

Westside Wire

News and Information for WESTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL
Parents and the West Houston Community.

Volume 16 Issue 3
February 2010

Welcome to Westside High School!



Principal Michael McDonough joins us after eight years at Pin Oak Middle School. Pin Oak has racked up numerous awards. The U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Award (2008), the Texas Education Agency Exemplary School designation (2008) and seven Gold Performance Awards are among the many on the list. Past

experience includes assignments as Assistant Principal at Bellaire High School, and teacher at Westbury High School.

Mr. McDonough came on campus full time February 1. Staff, students and the community are anxious to have the opportunity to work with him to continue to strive for excellence, in the Westside Way. We look forward to learning and growing with you, Mr. McDonough.

A Fond Farewell to Mr. Castro

Paul Castro left Westside High School for a new assignment at Lee High School on January 26.

Principal Castro received a heartfelt send off from our cheerleaders, band and seniors. Many faculty members were also on hand as a chant of "Castro, Castro" greeted him upon leaving the front door. It was a moving ceremony for a leader we will all miss.

Morgan Ball, Westside's Senior Class President gave the remarks that included fond remembrances and inspiring moments. In part, she said, "As your time at Westside comes to a close, you leave behind a legacy that will never be forgotten. We wish you the best of luck... and we know that you will soon inspire another community to exhibit the excellence that you have encouraged in us. Thank you for your tireless dedication and your endless wisdom. You will be truly missed."

Well said Meagan, and echoed throughout the entire Westside community.

Calendar of Events at Westside High—Home of the Wolves

February

- 15 NO SCHOOL
- 20 Tutorial, 8 a.m., Commons
- 25-26 "The Arabian Nights", 7 p.m., Black Box
- 27 Tutorials, 8 a.m., Commons

March

- 2 PTO Meeting, 7 p.m., Library
- 3 REPORT CARDS

- 4-6 Hiphopoly, 7:30 p.m., Mini-Theatre
- 6 Tutorials, 8 a.m., Commons
- 7 ABC Fun Run, 1 p.m.
- 8 Orchestra Pre-UIL Concert, 7 p.m., Auditorium
- 9 Jazz Band & Percussion Concert, 7 p.m., Commons
- 10 "The Mill on the Floss", UIL OAP Preview, 7 p.m., Auditorium
- 13 SAT @ WHS
- 15-19 NO SCHOOL
- 24 Progress Reports
- 27 Tutorials, 8 a.m., Commons
- 30 Choir Concert, 7 p.m., Auditorium
- 31 Blood Drive, 7 a.m.-3 p.m.

April

- 2 NO SCHOOL
- 3 Tutorials, 8 a.m., Commons
- 6 PTO Meeting, 7 p.m., Library
Band Pre-UIL Concert, 7 p.m., Auditorium
- 9-10 Student Directed One-Act Plays, 7 p.m. Black Box
- 17 Tutorials, 8 a.m., Commons
- 21 REPORT CARDS
- 22- Inertia Concert, 7:30 p.m.,
- 24 Mini-Theatre
- 30 Dance Show, 5 p.m., Auditorium

Inertia in the National Spotlight

By Sharon Roberts

Westside's Inertians began the New Year in outstanding form. They traveled to Miami to participate in a Dance Convention and the FedEx Orange Bowl.



During the convention the dancers worked with noted choreographers from around the country, along with a

special class in the Bollywood style from the choreographer of "Slumdog Millionaire", who flew in from Mumbai for the event. Inertia dancers **Nikki Charubhat** and **Sydney Pritchett** were singled out by the hip hop choreographers for their excellence. In fact, the choreographers were so impressed with our kids, that with 1000 dancers involved, staging was created to keep Inertia on the front row!.

The halftime was an amazing experience, leading 1000 dancers, in front of 60,000 fans with Kool & The Gang performing live. It was really, really cold, but they didn't mind.

The Inertian's would like to give a special shout out to **Mr. Greg Meyers**, **Mr. Paul Castro**, **Ms. Beth Kleis** and **Mr. Jason Catchings** for their help and guidance to making this trip a reality. We will never forget it.



Regional Scholastic Art Awards

By: Karen Hunter

The Alliance for Young Artists & Writers celebrates the creative achievement of America's teens. In 1923, The Awards were founded in order to offer recognition and scholarships for students for their artistic talents, instead of their academic or athletic abilities.



This work is from Marina Nikolaou.

Students who excel in the visual arts and creative writing participate in the Awards in order to earn recognition, get their work exhibited or published, and to earn scholarships.

During the 2010 program year, more than 30,000 students will be recognized in their local communities, and 1,000 students will receive National Awards. Students and teachers are celebrated at regional ceremonies, public events and the national ceremony at Carnegie Hall. Last year, Westside student **Alex Pintus** was honored at the national level in New York City for her painting.

The Scholastic Art **Gold Key** is the highest level of achievement on the regional level. Gold Key works are forwarded to New York City for national adjudication. Congratulations to Westside winners **Gloria Castro** (Drawing), **Sujan Patel** (Drawing) and **Joshua Valdez** (Drawing). Winners will be honored at a reception on February 4, 2010 at the Harris County Department of Education.

Three WHS artists also won **Silver Keys**, awarded for works worthy of recognition on the regional level. Congratulations to **Marina Nikolaou** (Painting), **Tu-anh Nguyen** (Painting) and **Michelle Lin** (Drawing).

Scholars Honored at AP Kick Off

One look in the Commons February 5th, and you couldn't help but be impressed by the sheer number of AP Scholars being recognized at the 2010 AP Kick Off. Three hundred students, all earning a 3 or higher on the May 2009 AP Exams, were invited for a breakfast catered by **Chelsea Gumm's** Culinary Arts students.

After breakfast, **Stephanie Matlock**, AP Coordinator, welcomed everyone. They were then congratulated by **Principal Michael McDonough** who discussed the importance of Advanced Placement Exams and the commitment they have made. The AP Scholars were then honored with plaques presented by their Dean with the assistance of Mrs. Matlock.

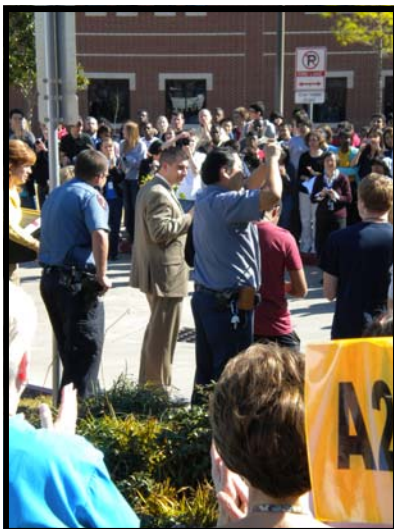
Westside is proud to announce that we have three AP National Scholars on campus this year. Usually, students are not awarded this honor until after graduation due to the number of exams taken in May of their senior year. However, current AP National Scholars **Niloufar Hafizi**, **Garrett Reddin**, and **William Watson** have already earned a 4 on all AP Exams, and grades of 4 or higher on 8 or more of these exams. Quite an outstanding accomplishment!

Westside Seniors Sign College Letters of Intent

On Wednesday, February 3, 117 HISD student athletes met at Delmar Field House to sign letters of intent for colleges throughout Texas and the United States. In the past, the HISD event was limited to football players but last year it was expanded to include all male and female athletes. While some may have previously committed verbally to a school, the letters signed last week are binding; athletes must attend the school in order to receive financial aid, and NCAA rules forbid coaches from recruiting them further.

Our heartiest congratulations to our Westside student athletes for their dedication and hard work and we wish you the best in college!

- **Chad Thompson and Mike Ariwodo**—Fullerton College in California
- **Frank Williams**—Ellsworth Iowa
- **Otis Seals**—Blinn Jr. College
- **Tyler Tucker**—East Texas Baptist
- **Kevin Rodriguez**—University of Texas San Antonio
- **Martin Ifedi**—University of Memphis
- **Chris Herbert**—Kansas Wesleyan
- **George Munoz**—Bethany Kansas
- **Ronald Tranbarger**—Missouri Valley Community College
- **Diamond Dixon**—University of Kansas
- **Kate Agneson**—South Carolina State University



Thanks for
the
memories...





It's Great To Be At Westside!

By: Cathy McDonnell, PTO President

Since the last newsletter, the Westside PTO has had an opportunity to contribute to the school in a number of ways.

The holidays are always a favorite time as we have another opportunity to show our appreciation of our faculty and support staff. We were able to provide beautiful poinsettias to our teachers to brighten homes and classrooms. The plants came from the Brookwood Community, so we were able to support a good cause in the community as well. The notes of appreciation came pouring in. Many thanks to organizers Lisa Say and Sonia Davis Elder and their helpers.

We also had a chance to thank our PTO Board, advisors and our Deans at a holiday function hosted at the home of Debbie & Larry Noriega. We were treated to a mini-holiday concert by our own WHS Jazz Band, directed by Mr. Allen. We thank the group for their time and for the great seasonal sounds.

Once back from the holiday break, we were off and running, assisting with the parent college panel. The panel was made up of parents with college students who were able to answer questions for those planning to send their students off to college soon. Lots of good information was shared, including practical information that isn't usually covered in college brochures and web sites.

We followed up the next day with an Alumni breakfast, providing food and volunteers to serve. It was great to see the 130 returning alumni from recent WHS classes. The students had the opportunity to catch up with old friends and make plans to reconnect. Mr. Wood, Ms. Matlock and others then had

these students share with current students, their experiences and their "If I had only known" stories.

The week ended with a Staff Appreciation luncheon, catered by Cantina Laredo, and funded by PTO staff appreciation volunteers. Our PTO Small School liaisons and their helpers assisted with the serving. A good meal was had by all.

Whether it is assisting at Community Open House, providing food for the Honor Roll Breakfast, helping with the AP Kick-Off, being available on the big test days (AP, TAKS, etc) or showing appreciation, the WHS PTO can be counted on to do our share to continue to keep Westside one of the best high schools in the area.

Parent involvement is key and each of you has an opportunity to participate whether you join PTO as a member, contribute to Dollars for Scholars, or volunteer in a sport or activity your student is involved with. Some of you may wish to answer the call to serve on the PTO board – nominations will be accepted soon for the next school year. We hope to see you at the next meeting, the first Tuesday of each month.

- President**
Cathy McDonnell
- 1st VP-Membership**
Christie Petrie
- 2nd VP-Fundraising**
Kiki Hummel
- Treasurer**
Kelly Simmons
- Recording Secretary**
Debbie Noriega
- Corresponding Secretary**
Janna Wright
- VIPS**
Shelby Doehring
Rhonda Monteverde
- Parliamentarian**
Kelly Cramer

PTO Meeting
1st Tuesday of the Month
7 p.m. in the Library

March 2
April 6



National Honor Society Membership

By: Ms. Patch

The National Honor Society (NHS) is the nation's premier organization established to recognize outstanding high school students. It serves to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character. Our Westside NHS will send out invitations in late February to students who qualify scholastically; this includes sophomores and juniors who have a 3.8 cumulative grade point average or higher for all work done through the Fall Semester, 2009.

Once a student receives an invitation, he/she needs to complete a questionnaire and return it to one of the sponsors by the designated date and time (no late applications will be accepted). All of the information will be on the invitation. After the questionnaire is returned the entire Westside staff has input on the character, service, and leadership of the student. Then a panel reviews the information and the final selection of students occurs.

We are fortunate to have so many outstanding students who meet the minimum academic requirement but the initial step of being invited to apply does not necessarily mean the student will become a member; it is a privilege bestowed upon a student by the faculty of the school. If you have any questions, you can email Donna Patch at dpatch@houstonisd.org.



HISD District Update

By: Greg Meyers, District VI Trustee
HISD Board of Education President



January is always a full month for the Board of Education at HISD. We have two new members of the Board who bring talent and expertise to the table. HISD and the Board no longer looks at our task at hand as “reforming” education. We want to “transform” what we are doing in HISD to better improve the academic success of our students. I know we all want to insure we have the best teachers and best leaders in our schools, so the Board and HISD will continue in these efforts. Dr. Grier brings a high level of expertise and experience to this job. He and the Board are working closely to define the strategy of HISD. Team HISD is up for the challenge and heavy lifting that will take place within HISD for the betterment of educating our students.

Closer to home...last Fall, the Board voted to distribute funds to each of the 9 districts within HISD. I am overseeing the \$13 million for District VI and have coordinated with the Regional Superintendent and each Principal in the District. I asked for them to evaluate physical “NEEDS” in their schools. This information was compiled and prioritized. The COO of HISD is working closely with Barbara Thornhill, myself and each Principal with projects on the table.

I am taking this task methodically. As of January, there are many projects occurring at the schools. At Westside, I am happy to report that we will make improvements to the tennis courts and add two additional courts so as to finally have home matches as well as improving equipment in the WHS Natatorium to attract larger meets. There are other proposed projects that have not yet been voted on for release of funding. In doing this evaluation, it was discovered that some of the needs indicated by the principals should have been funded by general facilities and maintenance. So those items are now underway as well.

As always, I am available to field questions and concerns. Keep in touch and best wishes for a wonderful Spring 2010 at WHS. GO WOLVES!

gmeyers@houstonisd.org
713-556-6121

Westside Theatre Presents
"The Arabian Nights" February 25-26

By Ms. Kearns



Please join us as WHS Theatre presents the entertaining play "The Arabian Nights," by Mary Zimmerman. The play is built around the seductive narrative prowess of Scheherazade (**Andrea Ontiveros**), the bride of the caliph Shahryar (**James Vigilant**), who, having been cuckolded by his first wife, now beds, and murders, a different virgin every night. Scheherazade postpones her execution by telling the caliph intricate fables. Ms. Zimmerman shuns the familiar stories that have been turned into Hollywood spectacles. There is no Sinbad or Aladdin in sight. Rather, she gives Scheherazade less fantastical tales that will subliminally instruct the caliph in the ways of love and justice.

Each story involves characters with their own stories to tell, and the 16-member ensemble shifts fluidly from one level to another, using overlapping voices to achieve the transitions. "Arabian Nights" is a celebration of the salutary powers of storytelling.

Performances will be held in the Black Box at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$5 in advance and \$7 at the door.

Mark your calendar for upcoming shows.:

March 10th We'll preview our UIL One Act Play Competition performance of "The Mill on the Floss"

April 9-10th Student directed one act plays

May 6-7th We close the year with our annual production of student written work "From the Writers Room".

See you at the show!

For more information or group sales, please call 281-920-9054.

Pride Drill Team

By: Ms. DeMartino



The Pride Drill/Dance Team has started 2010 off dancing! Pride is practicing everyday and work-

ing hard for competitions. The girl's first competition is Saturday, February 20th at Morton Ranch High School in Katy, TX. The cost is \$5 for the general public and free for ages four and under. Our other competition is in Galveston, TX at Moody Gardens, March 5th and 6th! Admission on Friday is \$5 and Saturday is \$8. Pride will be performing a variety of routines which include dance styles such as pom, kick, lyrical, jazz, modern and hip hop. We have an officer routine made up by the leadership of Pride as well as fifteen soloists. It would mean a lot for your support!

It is time for Pride try-outs for the 2010-2011 school year! If you are interested in showing your school spirit, passionate about dance and want to build special memories that will last a lifetime, then this is the place for you. We are looking for studious, respectful, graceful, enthusiastic young ladies that love to dance. Try-out packets will be available March 8, 2010 in the dance studio and wrestling room. Pride try-outs will be held on Thursday, April 1, 2010. For more information please contact Brooke DeMartino at bdemarti@houstonisd.org.



Breakfast is Free, Lunch is a Bargain

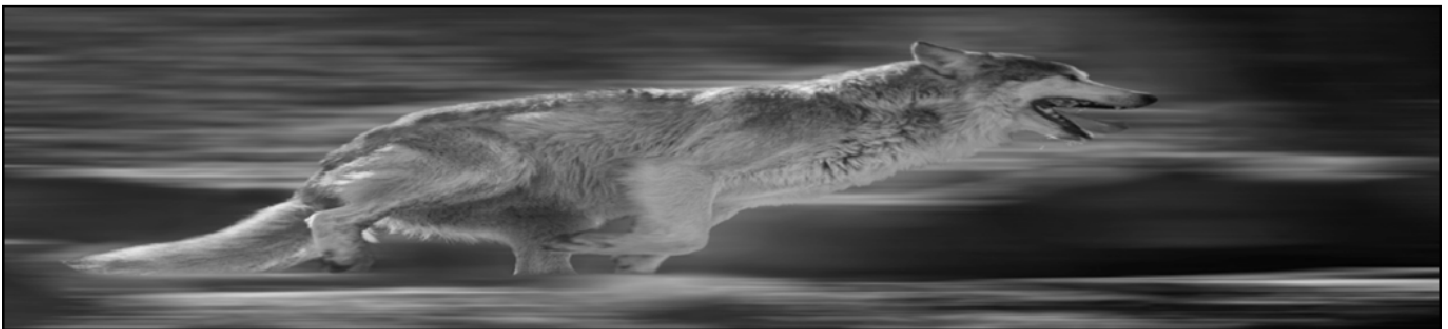


What a deal! Did you know that breakfast is served every school day at Westside and it's FREE for ALL students? If you're short on time in the morning or just ran out of cereal, don't go to class hungry. All you'll need is your ID to grab breakfast on campus! The hours are 7:00-7:40 am and 7:00-9:20 am Thursdays. Lunch is a bargain at just \$1.70 per day. And for students who qualify, it may be only \$.40 or even free. You can find information about [free and reduced-price meals](#) under Health and Wellness of the HISD Parent Resources website and even [apply online](#). Applications are accepted throughout the school year and are also available from Ms. Barras in the Main Office.

Credit Appeals



Credit Appeals Applications can be picked up from the secretary in the House Offices. The deadline to complete make-up hours for credit appeals is March 31, 2010. The student must attach a copy of the report card to the Credit Appeals Application. If you have concerns regarding grades, please email the teacher. Contact information is available on our website at www.westsidewolves.org under Faculty. Don't forget, you can keep a daily check on attendance and grades through the Parent Student Connect website. Use the Quick Link on our homepage for information about registering and using the program.



Sunday March 7, 2010

Long Playing (33 1/3-Minute) Run on the Track,
1-Mile Dog Run,
Cow Patty Bingo

Presented by the Westside High School Athletic Booster Club

This Fun Run benefits 1,000 Westside students participating in 24 sports programs

Awards will be given as Follows:

Age 5-10: All participants receive an award.

Top three in the following age groups (male and female):

11-12, 13-14, 15-18, 19-29, 30-34, 40-49, 50-59, 60+ (Age will be determined by age of the runner not the counter)

There will be lots of gift baskets and door prizes drawn at the conclusion of all of the run activities.

Cost: \$20.00 for each two person run team or \$15.00 for the Dog Run. (slightly more for online registration). Each participant will receive a t-shirt and the dog a bandanna.

Packet Pick UP: Week of March 1 during lunch at Westside High School or Saturday March 6 at Kroger, Briar Forest & Eldridge Pkwy.

ONLINE REGISTRATION: www.signmeupsports.com

Contact WHSABC @ (281)920-8000

www.westsidewolves.org

trackcoach248@gmail.com

Westside

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Volume 16, Issue 3

Wire

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WESTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL
Houston Independent School District
4400 West 18th Street
Houston, TX 77092-8501

PTO Membership Form 2009-2010

Parent's Name:

Parent's Name:

Street

City:

Zip:

Email Address:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Business Phone:

Westside Student's Name:

Grade Level

Dean/Small School

1.

2.

3.

I'm Interested in PTO Volunteering Opportunities ___Yes

YES, I WANT TO JOIN THE PTO for 2009-2010 \$50 Leader of the Pack \$20 Family \$10 WHS Faculty/Staff

Yes, I would like to contribute to PTO College Scholarship Fund \$10 \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other

Yes, I would like an extra copy(ies) _____ of the Student directory at \$5.00 each (or 2 for \$9)

Yes, I would like to have the Westside Wire emailed to me rather than delivered via U.S. Postal Service

Amount Enclosed \$ **(Payable to "WHS PTO")** **Check #:**

Return completed form with payment to: Westside HS, 14201 Briar Forest Dr., Houston, TX 77077, Attn: PTO Membership