores listed are National Percentile Ranking (NPR):

Sub-Test	'14-'15 NPR*
Reading	97 th
Language	99 th
Vocabulary	90 th
ELA TOTAL	98 th
Word Analysis	93 rd
Listening	93 rd
EXTENDED ELA TOTAL	95 th
Mathematics	97 th
CORE COMPOSITE	96 th

*National Percentile Rank

Individual student score reports will be sent home later this week.

This week we once again participate in the Souper Bowl of Caring. This is our 8th year to participate in this national campaign to collect non-perishable food for local food banks.

Please make note of a couple of changes from previous years. One of the biggest needs is for more protein. Consequently, our Souper Bowl of Caring team at West U has created a way for classrooms to gain more points. The Protein Challenge offers 1 point per can of tuna or chicken, 2 points for family size, 1 point for small peanut butter, 2 points for regular size peanut butter, and 3 points for family size peanut butter. *One other change is that we cannot accept 50 pound bags of beans, rice, etc.* These are extremely difficult to handle here at school and the Houston Food Bank cannot break these into smaller packages to distribute to families.

The last few years we have had the top school collection in Greater Houston for a number of years and led the nation for the last two years. Since 2007, our families have stepped up and gone above and beyond the call of duty to help the hungry in Houston. Let's make 2015 another banner year!

Have a Souper week!

John T. Threet, Principal

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Mark Your Calendars:

- PTO Speaker
Monday, February 9
7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 10
8:00 a.m.
- PTO Meeting
Tuesday, February 10
8:00 a.m.
- Early Dismissal Day
Friday, February 13
12:15 p.m.
- Kindergarten Roundup
Thursday, February 26
9:30 a.m.
- Go Texan Day
Friday, February 27

PTO Corner

PTO President's Notes

The International Festival was fabulous. I hope you enjoyed the amazing student performances, detailed country presentations, the tasty variety of cultural foods and the fun kid's scavenger hunt.

THANK YOU:

- Delphine Daube, Enrica Vagliani, Carla Sharp & Cecy Singh for chairing our successful International Festival.
- Cindy Burnett & Melisa Richardson for chairing the favorite Blue Bonnet Breakfast.

Our first service project, Souper Bowl of Caring, starts today and culminates on Friday. Get Magnetized to help others in our community! Thank you in advance for supporting these hungry and needy families.

Are you exhausted of discipline techniques that do not work? Get some new ideas at our PTO parent workshop - "Stop Defiance, Disrespect and Yelling" with Kirk Martin. Date: Feb. 9 at 7-9PM and Feb. 10 at 8-10AM. Both days offer the same workshop. Location is MPR.

Thanks for making our school the very best. Have a super week.

Magnetized to WUES,

Elizabeth Karkowsky
PTO President



PTO Nominating Committee

The PTO is forming a nominating committee to nominate the officers who will serve on the PTO Executive Board for the 2015-2016 school year. Pursuant to the PTO Bylaws, the nominating committee will consist of five voting members and a Chairman (the current PTO Parliamentarian) plus one alternate.



The nominating committee members will be elected by the general membership at the March 10, 2015 PTO General Meeting. The committee will then present the slate of officers for the 2015-2016 PTO Executive Board for election at the April 14, 2015 PTO General Meeting.

Interested PTO members should contact Kristen Flores at whywouldhe@yahoo.com by Friday, February 20th if they would like to serve on the nominating committee.

How To Get Kids To Listen – Speaker Feb. 9

Join the PTO, our parents and our community for a workshop on "Stop Defiance, Disrespect & Yelling". We offer the same workshop two times: Monday, Feb. 9 at 7-9PM and Tuesday, Feb. 10 8-10AM (after a brief PTO meeting). The location is in the MPR. Come listen to Kirk Martin and his son Casey discuss successful parenting and discipline strategies. This workshop is great for parents with children ages 2-22. For more information: <http://westupto.digitalpto.com/files/2014/12/celebratecalm.pdf>. Contact elizabeth@karkowskyproductions.com.

PTO Corner (cont.)

International Festival Wrap-Up



The International Festival week would not be possible without the army of volunteers in various capacities. And we would like to thank you all for helping to make this a fun and entertaining week for our children.

As a reminder of what the children got to experience this week:

- The 3rd graders were treated to a first glimpse of some of the performances after the Heritage Feast on Tuesday.
- Every morning, they were greeted by fellow students in a different language.
- We took the K-2 grade levels on a tour around the World with presentations about 6 Continents, and the 3rd-5th Grade students participated in presentations on countries this year.
- This all culminated in the International Festival evening event – once again this year starting an hour earlier to give more time to enjoy the tri-boards and tidbits as well as enjoy the great performances.

You will find a list of all the people who made it all possible here: <http://westupto.org/curriculum-enrichment-2/international/>

I Just want to call out the **Performers**: Elaine See Toh, Emily Jackson, Arianne Scheller, Elizabeth Smith, Malini Dinius, Meghana Dinius, Nicholas Dinius, Sofy Domakhina, Fiona Young, Zach Madison, Nicholas Harjadi, Marquesa Madison, Azkar Madison, Irgen Soeriawinata, Isla Fricker, Zoe Villalobos, Sofia O'Malley, Isabella Harper, Catrina Coe, Christine Chen, Simran Shroff, Rebecca Priske, Neha Ravi, Mira Pemmanda, Olivia Holst, Palloma Dinesh, and Auden & Emerson Chen and the students of the Houston Shaolin Temple.

We also have to thank our **Corporate sponsors** for the prizes that we raffled on the night:

Bernie's Burger Bus, Kiran's Indian cuisine, Benji's, Brasserie Max and Julie, Café Rabelais, Candelari's Pizzeria, Fellini Caffè, La Taste, NAM: Noodles and More, Pizza L'Vino, Salento, Snowblock Shavery.

Delphine Trogneux (Daube) & Enrica Vagliani (Gray), 2015 WUES International Festival Chairs

Souper Bowl of Caring is Finally Here!

Heavy Lifters needed! If you have a DOLLY, please bring it on Friday, January 30. We need to get the food to the Food Bank trucks—each dolly will speed up the process.

Most Needed Food Items **DO NOT INCLUDE 50 lb bags of rice or separate individual serving sizes**

Protein items such as:

- H Canned tuna or chicken, packed in water*
- H Canned stews and pasta/meat, easy on salt and fat
- H Canned fruits in *light* syrup, natural applesauce
- H Canned vegetables, tomatoes, tomato sauce
- H Cereals and cereal bars, easy on sugar and fat
- * points toward Protein Challenge

- H Peanut Butter*
- H Packages of dried beans
- H 100% juice cans or boxes
- H Soups with meat and/or beans, meal-in-a-can, easy on salt & fat
- H Pasta, spaghetti, macaroni, noodles

Houston Food Bank is UNABLE to ACCEPT:

- 6 Open packages
- 6 Baby food
- 6 Perishable items
- 6 Homemade food items
- 6 Expired items (yuck!)
- 6 Glass containers



***Protein Challenge:** 1 point per can of tuna or chicken, 2 points for family size. 1 point for small peanut butter, 2 points for regular size peanut butter, 3 points for family size

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact anyone on the SBC team:

Leslie Wade leslietwade@yahoo.com
Carrie Lium carrielium@yahoo.com

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Laura Torgerson lauratorgerson@gmail.com

PTO Corner (cont.)

Playground Renovation Project – WUES Foundation

The WUES Foundation is excited to announce the launch of a school wide campaign to refurbish and update the front playground. Our goal is to refurbish the play area by bringing it up to the level of excellence enjoyed by our community. The Foundation's goal is to raise \$250,000 for renovations including: new playground flooring, new playground pieces and existing playground equipment repairs. Thanks to generous donations from Cleburne Cafeteria, the Friends of West University Place Parks, the West University PTO and many other individuals, we are well on our way to reaching our goal.



We need your help! The Foundation is launching a school wide campaign from January 12th through February 6th. As part of the campaign the Foundation will be selling 6 X 6 inch tiles for your child to decorate for installation around the large tree adjacent to the playground. The top 3 classes with the most money raised will celebrate with a special party hosted by Mr. A, Coach Jones and Principal Threet. Donations in any amount are appreciated and necessary for this much needed renovation. You can make your donation online at www.wuesfoundation.org or fill out the form in the Monday Folder and drop it in the Foundation mailbox next to the front office.

Please designate your donation for the playground in the comments/memo section of your check or online. You will also need to include your child's/children's name, grade and teacher so the appropriate class gets credit for the contest. Funds will be divided equally among children in the same family unless designated otherwise. Please make checks payable to **WUES Foundation**.

Contact Pam Packer at krepacker3@gmail.com or Anna Stewart at annacastonstewart@yahoo.com with any questions.

Thank you for your support!

Birthday Book Club

חמשת ימים טובים, Happy Birthday, Maligayang Bati! The following students are celebrating their birthdays this week by donating a book to our school library:

Samantha Wexler	June 22nd	Sophia Sharp	January 28th
Ryan Wexler	January 21st	Lucy Ginzell	January 29th
Kacey Chapman	January 26th	Jacob Leach	January 29th
Amira Regaila	January 26th	Audrey Cheng	January 30th
Noah Skaria	January 26th	Julia Ziff	January 30th
Jack David	January 26th	Isabella Alves	January 31st
Paige Miller	January 27th	Ethan Xu	January 31st
Mira Demmanda	January 28th	Luke Forney	February 1st
Alex Flores	January 28th	Nicholas Leppard	February 1st

Thank you very much for supporting West U Elementary Library!



If you would like to order a Birthday Book Club membership for your child, log on to www.westupto.org and sign up online or, download a form and leave it with a check in the PTO blue box located at the front office. Please, note that all orders are due NO LATER THAN Tuesdays at 2:00 p.m. to be included in the following week's Pony Express. If you any questions, please contact Tracy Benner (tracymbenner@yahoo.com) or Guadalupe Harper (guadacarlesso@hotmail.com).

Citizens of the Month



These students were selected as Citizens of the Month for December:

Sophia Johnson, Ms. Webb's 1st Grade Class

Ms. Webb writes, "Sophia is an attentive listener. I can trust that when I give directions, she'll do what I asked the first time. As soon as Sophia receives an assignment she writes her name and quickly begins the task. I can trust that she'll complete her work in a neat and timely manner. Sophia cares about others. I can trust that she'll always use kind words. Sophia is a trustworthy West U student."

Sophia's favorite book is *The Weather Fairies* by Daisy Meadows. Her favorite subject is Reading. When she grows up she wants to be a teacher. What she loves about West U is, the nice teachers. Sophia said her hero is, "My grandma because she helps me sew." To make West U No Place for Hate she said, "If someone is lonely I play with him or her."

Mehran Kooshlar, Ms. Inman's 4th Grade Class

Ms. Inman writes, "I can always trust that Mehran will do the right thing in and out of the class. He is a positive leader to those around him. He is a hardworking and reliable student. Mehran is helpful and welcoming to his classmates. I am happy to have him in my class!"

Mehran's favorite book is *Arnie the Doughnut* by Laurie Keller. His favorite subject is Math. When he grows up he wants to be an engineer. Mehran said his heroes are, "My parents because they always help with homework and are nice to me." To make West U No Place for Hate he said, "If I see someone bullying, I ask him or her, 'how would you feel if you were treated that way.'"

Devin Morris, Ms. Smith's 1st Grade Class

Ms. Smith writes, "Devin is an outstanding student. She works hard at everything she does, and always goes above and beyond. Devin is very trustworthy and can be counted on for just about anything. When a friend needs a helping hand, Devin is always there. When I need extra help in the classroom, Devin is quick to volunteer. I never doubt what Devin says because she is truthful and fair. She is a student I can rely on to be a leader and be a good example for her classmates. Devin is an exceptional first grader, and I'm lucky to have her in my class."

Devin's favorite book is *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan. Her favorite subject is Reading. What she loves about West U are all the nice teachers. When she grows up she wants to be a doctor. Devin said her hero is, "My sister because she helps me with my homework." To make West U No Place for Hate she said, "I try to be a good friend to everyone."

Sofia Moretti, Mrs. McLamb's 3rd Grade Class

Mrs. McLamb writes, "Our class would like to nominate Sofia Moretti for Citizen of the Month. She is a good role model for the character trait of Trust as she is a person they can rely on. She is a good friend to her classmates, keeping secret when asked to. She does all of her homework assignments early if she can. She always raises her hand to participate in class and volunteers to help the teacher with any simple task."

Sofia's favorite book is *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan. Her favorite subject is Reading. What she loves about West U are all the nice teachers. When she grows up she wants to be a teacher. Sofia said her hero is, "My mom because she helps me with my homework." To make West U No Place for Hate she said, "I try saying nice things to everybody."

Josh Horn, Mrs. McClintock's 3rd Grade Class

Mrs. McClintock writes, "Josh is a student who I can always count on. He is honest and trustworthy, always striving to do what is right. His integrity and sincerity shows and others respect him because of it. I am proud to have Josh as a leader in our classroom. He is a great student!"

Josh's favorite book is *Thrown of Fire* by Rick Riordan. His favorite subject is Math. What he loves about West U are all the nice teachers. When he grows up he wants to be a geologist. Josh said his hero is, "Taylor Collins because he is a nice friend." To make West U No Place for Hate he said, "If somebody is alone on the playground, I will play with him or her."

Continued on next page

Citizens of the Month (continued)



Abby Degregori, Ms. Jones' 2nd Grade Class

Ms. Jones writes, "Abby always is a wonderful example of trust in the classroom. I can always trust her to do the right thing in the classroom and outside the classroom. Her classmates trust her to help them when they are in need! She is always the first person to volunteer to do anything in our class and I know I can trust her to always try her best! My class and I are lucky to have Abby in our class!"

Abby's favorite books are the Junie B. Jones series by Barbara Parks. Her favorite subject is Reading. What she loves about West U is all the students are nice. When she grows up she wants to be a 2nd grade teacher. Abby said her hero is, "My mom because she is kind to me all the time." To make West U No Place for Hate she said, "I stand up to bullies."

Preston Popov, Mrs. Hilburn's 5th Grade Class

Coach Jones said, "I can trust Preston to be there for carpool duty. He is the first one here and one of the last to leave. He has a positive attitude. He showed dedication when he was on the waiting list for safety patrol. I gave him a chance and he worked hard to show that he deserved to be selected."

Preston's favorite books are the Hunger Games series by Suzanne Collins. His favorite subject is Science. What he loves about West U are the nice teachers. When he grows up he wants to be a football player. Preston said his hero is, "My mom because she helps me." To make West U No Place for Hate he said, "I try to be nice to everyone."

Daniel Thompson, Mrs. McAleavy's 5th Grade Class

Coach Jones said, "Daniel gives 110%. Mr. Threet always asks for Daniel for the main car pool because he knows how to run things. I can trust him to be on-time, polite and nice especially when he is with the younger kids."

Daniel's favorite book is The Lost Treasure of Tuckernuck by Emily Fairlie and Antonio Javier Caparo. His favorite subject is Science. What he loves about West U are the nice teachers. When he grows up he wants to be an NBA player. Daniel said his hero is Nick Vujicic. He was born without legs and arms but he works and travels the world as a motivational speaker. "He inspires me and makes me think I can do anything." To make West U No Place for Hate he said, "I include others in my games."

Lillian Cutrer, Ms. Stone's 2nd Grade Class

Ms. Stone said, "Lillian is a very respectful student. I can count on her to always listen. She never interrupts when a speaker is talking. Lillian consistently follows the rules and directions. She is respectful to adults, students, and to her friends. I am one lucky teacher to have her in my class."

Lillian's favorite book is Ramona Quimby Age 8 by Beverly Cleary. What she loves about West U are her friends here. When she grows up she wants to be a doctor. Lillian said her hero is, "my mother because she helps me with my homework." To make West U No Place for Hate she said, "I try to play with everyone in my class."

Congratulations to all of these boys and girls for their outstanding citizenship!

Michael Connolly School Counselor

Bicycle Safety – Helmets

Bicycle Safety Month isn't until May but we in Houston probably started riding our bikes last weekend when the sun popped out and it warmed up a little. Throughout the spring we will include bike safety tips for kids and parents. One of Mr. Threet's pet peeves is to see parents riding to school along with their children and not wearing a helmet. If your child sees you not wearing a helmet, they will eventually think that helmets are only for kids.



Two percent of motor vehicle crash deaths are bicyclists. In a majority of these deaths, the most serious injuries were to the head, highlighting the importance of wearing a bicycle helmet. Helmet use has been estimated to reduce head injury risk by 85 percent. The City of West U requires helmets for children under the age of 14 including any side car, trailer, child carrier, seat or other device attached to a bicycle. Parents can be ticketed for failing to ensure that their child wears a helmet.

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We're on the Web!
visit us on the web at:
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John T. Threet
Principal
Tracey L. Wyatt
Magnet Coordinator
Amber Pinchback
Assistant Principal

Library Book Nook

How would you react if you were living a lie? What would you do if you lived in a city where you could not escape?..... Find out in the new book Masterminds by Gordon Korman.



Author Korman will visit our school on Thursday, February 12. You can purchase an autographed copy of this new book by completing the form in your Monday Folder and returning it to the Library by next Tuesday, February 3.

Kelly Russell, Librarian

Pershing Accelerated Placement Exam



The Accelerated Placement Exam for Pershing will be held on Wednesday, January 28 at 2:00 p.m., and Saturday, January 31 at 10:00 a.m. for current 5th graders interested in qualifying for the Accelerated Math and Science program for the 2015-2016 school year. No registration necessary. The test takes approximately 1 hour.

Questions? Please contact the counselors at Pershing at 713-295-5240.

We look forward to seeing all of our future Pandas!

Vanguard Application and Testing Info

Incoming Kindergarten Students Application Window

H **Monday, March 2 – Friday, March 24** [note: these dates are set by HISD. *There are no exceptions to these deadlines*]
Testing Window

H **Monday-Thursday, May 11-14** [once you have completed your application and enrollment info, you may schedule a testing time within this window]

Current Students, 1st-4th Grades Application Window

H **February 2-27 24** [note: these dates are set by HISD. *There are no exceptions to these deadlines*]

Testing Window

H **Monday-Friday, May 18-22** CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test)

Each grade level will test at a different time. This test is administered online and students will be scheduled into the Computer Lab to take this test during this week.

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It is the policy of the Houston Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, handicap or disability, marital status, religion, veteran status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression, or any other basis prohibited by law in its educational or employment programs and activities.