

ÉCOLE WILLOWS SCHOOL NEWSLETTER UPDATE

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Principal's Message

October has found us settling into our routines. Classes are well underway and students are hard at work. I would encourage each of you to take some time now and ensure that routines for doing homework are getting established. It is never too soon to help your son or daughter set up an area where they can do their homework. Some students work well in a very quiet spot, others like to have quiet music playing, and others like to be in a busy place. If the homework is getting done and done well then they are working in a spot that is right for them. It may take some time to get to that right balance, but it will happen.


Teachers are also hard at work creating thoughtful learning environments for your children. On Friday, October 21st many of our teachers were involved in a variety of professional development activities. One particular area of interest is technology and this year, with the help of the PAC, we are again able to install more Smartboards into classrooms. Teachers are excited about this and are working together to share expertise in using this new tool to enhance their teaching and to engage students. They are also investigating ways for children to use the tool to assist in their learning. Mr. Kiernan and Mme Showers are taking the lead to organize opportunities for teachers to improve their skills through sharing sessions and classroom demonstrations.

The staff at Willows is also continuing the long tradition of mentoring students from UVIC as they do their teaching practicums or working with UVIC students who are learning how to teach PE. Our teachers are wonderful mentors and very willing to share their knowledge with the new generation coming up.

Together we are continuing the excellent work we have always done for the students at Willows and with the continued support of our parents we are well on the way to a wonderful year.

Wendy 

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Dates to Remember

- Nov. 10 9:00 and 10:45
Remembrance Day
Assemblies
- Nov. 11 No School in
Session
- Nov. 16 PAC Mtg.
7:00
- Nov. 18 Lice Check
- Nov. 21 Pro D Day
No School in Session
- Nov. 25 Pizza/Sushi
Day



Cross Country - Another Year, Another Team Effort

Early in September Willows students were invited to join the cross-country team, and we had over 110 runners join us for our morning runs and at various meets around the city.

On October 24th Mr. Walker and Mme O'Rourke, along with a host of parents, grandparents and supporters, watched as we completed our season with some outstanding performances in the City Final Jamboree at Beacon Hill Park. It was a beautiful day at the park and we all had a wonderful time cheering on our runners.

All of our runners finished well in their events, some having their best results of the year. We had many finishers crack the top 100 for the first time, a lot broke the top 50, and a good number finished in the top 30, the top 15, and the top ten. No matter where they placed, all of the runners showed a determination and a commitment to fitness throughout the entire cross-country season and we are proud of each of them.

Most impressive at the meets this year, and in particular at the Final Jamboree, was the great sportsmanship demonstrated by the runners. It was wonderful to see them cheering on their teammates and congratulating not only them but also some of their friends and competitors from other schools.

While cross-country is often thought of as an individual event, in order for individuals to perform well they need teammates who will run with them and encourage them to do their best. Willows certainly had a **team** again this year! Every runner at Beacon Hill, every runner who ran in the weekly meets, and every runner who came out to practices just for personal conditioning contributed to our team's success. Joining them as a big part of that team were those parents and grandparents who helped transport our runners all season long and were there to cheer them on every week.

We also wish to thank those parents who came out to our practices and ran with the team, those who were so diligent at being crossing guards each morning, and those who helped marshal at the City Finals. A special thank you also goes out to Mr. Boden, our lead rabbit for all of our morning outings.

Thank you all; it was a wonderful season! Keep active, keep running, and keep healthy!



B. Walker and A. O'Rourke



Remembrance Day

Our Remembrance Day Assembly will be held on Thursday, November 10. We will have one assembly at **9:00** and a second one at **10:45**. Students have been practicing a variety of activities already and are doing a wonderful job with all aspects of the assembly.

Our choir members are working hard on their selections, and a big thank you to everyone who is helping out.



Attention Choir Members

You will need to have your choir uniform ready to go for this assembly. White shirt with long sleeves and collar and a dark skirt or pants.

Honour Guard

All Guides, Brownies, Sparks, Cubs, and Beavers should wear their uniforms to school for the assembly. You may want to bring a change of clothing for after the assembly.

There will be no school on Friday, November 11.





Attendance is Important

In looking at student absenteeism rates in our school district, there is a concerning trend that is showing. The average student absenteeism rate in 1991 was around 4.5%; however, by 2009, that number had risen to over 7.5%. The reasons for this increase are varied. However, the research does indicate that attendance at school can be one risk factor that inhibits school success. In the middle and high school years for example, the following problems can occur:

Students who attend school less than 90% of the time have increased odds that they will not graduate (that works out to approximately 19 days missed per year).

When a student's attendance dips below 80% (missing approximately 37 or more days in the year), the student has only a 1 in 6 chance of graduating on time or one year later.

Our District is working to ensure that good attendance habits begin and remain from the early elementary years. I ask that parents do your part to help ensure that we are doing the same at École Willows School. I realize students have to miss school at times. We do not want children at school who are ill for example. However, anything you can do to ensure your child is regularly at school to receive the benefits of in-class instruction will maximize their learning.

Thank you for your support on this.

Great B.C. ShakeOut



We had a wonderful earthquake drill on Thursday, October 20. The teachers had gone over the steps the children would follow throughout the preceding week, and everyone was well prepared. Once the inside noise and counting to 60 was done the students got their coats and recess snacks and made their way outside to a pre-arranged site. Then their attendance was taken and handed to Ms Bourcier. Those teachers with additional responsibilities, such as our search and rescue team, first aid team, etc., made their way to the assembly station.

All in all it was very successful. A big thank you to Craig Mount, PAC Earthquake Preparedness Rep., who took time away from work to come and be part of our drill. He watched our process in order to make recommendations where need.

Having the opportunity to be part of a province—wide event was exciting for the children. To know that over 500,000 people were all doing the same thing at about the same time, and they were part of it, just emphasizes how important our emergency drill practices are for their safety. Thanks to all the parents who helped to prepare the children by talking about the drill at home.

HOMWORK CLUB

IT'S BACK Beginning Thursday, November 17th our homework club will once again offer time and help to students from 12:15–12:45 in the library. The club will run once a week—Thursdays. Mme Lawson is working in conjunction with students from Oak Bay High School and Mark Payten of the Kiwanis Key Club to offer this support. This is a great opportunity to have some quiet, in-school time to complete work and get help. Thanks to Mrs. Goorachurn and Mme Lyall for helping with supervision. See you there.

GR. 4 & 5 CLUB

On Monday, November 14th the Gr. 4 & 5 book club will hold its first meeting. Come and join a group of students that love to read. There is lots to share and fun activities to take part in. See you in the library at 12:15 with Your favourite book.





WELCOME We would like to welcome Mrs. Sherrill Herbert to École Willows School. She will be teaching in our grade 1/2 class and we know she will really enjoy our community.

Lost and Found

On Tuesday, November 1 we will lay out the items in our lost and found. Please come in and see if you recognize anything.



WHO SHOULD GET THE SEASONAL INFLUENZA (FLU) VACCINE

The influenza vaccine protects against viruses that cause seasonal influenza, often called the flu. The vaccine does not protect against other viruses or bacteria that cause colds or stomach illness such as "stomach flu."

Influenza, often called seasonal flu, is an infection of the nose, throat and lungs caused by the influenza virus. A person with influenza is at risk of other infections, including viral or bacterial pneumonia (infections of the lungs). Influenza spreads easily from person to person through coughing, sneezing, or having close face-to-face contact. The virus can also be spread when a person touches an object contaminated with the influenza virus and then touches his or her mouth or nose.

In BC, the following groups are eligible for the free annual vaccination:

- Children and adults with chronic health conditions and their household contacts
- Healthy children aged 6 to 23 months
- Household contacts and caregivers of infants aged 0 to 23 months
- Pregnant women who will be in their 3rd trimester during the influenza season
- People 65 or older and their caregivers
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities
- Health care workers
- Emergency responders
- People who work with poultry and swine
- Employees and inmates at BC correctional facilities
- Those who provide care or service in potential outbreak settings housing high risk persons (e.g. crew on ships)

Influenza vaccine is available through health units and physicians. The vaccine is free for anyone in the above groups.

For more information contact:

- Your local Health Unit
- HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1 (a free call) or www.healthlinkbc.ca
- Your doctor
- www.immunizebc.ca

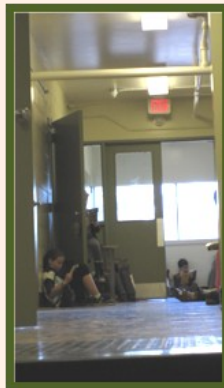
Drop Everything And Read



Monday, October 24th was DEAR or **D**rop **E**verything **a**nd **R**ead day. This day is sponsored by the Librarians of BC to encourage everyone to take time to read. All across B.C., schools were stopping everything and opening up a book. Willows was no exception. As the pictures show everyone was reading.



They were reading in the kindergarten class.



They were reading in the hallways.



They were reading and lunching.



They were reading even if injured.



They were reading together.

Thank you to Mrs. Goorachurn for reminding us that we need to take a little time to read everyday.

Community Concern at Windsor Park

A couple of students from a neighbourhood school had a problem this week at Windsor Park. He and a friend were playing in the bushes between the tennis court and the street when they heard someone yell at them to come out of the bushes or they would call the police. One came out (while the other ran away) and they (2 young men) told the one child to put his arms behind his back and get in the truck. That child refused and ran away and was chased but he made it to the crowd closer to the playground. The father called the police who came and were very attentive and concerned. It's not clear to any of us if these were just teenagers horsing around but the child was frightened.

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It is getting close to that time of year when we start thinking about swim club.

Our start date is

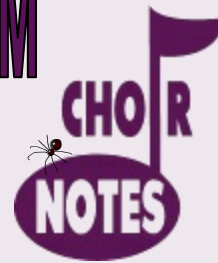
Thursday November 17th.

Watch for the first meeting of interest to be announced and make sure you get your sign up information. We are looking forward to another great year of training and the Swim Meets later in the year.


Mme Lawson



WELCOME TO THE WILLOWS CHOIR PROGRAM

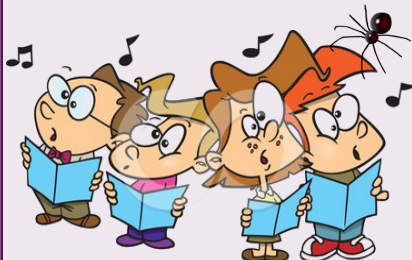


We are delighted to report that 366 children have chosen to be part of the choir program at Willows Elementary. The choir program encompasses three separate choirs. The **Senior Choir** is open to students in **grades four and five**. It practices on Wednesday during the lunch hour and on Friday from 11:06 until 11:52 and is directed by Mme Fox and Mrs. Evans. The **Junior Choir**, consisting of students in **grades 2 and 3**, is divided into two groups and is directed by Mrs. Evans. The Tuesday Junior Choir, also known as the Discovery Choir, practices on Tuesdays from 11:06 until 11:52 and the Thursday Junior Choir, also known as the Chatham choir, practices on Thursdays from 11:06 until 11:52.

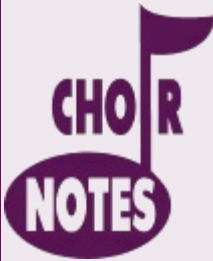
The Tuesday Junior Choir (the **Discovery choir**) consists of students in the following classes: Mrs. Westby, Mmes Lawson/Makaroff, Mrs. Skillings, Mrs. Herbert, Mme Fox, and Mme Deblois. The Thursday Junior Choir (the **Chatham choir**) consists of students in the following classes: M. Francis, Mr. Kiernan, Mmes O'Rourke/German, Mrs. Connelly/Ms Fox and Mrs. Conrod. 

The choir uniform at Willows consists of a black bottom and a white top. We ask that if you do not have a black bottom that the bottom be as dark as possible. We prefer white shirts with collars, buttons and sleeves, particularly for those students in Senior Choir as the school has red vests for them to wear for performances and the collars and sleeves look nicer under the vest. **Students will require this uniform for the Remembrance Day Assemblies and the Winter Concert.** There are some extra white shirts and black bottoms in the Music Room for those who forget theirs on concert day. If you have outgrown last year's uniform and would like to pass it along, it would be appreciated.

The first performance for all the choirs is on **Thursday, Nov. 10th** for the **Remembrance Day assemblies** in the Willows gym. The Senior Choir and Discovery Choir will perform at 9:00 am and the Senior Choir and Chatham Choir will perform at 10:45 am. Unfortunately, choir parents are not invited to attend this ceremony due to fire regulations concerning in the number of people in the gym. We will, however, be performing our Remembrance Day songs again at the **Winter Concert on Wednesday, December 14th at 1:00 pm (Senior and Discovery) and Thursday, December 15th at 1:00 pm (Senior and Chatham)**. There are two school performances the previous day: **Tuesday, December 13th at 9:00 am (Senior and Discovery) and 1:00 (Senior and Chatham)**. Tickets will not be required for any of these performances.



in January we will begin work on our annual school musical. Junior Choir members form the chorus. The Senior Choir members will form the chorus as well but will also be eligible for on-stage or back-stage roles. Audition forms will come home in January to be signed by parents. **Everyone in Junior and Senior Choir will require a costume for the musical.** Details on costuming will come home in January.



If you are willing to help out with this enterprise please let us know. The musical is scheduled for the last week of April 2012.

In order to facilitate better communication and be more environmentally friendly, all future choir notices will come via e-mail as part of the weekly updates or the monthly newsletters.

Looking forward to a wonderful year of singing and performing,

Mme Fox and Mrs. Evans



Mini Monster Mash



Come along to a "Mini Monster Mash" at Oak Bay High School the night of Halloween—

Monday, October 31.

It is a safe way to pass the time in those long hours before trick-or-treating.

It will be held at Oak Bay High School from 4 to 6:30.

Take part in fun activities, games, prizes and a contest for best parent/child costume!

Everyone is welcome and we are hoping it will be a spook-tacular time!



Island Farm Daisy Dollars



This year we are participating in the Island Farms Daisy Dollars program. For every **500 Island Farm barcodes** our school sends into Island Farms we will receive \$15.00 towards library books or computer equipment. We will be cutting the bar codes off the milk containers on PAC lunch days and we are inviting our families to cut the bar codes off of **any Island Farms product at home**. We will have a box set up in the office for easy drop off.

We would like to thank Lisa Smith for her inspiration and enthusiasm behind Daisy Dollars.



PAC Donations

Thanks to all of you who have returned your PAC donations to the office. We are trying to receive all donations by the end of next week so that we can begin planning for this year. Your contributions have meant so much to the students at Willows and will again this year. Check the website for an outline of this year's plans.



How many spiders can you find printed in our newsletter? If you think you know come to the office and tell us. You might be close enough for a small treat.





NOVEMBER 2011

NOVEMBRE 2011



SUN DIM	MON LUN	TUE MAR	WED MER	THU JEU	FRI VEN	SAT SAM
		1	2	3 Final Girls' soccer game 3:15 at Willows	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 Assem- blies at 9:00 and 10:40.	11 Remem- brance Day. No school in session. 	12
13	14 Grade 4/5 book club starts today at noon	15	16 PAC Meeting 7:00 in the library.	17 Home- work Club starts today at noon Swim Club starts today.	18 Lice Check.	19
20	21 Pro D Day. No school in session.	22	23	24	25 Pizza / Sushi Day. 	26
27	28	29	30			