Emotional 3rd Annual Veterans’ Day Assembly
By: Christy Weaver, Bugle Editor

On November 11, WHS held its third annual Veterans’ Day Assembly. The morning started with a reception for community veterans prior to the assembly, which was provided by the Woodridge Service Organization (WSO).

The Woodridge High School Choirs led by Ms. Donald sang “American Heroes” a piece which featured the hymn of each branch of the service. All three choirs participated, totaling 156 voices, with Andrew McCaffrey narrating. The Woodridge High School Band under the direction of Mr. Krstolic performed “God Bless America”.

A power point presentation read by Heath Capaldo and Carmen and Kathryn Beacham gave a lasting image of soldiers in action. The assembly concluded with a moving Echo Taps performed by Kelsey Tomlinson and Jacob Onifer in memory of our fallen heroes. Students, staff, community members, and veterans continue to compliment how proud they are that WHS takes time to honor our heroes.

PTO Awards $20,000 in Grants to WPS and WIS
By: Jill Klein, PTO Executive Director

The Woodridge PTO proudly awarded $20,000, in the form of 41 grants, to faculty and staff of the Primary and Intermediate Schools. The grants, which are funded through the PTO Enrichment Grant Program, were submitted by teachers and staff to the PTO Board for approval. The funding for the grants comes from last year’s fundraising events.

The Enrichment Grant Program, in its fifth year, funds grants that bring new and exciting ideas and programs to our students to enrich their education. These ideas and programs are the “extras” and hands on experiences that make learning interesting, fun and memorable for our students.

Some examples of the programs funded include, field trips, podcasting equipment, pedometers, equipment and tools for science experiments, chess books, art supplies, No Bullying assembly, etc. The list of awarded grants for each year is available on the PTO website at www.woodridgepto.com.

To date the PTO has raised and granted $73,986.00 to fund this Enrichment Program. Thank you for assisting our schools in providing innovative and creative educational experiences for our children. We strive to make sure each and every dollar comes back to our students and schools in the most beneficial way.

WHS Student Government Kicks Off Holiday Charity
By: Norma Hammond, WHS Teacher

WHS Student Government students will begin the Holiday giving season with the food drive. WHS students are asked to bring non-perishable items from Dec 1 thru Dec 10. All foods donated will stay within the Woodridge community, going to needy families that use the Peninsula Food Bank.

An American Red Cross Blood-mobile will be at the High School on Tuesday, December 9th from 7:30 until 2:00. Community members are encouraged to give blood that day, as it is a Scholarship Drive (we need 50 pints to earn a $500 scholarship). Call Norma Hammond at WHS to make an appointment.

The last holiday event will be the Angel Tree Christmas, sponsored by the Salvation Army. Each Academy period will “adopt” an Angel and make donations to purchase needed and wanted items. These items will then be delivered to the Salvation Army on December 14th. Please encourage your son or daughter to participate in these holiday giving events!

The Teacher Beside Me
By: Linda Ocepek, WHS Principal

On November 19, special education teachers from Woodridge Middle School and High School received training in the use of a reading software called Kurzweil 3000. Use of this special- ized software addresses the district goal of improving reading scores for our at risk students. Although the software and training are expensive, their purchase was made possible by the GAR Foundation who awarded the district $9,550 in June through an Educator Initiative Grant called The Teacher Beside Me.

Kurzweil is designed to help struggling readers. The use of Kurzweil 3000 is almost as if the students have a teacher sitting next to them. The software, like the teacher, helps to decode words, give definitions, suggest helpful hints, and check on spelling. In addition the software can read any material whether printed, electronic, or on the Web, so students are not stopped in their tracks when they run across a word they do not know. When this happens it prevents them from taking meaning from the reading.

The software will be available for special education students and English language learners as well as any student who struggles with reading. Because the software reading tool is content-independent, students at any level can succeed in the classroom regardless of curriculum or lesson plan. The software can access virtually any information which it then reads out loud to the student in clear, human-like, synthetic speech, while a dual highlighting feature adds visual reinforcement.
WMS October Students of the Month
By: Linda Ocepek, WMS Principal

Students of the Month for October are 8th graders Tyler Hushour and Marisa Minerovic; 7th graders are Carolyn Anderson and Max Short; and 6th graders are Chase Edwards and Samantha Schneider.

Boo At Woodridge Intermediate School
By: Betsy Gorrell, WIS Principal

On the evening of October 30th, there were many scary faces and boo-tiful artwork appearing on pumpkins at the first annual Boo At the School at Woodridge Intermediate. Families gathered for pumpkin carving, fellowship, and snacks as the new greenhouse was introduced.

Teachers Jodi Crawford and Jayna Treem were awarded a GAR grant in the spring of 2007 to develop a greenhouse program for the students of Woodridge Intermediate.

Inspiration came from a novel the fifth grade students read, Seed Folks. It was their hope that the greenhouse, and the lessons concerning it, would actively engage students in their learning. By providing a hands-on experience for children, they could realize that plants are a living thing which must be cared for, discover where food comes from, and participate in real life experiences using information they have learned in science, math, and language arts classes.

The hope is that the children will grow their own pumpkins to use in next year’s activity. Seeds were harvested and will be planted next spring.

We would like to thank Krieger’s Health Foods Market for donating the pumpkins we used this year, Hillside Orchard who donated the cider, along with the parents and the Woodridge PTO who donated decorations and cookies. Everyone had a great time and left with a jack-o-lantern and family picture to commemorate the evening.

Middle School Homework Center Open
By: Linda Singer, WMS Teacher

The Middle School Homework Center is available to middle school students who desire a designated time for study. It is open Mondays – Thursdays from 2:30 – 4:30. Students have a certified teacher in the room to help with organizational skills, homework, and research projects. There are 5 computers available for their use. Students should pick up a permission form from the main office, guidance office, or Mrs. Singer in room 811. Any questions, contact Mrs. Singer at 330-928-7420.

WHS Student Develops Pharmacy Program at Cleveland Clinic
By: Christy Weaver, Bugle Editor

While most high school students are still deciding what they would like to do with their future, Woodridge High School Senior, Samantha Parisi has already taken huge step towards her dreams. Over the summer of 2008, Samantha participated in a Pharmacy Internship at the Cleveland Clinic. Monday through Friday, 40 hours a week for 9 weeks, Samantha had the opportunity to see exactly what it was like to be a Pharmacist. During her time there, she was required to complete a research project. The fruits of her work are still being used in the Cleveland Clinic pharmacy.

For Samantha’s project, she created a program for transplant patients that would help them to receive their medications more efficiently. She worked very closely with the Pharmacists, pharmacy staff, and transplant departments to develop the “Discharge Medication Program for Transplant Patients.”

Samantha created forms that allow the transplant department to fax the requests for the 15-20 medications that patients will need after discharge from the hospital. The pharmacy can then get the patient’s medications ready, which eliminates the 1-3 hour wait that it takes to fill the prescriptions. She also put together a “Start Kit” for the patients that includes a pill box, thermometer, scale, and blood pressure monitor for free. These items are important to the patient because if their weight, blood pressure, or temperature fluctuates, the medication must be adjusted.

Samantha states, “This internship really let me see exactly what it is like being a Pharmacist, and I’ve decided that this is definitely what I want to do with my life. It was a lot of work, but it was definitely worth it.”

Woodridge Places 2nd at Financial Planning Competition
By: Leah Norris and Kristen Kalinowski, WMS/WHS Teachers

On Monday, November 3rd, 2008 students from Mrs. Norris’s high school Successful Living class and Mrs. Kalinowski’s middle school Family and Consumer Sciences class competed in the 2nd Annual Financial Planning Competition at Ashland University. The students competed against 7 other high school teams from around the state.

The high school students who proudly represented WLSD were Chris Allen, Natalie Klag, Nichole Meckler, Rebecca Alexander, Kelly Valle, and Aaron Cabera. The 8th grader team members were Kirk Baglia, Steven Frederick, Lauren Brady, Jordan Pridy, Lizzie Wilkinson and Kara Kelleher.

The morning session was a lightning round of questions. The high school team finished the morning tied for third and the middle school team finished in 2nd place. Following the lightning round all of the teams were given a scenario about a family facing major financial stress.

The teams worked for 4 1/2 hours developing a financial plan for the family. Both teams addressed the problems the family was facing, the causes of them and ways to fix them. The groups then gave a 15 minute presentation in front of three judges and a packed auditorium. The high school team placed 3rd and the middle school team placed 4th overall. Congratulations to both teams for doing so well at the competition.
The Woodridge Latin Club participated in the annual Make a Difference Day (MADD), sponsored by the Ohio Junior Classical League (OJCL). For this year's activity Latin Clubs from Shaker Heights, Westlake, and Woodridge visited the St. Augustine Health Campus, located in Cleveland.

After a brief tour of the facility, the students helped assemble and decorate Christmas trees, which will be placed in various hallways of the center. The students carried boxes, put together trees, untangled and repaired strings of lights, and attached decorations.

The group then was generously provided lunch at the St. Augustine Health Campus. During lunch the group got a chance to talk to Mr. Fahey, one of the residents of the facility. He regaled everyone with tales of his forty years of teaching in both public and private schools in the Cleveland area. After lunch the students quickly finished decorating. The Woodridge group was led by Latin Club vice-president Andrew McCaffrey, a senior at WHS, and by Latin 1 student Josh Conner, a sophomore. Commented Andrew, "Josh and I had fun carrying boxes, a task for which we were well suited."

WHS Latin Club “Makes A Difference”
By: Tom McCaffrey, WHS Teacher and Latin Club Advisor

WHS October Students of the Month
By: Chris Sieber, WHS Assistant Principal

Students of the Month for October are Randi Farling, Nicole Anderson, James Rhodes, Nathan Mercer, Megan Wojcik, Bianc Jackson, and Karen Andrade.

The Woodridge Middle School had two grand prize winners in the City of Cuyahoga Falls Halloween Creative Writing Contest which is sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department. Chase Edwards took the grand prize for his poem and Emiko Waight won the grand prize for her Halloween story. Other winners included Kara Renner, first place poem; Michaela Miller, second place poem; Tyler Laughorn, first place story; Danielle Lo-Prinzi, third place story.

We also had five students receive an honorable mention for their writing. They are Ian Mullins, Allie Yanaman, Noah Bullock, Ayman Abdul Hague, and Brian Jankowski.

Congratulations to all of these excellent writers.

WHS Yields 11 Winners in Local Creating Writing Contest
By: Linda Ocepek, WMS Principal

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We also had five students receive an honorable mention for their writing. They are Ian Mullins, Allie Yanaman, Noah Bullock, Ayman Abdul Hague, and Brian Jankowski.

Congratulations to all of these excellent writers.
The Intermediate School Library has recently had a major make-over. For the past few months, the library has undergone some major changes. The old carpet had begun to wrinkle, creating a tripping hazard and it was also quite worn in places. As with any re-doing project, we experienced some “bumps in the road”. The carpet install was delayed longer than expected, which in turn delayed the re-shelving of the fiction sections. However, the show must go on! Unfortunately, an error in the measurement of the space caused the installers to order a much smaller amount of carpet than what was actually needed. I came in to see a 17’ x 20’ section of the room looking very bare.

Mrs. Benaszeski, one of our 3rd grade teachers, thought that this would be a wonderful real-life example of why math skills are needed in everyday life. She was right – being able to make a connection between class lessons and everyday life is an essential part of learning. Teachers were able to turn the measurement error into a school-wide “teachable moment”. During morning announcements, the teachers were invited to bring their classes down to re-measure the space to see how much carpeting was still needed. Many classes took advantage of the offer! The 3rd grade was studying a math unit on area and perimeter at the same time that the measuring error was made, and they were able to test out their new measuring skills.

After the carpeting was completed, the shelving units were reconfigured to give the library a more open feeling. Mrs. Houlanah is extremely grateful to the PTO for approving a grant for bean bag chairs, and cannot wait for them to arrive! There is also an area rug underneath the bean bag chairs in the new reading area.

Youth Football scrimmages against WHS Varsity
By: Jeremy Maxa, WHS Teacher and Football Coach

On Wednesday, October 22nd, the Woodridge JV football team showed up to practice preparing for their big game with Kenston that Saturday. What they did not know was that their coach set up a scrimmage for them as a final “tune up” for the big game. When the 3rd and 4th graders arrived, the Woodridge Varsity Football team was their opponent.

The boys…what can be said…THREE IN A ROW! What a fall for this group of young men. Key injuries to runners like Kyle Cochrun and Drake Sulzer were handled with maturity and resolve as our youngsters stepped in and our veterans stepped up. The 2006 State Championship team had four seniors, the 2007 State Championship team had three seniors, and this group only had two seniors. Early conversations about the ’09 fall season would have to include Woodridge among the potential titlists! Again, late-season leadership set a tone for tremendous success. Mike Rhodes epitomized confidence and patience as he persevered through some early season disappointments to be the ‘man of the meet’ at the state championships.

Joe White and Jimmy Charles were outstanding all season while Nathan Mercer and Vibush Sivakumaran made tremendous strides and will be counted on heavily next fall. Again, depth was a savior as many of our youngsters ran well throughout the fall and showed great promise for future successes. Jacob Onifer, Aaron Ettinger, and Michael Patton filled in nicely and gained valuable ‘big-meet’ experience for next year.

Individually, Erin Mercer earned All-Ohio honors in cross county for the first time. Her third place finish was coupled with a school record of 18:14.2. Emily Sabo continued her career of success as she earned All-Ohio honors for the 3rd consecutive time! Joe White returned to greatness after persevering through an IT band injury and showed his mettle again and again as he earned All-Ohio honors in cross county for the first time as a Woodridge harrier. Mike Rhodes also secured himself a place in the Woodridge Athletic Hall of Fame with his first All-Ohio honor. In addition, 12 of our 14 runners that competed at the state championships grabbed Academic All-Ohio honors. Finally, Joe White and Erin Mercer were selected to represent Ohio in the Mid-East Meet of Champions. This meet pits the top ten seniors in Ohio against their counterparts from Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan.

Our coaching staff is extremely proud of the work of these young men and women. We are also thankful for the time commitment of time and effort by the families in our program. Coach Conroy, Coach Schaliet, Coach Massey, and I each looks forward to helping with the development of our students athletes!