Downey Update

October 5, 2007

Issue 4

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Downey Core Values:

- ***Respect***
- ***Responsibility***
- ***Courage***
- ***Pride***
- ***Excellence***

We're on the Web!
www.westwood.k12.ma.us

Coming Events

October 8- *NO SCHOOL Columbus Day*
October 9- *PTO Meeting*
October 10- *Early Release*
October 17- Chateau Night
October 24- *Early Release for Parent Conferences*
October 26- *Halloween Party*
November 7- *Early Release for Parent Conferences*
November 14- *Early Release*

The MATH CHALLENGE returns on October 12th. Are you ready?

The Westwood Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, sex, religion, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation.

Caps for Kids!

On Friday, Grade 5 students sponsored a Cap Day in which Downey students could donate $1.00 to wear a cap for the day. Fifth graders visited classrooms and collected the donation as part of a national campaign to raise money to support children battling cancer. Money collected is being donated to an organization that purchases caps which are signed by celebrities and then donated to children's hospitals throughout the country. Fifth graders collected nearly $300.00! Great job, Downey students and staff! Our donation will make a difference for kids!

Math on the Mind at the October 9th PTO Meeting

Parents are invited to learn more about the revisions to the *Investigations* math program at the PTO meeting on October 9th. The focus of instruction in the *Second Edition Investigations* is on mathematical thinking and reasoning, but students are still expected to learn arithmetic and basic facts. *Second Edition Investigations is* currently being implemented in all elementary schools in Westwood.

Bus Evacuation Drill

On Friday, all Downey students participated in bus evacuation drills. First, Officer Brad Pindel spoke with students about bus safety. Then students got on the bus and were shown how to make an "emergency hop" out the back door of the bus. With encouragement from Officer Pindell, Downey students successfully made the hop to the mats below. Special thanks to Officer Pindel for his patience and positive attitude! He made even the most reluctant "hoppers" try their best!

Please read the important Halloween message on page 3! We can make a difference!

Grade 4 Parents!
Today, students are bringing home information about the Milton Academy Saturday Program. Participation is generally determined by lottery as space is extremely limited. Please return application materials by the deadline!

Calling All Nurses!

We are looking for substitute school nurses. Please send resume to Student Services Director, Audrey Seyffert at:

Westwood Public Schools
Central Office
220 Nahatan Street
Westwood, MA 02090

Kindergarten Screening

Kindergarten Screening is a state-mandated check of children's visual, auditory, motor, and language skills as well as their vision and hearing functions. Kindergarten Screening is currently being conducted by the Student Services Staff at Downey School and will be completed before the end of October. Parents of kindergartners will receive letters by November 1, informing them of the results.

Westwood Boosters Club- Road Race

The Boosters Club is holding a 5K Road Race at Westwood High School on October 20, 2007, at 9:00AM. The Race is sponsored by the Vanderbilt Club, 45 Vanderbilt Avenue, Norwood. Entry forms are available at: http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us (go to: HS/Student Life /Sports/Boosters)

Holiday Recognition

If you observe a holiday that you would like to include in the Downey Update, please submit the name of the holiday and date by the preceding Friday. We would also be happy to include some brief information about the holiday and traditions that you might like top share with the Downey Community.

How Kid-Directed Advertising Influences our Children and What Parents Can Do About It!

With author, Juliet B. Schor, PhD, Professor and Chair, Sociology Department, Boston College.

Tuesday, October 16, WHS Auditorium

7:00 PM. Book signing, "Born to Buy: The Commercialized Child and the New Consumer Culture." Books will be available for purchase.

7:30 PM. Talk and Q & A session

Ads targeted at kids are virtually everywhere—in classrooms and textbooks, on the Internet, slumber parties, the playground, even at Girl Scout meetings. Advertisers spend more than $15 billion a year marketing directly to our children. Our children respond by spending more than $30 billion a year, and by influencing another $670 billion of their parents' purchases.

Ads and their messages about sex, drugs, and food affect not just what children want to buy, but who they think they are. During this lecture, Dr. Schor will explore the damaging effects that advertising and marketing have on our children and will give parents strategies to combat this cultural phenomenon.

Please join us for this free event, which is sponsored by all Westwood PTO/PTA's, as well as the Early Childhood Council. For more information, please contact Lee Kouri, 781-329-4959 or lkouri@comcast.net

Please help bring - HAPPY HALLOWEEN to CHILDREN IN NEED

October is here, and for our children so, too, is the anticipation of Halloween!

We all know what an exciting time it is, because at least in our house, this is the official start of the holiday season for the next two months! Sadly, however, many will not celebrate this fun day. These are the children in the care of DSS. These children, along with the families caring for them, simply cannot afford the expense of Halloween, with the other significant holidays following so close behind!

It is not a decision foster families choose to make, but rather one that makes itself.

I began this drive with my family, to bring Halloween to children less fortunate three years ago. The first year we collected 25 items, the second year - 100 items, and last year - 400 items! In a classic case of Pay It Forward, when word spread that packaged Halloween parties were coming to these families, local churches and recreation centers, donated their halls for the parties to take place. Imagine my surprise, when I asked the director, if we helped a good majority of children, and she answered, 'Oh this is incredible, but you know, we have 10,000 children in our care.' It quickly became clear to me, that the tremendous outpouring from our Downey families needed a little love and support from our Westwood sister schools. The district has embraced our request to reach out, and now I ask for your help.

Here's how…

If you have a gently used costume in your home, and would like to put it to good use, please bring it to your school lobby.

PLEASE PLACE ALL COSTUMES IN PLASTIC BAGS

AND LABEL THE BAG IDENTIFYING THE COSTUME AND SIZE:

(Example, "boys size 5 Spiderman costume" or "girls size 6 Snow White costume")

If you do not have a used costume, but would still like to help, we also need new costumes, face paint, masks, witches hats, decorations, trick or treat bags, Halloween candy, pretzels, candy corn, or ANY OTHER Halloween dress up or party items to essentially 'box up' Halloween parties for these children!

WHEN: MONDAY, OCTOBER 8th – TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23rd

WHERE: HALLOWEEN COLLECTION BOX AT YOUR WESTWOOD SCHOOL LOBBY

HOW: BRING YOUR DONATION, OR SEND IT IN WITH YOUR CHILD

If we all contribute something, together we can truly make a difference in so many lives and this event is a wonderful way to teach our children how a simple gesture makes such a difference!
Thank you so much for your time and support!!

JOANNE BORZAKIAN OUELLETTE - Mom of Three, At Downey!!! ☺☺☺ 781-320-0036