



# Washington Township Schools

## "Making a Difference"

### Attention all Veterans!

Our Veterans are cordially invited to join us at Brass Castle and Port Colden Schools on November 11th for a special Veterans Day program. The program at Brass Castle will begin at 9:15am and Port Colden's program will begin at 2pm. The children will sing patriotic songs and read patriotic essays during both programs. Afterwards we request that our Veterans remain for refreshments and a "Meet-and-Greet" with our students and staff.

We will have a Wall of Honor displayed, so remember to send in your photo and information so we can include you. For more details, please contact Mrs. Peterson at [speterson@washtwpsd.org](mailto:speterson@washtwpsd.org) (our BC coordinator) and Mrs. Melhem at [tmelhem@washtwpsd.org](mailto:tmelhem@washtwpsd.org) (our PC coordinator). You can also check the school web e-blast page for forms. We hope you can join us for this special event!

Port Colden School  
Brass Castle School

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### Important November Dates

- ★ Early Dismissal Days (No lunch served): Mon. - Wednesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Parent Teacher Conferences
- ★ Child Care opens at 1:10pm on Monday - Wednesday November 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>
- ★ School Election Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>
- ★ No School Thursday, November 7<sup>th</sup> & Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup> New Jersey Education Association Convention
- ★ Veterans Day Activities Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup>: Brass Castle School 9:15am & Port Colden School 2pm
- ★ Board of Education meeting 7:30pm Brass Castle School November 11<sup>th</sup>
- ★ Port Colden School Make-up Picture Day Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup>
- ★ First Marking Period Report Cards Distributed Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>
- ★ PTA Holiday Basket Collection Week Monday, November 18<sup>th</sup> - Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>
- ★ Brass Castle School Make-up Picture Day Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>
- ★ Early Dismissal (No lunch served) Wednesday, November 27<sup>th</sup>

### Port Colden Winter Concert

Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup> is the date for Port Colden School's Winter Concert, which will be held at Warren Hills High School, at 7pm. The concert will feature students in grades 1-3 singing winter and holiday musical selections.

Parking at the concert is available on the side of the building. (The snow date for the concert is Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>.) We look forward to seeing you there!

## Board of Education to Discuss Full Day Kindergarten

The Washington Township Board of Education will discuss the merits of full-day kindergarten at their November 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Board's Education Committee has been discussing the full-day option in committee and has recently decided to take the conversation to the entire board. If you have an interest in the topic or an opinion you would like to share, please come to the board meeting on November 11<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will begin at 7:30pm in the Brass Castle Media Center.



National Young Readers Week is November 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>! Remember to always read with your child!



## NASP Archery - Grade 6

In the National Archery in the Schools Program there are special guidelines—see whistle commands.



Grade 6 students: Alina, Kayla, Justin, Tony and Damien performing Archery on Brass Castle's Range from 10 yards.



Damien demonstrating proper shooting form



### Whistle Commands:

- 2 Whistles= Get bows,
- 1 whistle= shoot,
- 3 whistles = retrieve arrows



Ryan Monahan's score of 26 from 10 yds.



### Archery Success:

The 11 steps of archery success include: stance, nock the arrow, draw hand set, bow hand set, pre draw, draw, anchor, aim, shot set up, release and follow through.

**Great Job Grade 6 students!**

For more info visit: [naspschools.org](http://naspschools.org), [nasparchery.org](http://nasparchery.org), [njfishandwildlife.com/nasp.htm](http://njfishandwildlife.com/nasp.htm)

# Drew Nugent and the Midnight Society

On Friday, October 18th, and Thursday, October 24th, Drew Nugent and the Midnight Society brought the true spirit of jazz to the students of Brass Castle and Port Colden schools. Their approach to playing and improvising their music, as well as their classic attire reminiscent of the Golden Age of Jazz, let our children step back in time and experience popular music from a century ago. Ask your children how the teakettle sounded or what the microphone looked like!

In between songs, Mr. Nugent shared his knowledge and enlightened the audience about rock music's predecessor. He talked to them about musical instruments, songs, and even about the 1920s! The students could not help but move their feet to the beat!

These performances were coordinated by the PTA Cultural Arts Committee, and have been made possible in part by a grant funded by the Warren County Cultural and Heritage Commission.

If you are interested in joining the Washington Township PTA Cultural Arts Committee, please contact Bridget Asbury at [bridgetasbury@gmail.com](mailto:bridgetasbury@gmail.com).

## Parents Sit For a 'Spell'...

Parent Visitation Day at Port Colden was enchanting. Parents were warmly welcomed for Mrs. Melhem's writing class. Students had the help of their parents in the recipe writing of some fun Halloween spells. Spells were diverse in topic such as *How to Turn Somebody into a Frog*, *How to Turn Someone into a Zombie*, *How to Make Someone Behave All School Year* and *How to Make Someone Happy*. Students were so excited and 'bewitched' by this free writing topic that they couldn't wait to write 'another one.'



Mr. and Mrs. Roth with Curtis

Sharing time was full of giggles and applause. Students didn't need magic to be creative this day.

## Fire Safety Assembly

By: Mrs. Gigantino/Mrs. Polhemus Class

This is what we learned during our Fire Safety Assembly:

- ★ Make sure you test your fire alarm once a month and replace the batteries once a year.
- ★ Cutting off the oxygen supply to a fire will extinguish it.
- ★ Have a meeting place with your family. This place should be far enough away from the house/fire to be safe. Be sure the meeting place is not in the way of the fire trucks.
- ★ Feel the door before you open it because if it is hot there is probably fire on the other side.
- ★ Heat-Oxygen-Fuel start fires...they are the Fire Triangle...take 1 away and the fire cannot continue to burn.
- ★ When trapped inside your house during a fire be sure to yell "FIRE" to get a neighbor's attention.
- ★ Don't hide from the firefighters who are there to save you...even though they look and sound scary.
- ★ Call 911 ASAP.
- ★ Have a plan with your family! Don't let a real fire be the first time you talk about what to do.



## Spending Time and Sharing Memories



Anthony Mammaro with Grandparents  
Karen Bishop & Lauren Tucker

Mrs. Melhem's third grade students celebrated Grandparent's Day with heartfelt activities. First, children got to know their grandparents through interviews. Questions varied from where they were born, their favorite childhood memory to sharing that one special, piece of advice. Students loved taking turns and sharing their new findings about their grandparents aloud with everyone. Next, all participated in a 'hands on' art activity. Children and grandparents traced and cut out each other's hands. The hands were glued to a poem entitled: A Grandparent's Love. Grandparents left that day with smiles, poetry and hands 'to hold'. Students were left with fond memories of their grandparents visiting with them when they were in third grade.

## Columbus Day Teacher In-Service

### Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model

The Washington Township School District adopted the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model in May 2012. Training has been set in a series of stages, the program was first introduced to staff on Sept 4, 2012 & Oct. 8, 2012. In the final piece of the Marzano puzzle, teachers were trained to implement student learning scales that align with unit goals during their Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> in-service.

As a parent, you will see your child(ren) come home with an understanding of their learning goals and the ability to describe what performance on the learning goal looks like at each level of the scale. The teachers' optimum goal is to involve each child in his/her own learning by having the student set and then monitor their own progress in attaining these goals.

The Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model is a research-based teacher evaluation model, which identifies the direct cause-and-effect relationship between teaching practices and student achievement.

## Welcome to our new Second Grade Teacher!

We are pleased to introduce Miss C o l l e e n O'Rourke as one of our new staff members. Miss O'Rourke is a second grade



teacher at Port Colden School. Miss O'Rourke attended York College of Pennsylvania, receiving her Bachelor's of Science degree majoring in Elementary Education and Special Education. This is Miss O'Rourke's very first year of teaching and she reports, "It has been AWESOME so far!" Miss O'Rourke also states "being a part of the WTSD staff has been a wonderful experience. The faculty, students, and families have given me such a warm welcome and I am so happy to be here every day :)" When she is not teaching, Miss O'Rourke enjoys playing sports, running, and spending time with her friends and family.

## Hooray for Our PTA!

A special thank you goes out to the P.T.A. for organizing another year of Spirit Days for the students of Washington Township. This year there are four events planned. After a successful Fall Colors Day, there will be a Tie Dye and Peace Day held in January, a Crazy Hats and Hair Day in March and Red White and Blue Day held respectfully in May on the same day as our district's Memorial Day program!

Because of our wonderful P.T.A., the students have something to look forward to each season of the year.



Sophie Picone & Allison Solvak



## Washington Township Schools Support Troops® Coupon Collection

The Support Our Troops® Troopons® program enhances the well-being of overseas and domestic military families by sending them food and non-food manufacturer coupons to make their hard-earned dollars go farther.

Washington Township School District aims to help military families save money while deployed overseas! Shopping abroad can be especially tough for military families; because currency exchange rates are not always beneficial meaning their earnings may not go as far as they would at home. For example, off base, a military family's dollar is worth the following:

England: 65¢ Germany: 72¢ Japan: 90¢

We are requesting that Washington Township families send all manufacture coupons (current and expired coupons) into school with their children. Please remember to ask other family members and neighbors to save coupons too! Our students will cut, sort, package, calculate total worth of coupons, and ship them to the Support Our Troops® headquarters in Florida. The coupons will then be distributed to overseas and domestic military families. Our first shipment will be forwarded in mid December. Thank you for your help in supporting our troops.

## The Sun Shines at Stokes

The sun was shining on September 25th as five classes of sixth graders began their journey to Stokes State Forest for the annual environmental education trip. On the first day the students hiked to Tillman's Ravine, learned team-building skills and had an evening with hawks, eagles and owls from the Delaware Raptor Trust. The next two days consisted of two-hour classes in water ecology, forestry, wilderness survival and first aid, and orienteering/field math.

The sixth graders have recently completed the first draft of a journal about their experiences. As a warm up for this task, they wrote "Six Word Memoirs" to capture the essence of this trip. Here is a sampling from seven different writers: Misty lake, all white, beautiful scents -- All my friends in Cabin One -- Exploring forests, having fun, epic time! -- catching critters, aching ankles, shelter set-up -- I caught the biggest fish there! -- Stokes, woods, adventures, wildlife- fun time -- Sad to leave, but had fun!

The sun was still shining on September 27<sup>th</sup> when we returned to Brass Castle; tired, but full of memories of learning, having fun, and making new friends. Everyone feels very fortunate to be able to continue this annual grade 6 tradition!

## Upcoming Parent Conferences – Some Tips....

A parent-teacher conference is a time when the most important people in a student's life can talk about how that student is doing in school. It's a chance for parents to ask questions about their child's class and their child's progress. It is also a time for the parent and the teacher to discuss ways both parent and teacher can help students reach their potential. Whether the child is in elementary, middle, or secondary school, parent-teacher conferences are important. It is a time for parents to help the teacher help the child - together, the teacher and parent can help a child have a great school year. These are some basic parent tips:

**Before the Conference:** Make sure you schedule the appointment. Often parents may feel their child is doing well and a conference is not necessary. It's important for the student to know that their parent and their teacher communicate.

- ★ Talk to your child.... Find out which subjects your child likes the best and the least. Ask why. Also, ask if there is anything your child would like you to talk to the teacher about. Help the child understand that you and the teacher are meeting to help him or her.
- ★ Gather input from others.... If your spouse, another care-giving adult, or someone with pertinent information or insight (doctor, counselor, other guardian) can't attend the conference, ask for that person's concerns and questions before the conference.
- ★ Make a list.... Before you go to the meeting, make a list of topics to discuss with the teacher. Along with questions about academics and behavior, you may want to talk to the teacher about the child's home life, personality, concerns, habits and hobbies, and other topics that may help the teacher in working with the child (e.g., religious holidays, music lessons, part-time jobs or a sick relative).

**During the Conference:** Establish a rapport with your child's teacher. As an icebreaker, take notice of something that reflects well upon the teacher. For example, thank the teacher for having made thoughtful notes on your child's homework or for the special attention in helping your child learn to multiply.

- ★ Ask questions—Questions you ask during the conference can help you express your hopes for the student's success in class and for the teacher. It's a good idea to ask the important questions first, in case time runs out. The teacher's answers should help you both work together to help your child. If your child receives special services (e.g., gifted and talented programs, focused enrichment, speech or occupational therapy), be sure to ask about the frequency of services and your child's progress.
- ★ Addressing problems—Parent-teacher conferences are a good time to discuss any difficulties (either academic or behavioral) a child might be having at school. Consider asking the following when faced with a problem your child may be having in class:
  - a. Ask what is being done about the problem and what strategies seem to help at school;
  - b. Develop an action plan that may include steps that parents can take at home and steps the teacher will take when the problem comes up at school;

## Upcoming Parent Conferences – Some Tips (cont.)...

- c. Schedule a follow-up conference and decide on the best way to stay in touch (phone, e-mail, text or letters sent to the home). Develop an action plan: If the student needs help with a behavioral or an academic issue, you and the teacher should agree on specific plans—that you both will work on—to help your child do better. Be sure you understand what the teacher suggests. If it's not clear, ask him or her to explain.
- ★ Set up a way to check on your child's progress. You and the teacher can decide how best to stay in touch, such as through phone calls, emails, text messages, notes or additional meetings.
  - ★ Ending the conference: End the conference by reviewing what you discussed and restating your action plan.

**After the Conference:** When discussing the conference with the child afterward, stress the good things that were covered and be direct about problems that were identified. If an action plan is in place, explain to the child what was arranged. When an action plan is in place, consider the following: Watch your child's behavior and check on class work and homework. Ask how the student feels about schoolwork. Stay in touch with the teacher to discuss your child's progress. Express appreciation as progress is made. A good way to promote a continuing relationship with the teacher is to say "thank-you" with a note or a telephone call. Continuing to keep in touch with the teacher, even if things are going well, can play an important role in helping the child do better in school. When a child knows parents and teachers are regularly working together, the child will see that education is a high priority requiring commitment and effort.

## Counselor's Corner — November 2013

This has been a very different fall for me. As you may recall, my oldest child, is off to college. Though I am reassured by his 'upbeat' voice and understand that he is content and everything is going well, it still pulls at my heart strings that he is not 'at home.' He tells me that it is 'cold' in Connecticut, so I send him Under Armour... he is hungry, so I send him gift cards for 'Shake Shack' ... he is feeling tired, so I send him vitamins... I ask my girls to enclose a note or picture with the packages that I mail out... so they send him letters... It is in our nature as parents or guardians to take care of our kids.

Then yesterday, my son calls me and tells me that he is thankful that I understand him. That I know him. That I support him and love him. He thanks me for the Under Armour, vitamins, gift cards and especially for the letters. The drawings by his 7 year old sister are his favorite and are hanging on his wall. His expression of gratitude is more than I could have anticipated. If my son did not take the time to thank me, would I have continued to send him what he 'needed' going forward?

Take a moment and evaluate your relationship with your children. Are you eager to meet their every request? I know that I want to be my kids 'hero' and meet every need that they have, but it is also important to measure their reaction to your efforts.

YOU are their role model - you are the barometer, the measure, for their lives going forward. If they know that they can take advantage of you, they likely will. This may translate to how they treat their friends, family and acquaintances now and in the future. It may effect how they measure happiness - with material possessions or have they been supported in developing true gratitude for the less tangible?

## Counselor's Corner — November 2013 (cont.)

This month, take a moment to help your children understand all that they have to be thankful for. My son was most thankful for the drawings by his youngest sister... this cost virtually nothing, was not asked for and was the most appreciated. We live in a world where something new is available every moment... but it is the heart felt connections that speak to thankfulness, gratitude and ultimately provide true happiness and contentment.

Take a moment each day and review the Character Calendar for November. There are some great conversation starters that will help you support the concept of Gratitude...

Finally, I would like to take a moment and remind our Washington Township families of the New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act which was effective in the state in the fall of 2011. This law is considered to be the toughest anti-bullying law in the country to date. All public schools in NJ must be in complete compliance with the law.

We are fortunate in Washington Township to have a clear and strict policy regarding intolerance for bullying, and in fact a clear intolerance for any behavior considered disrespectful or "mean." Our success in meeting and exceeding the law's requirements have been positive as our expectations for appropriate, respectful student behavior is very high.

As our children's caregivers, we can help them become resistant to bullying by:

- ★ -developing positive talents or attributes of your child; growing their self esteem with true accomplishments, talents and achievements;
- ★ -encouraging contact with a diverse cross section of students in his/her class to see first hand who they get along with; encouraging those relationships while reinforcing respect for all;
- ★ -helping your child meet friends outside of the school environment;
- ★ -broadening your child's world and remind them that their school environment is a small place in the scheme of their lives; helping them to see the "big picture" while functioning successfully where they are;
- ★ -reminding your child of their safety strategies, how can they can seek help and from whom
- ★ -reviewing the rules of tattling vs. telling;
- ★ -assessing or requesting assistance to assess whether your child may have a lack of appropriate social or learning skills;
- ★ -modeling active listening skills to show your child that they can always come to you with their concerns, thoughts and challenges - and successes! (*Adapted from [bullyinginfo.org](http://bullyinginfo.org)*); and
- ★ and most of all, understand that some conflict is not only natural, but learning how to handle conflict in a positive manner will provide a solid foundation for our children in their future endeavors (more on this next month...).

As always, I reach out to you to contact me any time with questions or concerns. I am so thankful to be a small piece of your child's life each day. I am grateful for you and your wonderful children! Happy Thanksgiving!

*Deb Tierney*



# NOVEMBER 2013 GRATITUDE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>"An attitude of gratitude brings great things."</b> <i>Y. Bhajan</i>				1 Have a positive attitude - be thankful for all that you have	2
3	4 Think about the teachers that you appreciate - take the time to thank them TODAY!	5 Be happy with who you are and what you do- and know you can do anything.	6 Be thankful for your family, your home and your friends.	7 <b>Enjoy Your Time off From School</b> - Think about what you are thankful for today...	8 <b>Do Something kind for a friend - be grateful for your positive relationships</b>	9
10	11 This Veterans Day - be thankful for your freedom!	12 Take a moment to thank someone in your life who has helped you.	13 What are YOU thankful for?	14 When you receive a gift (birthday present) remember to send a thank you card...	15 Take the time to consider the things in your life that you are most thankful for.	16
17	18 Pay attention to the difference between what you NEED and what you WANT.	19 Tell your family that you are thankful for them and why...	20 You are an awesome person - think about how you can share this with others...	21 Look for an opportunity to help others.	22 Regardless of sunshine or rain, be thankful for another great day... "	23
24	25 Thank your teacher for dedicating his/her time for YOU. Tell them what you are thankful for...	26 Be thankful for all that you have -consider donating your extra 'stuff' to someone in need	27 Know that I AM THANKFUL for every one of you!	28 <b>Happy Thanksgiving</b>	29 <b>Be Thankful For Your Family and Friends!</b>	30

**"Forget yesterday - it has already forgotten you.**

**Don't sweat tomorrow-you haven't even met. Instead, open your eyes and your heart to a truly precious gift - today."**