

# Woodlake Elementary Pelican Press

February 2012  
Volume 25, Issue 7



## Woodlake Elementary School

1620 Livingston Street  
Mandeville, LA 70448  
(985) 626-8842

Levia Parker, Principal  
Tara Dragon-Hernandez, Asst. Principal  
Leslie Miller, TRT

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### Upcoming Events

- ◆ **February 14** - Triple Nickel Grill Night
- ◆ **February 16** - (2pm) Krewe of Third Grade Parade
- ◆ **February 21-24** - Mardi Gras Holiday
- ◆ **March 1** - (6:30pm) General PTA Meeting
- ◆ **March 8** - Teacher Appreciation Mini-Luncheon
- ◆ **March 9** - End of 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, NO SCHOOL

## Principal's Letter

Wow! I can't believe that it is the middle of February already. I am looking forward to our Mardi Gras Celebrations! I keep hearing that the third grade one is a big favorite. It will be fun to watch the excitement of all the students whether they are catching or throwing beads and trinkets. All families are welcomed and encouraged to attend. A map will be sent home of the route of the parade. The police department has suggested to us to try to eliminate most of the parking along the parade route to make it safer for the students. This will require all parents to allow time to park away from the parade route and walk up to the parade area. This year the parade will be on Thursday, February 16 at 2 P.M. We're looking forward to seeing you!

Our school was recognized at a recent school board meeting for our efforts with the United Way Drive. We were awarded for being the school with the most student dollars collected. This was a huge accomplishment, since there are many schools with higher enrollment than Woodlake! Another award we received was for 100% of the Woodlake employees contributing to the drive. Thanks to all parents,

students, and staff for your support with our United Way Drive. We give a special thanks to Ms. Nancy Reed for heading the drive this year and many previous years.

Parents, I would like to encourage you to volunteer for the Pelican Palooza on March 24<sup>th</sup>. This is a great opportunity to work alongside many other parents, as well as the faculty and staff of Woodlake. Even if you can only work for a couple of hours, it will make a huge difference! It is sure to be a fun day for everyone!

Third grade students will be administered the iLeap Test on April 12, 13, 16 and 17th. Second grade students will be administered the Iowa Test of Basic Skills in the spring. Further information will be sent home regarding both of these tests.

Mardi Gras holidays will be February 20 - 24. Classes will resume on Monday, February 27. Have a fun and safe Mardi Gras!

Levia Parker,  
Principal

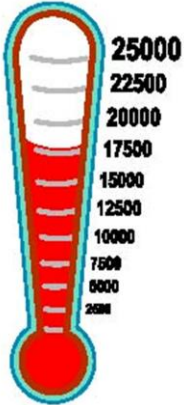


**Did You Know...That WES Kindergartners use iPods in the classroom to help them learn?**

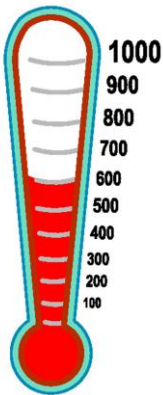
*(see story on page 3)*

**PTA Goals for 2011-2012**

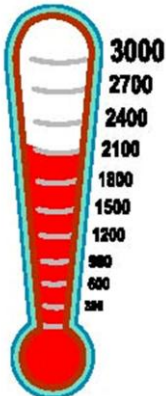
**Box Tops**  
 Goal: 25,000  
 Current: 17,500



**PTA Membership**  
 Goal: 1,000  
 Current: 600



**Food Drive**  
 Goal: 3,000  
 Current: 2,100



**February/March 2012**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/Sun
February 13	14 Triple Nickel Grill Night	15	16 2pm - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Mardi Gras Parade  Domino's Night	17	18
					19
20	21	22	23	24	25
<b>Mardi Gras Holidays - No School</b>					
27	28	29	March 1 6:30pm - General PTA Meeting*	2	3
					4
5	6	7	8 Teacher Appreciation Mini-Luncheon	9 End of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter NO SCHOOL	10
					11
12	13 Spring Pictures	14 Bop's Night	15 Domino's Pizza Night	16	17
					18

Visit [www.woodlakepta.org](http://www.woodlakepta.org) for more information on scheduled events, click on WES PTA Calendar.

\*The PTA Meeting will be held at the Treen Technology Center, 2024 Livingston Street.

**Volunteer Opportunities: Pelican Palooza**

The Pelican Palooza is looking for volunteers to help with the festival from 7:00 am until 4:00 pm. For some parts of the day, we will need up to 40 volunteers per hour!

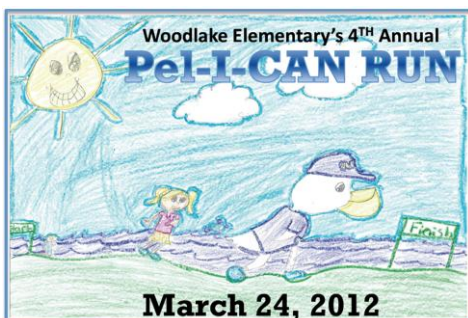
If you can give any of your time that day, please contact Leslie Miller at [leslie.miller@stpsb.org](mailto:leslie.miller@stpsb.org).



## A Note from Your PTA Presidents...

In the children's classic *The Tortoise and the Hare*, we learn about an overconfident little rabbit who takes his speed for granted; and about a methodical, unassuming tortoise who patiently stays on task. Using a bit of imagination, this story reminds us somewhat of the students and faculty at Woodlake. Much like the Hare, our students are full of unlimited energy and willing to demonstrate how skillfully they can master a challenge. However, sometimes they can get distracted by the world around them. They might even feel the urge to take an afternoon siesta (whether it's required or not) while they are supposed to be learning! On the other hand, our faculty provides the calm, steady leadership that comes from wisdom and experience. They patiently guide their little hares toward success, realizing that an occasional failure teaches a valuable lesson.

On March 24<sup>th</sup>, WES will attempt to settle the age-old debate of who really wins...the tortoise or the hare. Please join us for the Inaugural



Students vs. Faculty Relay Race to be held at 9:30 a.m. in conjunction with the Pel-I-CAN RUN 5K race and 1-Mile fun run. Information has already been sent home describing this spirited competition with instructions on how to participate. If you did not receive this note, please either visit the PTA website and click on the Pelican Palooza tab, or send us an email at [president@woodlakepta.org](mailto:president@woodlakepta.org).

Between now and March 24<sup>th</sup>, you also have an opportunity to cast your vote for the winner. Two buckets have been set up in the Woodlake office, one for the Students and one for the Faculty. Simply drop money into the appropriate bucket to vote for who you think will win the Relay Race. After the race, the winning team will get to choose the best use for the money donated in the two buckets.

We hope to see you on March 24<sup>th</sup> for a day of family fun at the Mandeville Lakefront!!

Your PTA Co-Presidents,

*Melissa Gourgues  
Gail Owens*

**Pelican Palooza and  
Pel-I-Can Run  
March 24, 2012**

For forms and information visit  
[www.woodlakepta.org](http://www.woodlakepta.org)



### DID YOU KNOW

**That the WES Kindergarteners use iPods in the classroom to help them learn?**

- iPod applications are teaching students to recognize, write, and sound out letters and helping teachers to measure progress in learning sight words and math facts.
- Literacy games are helping students to read stories and track words.
- As a result, DIBELS scores, specifically in the areas of sound and letter recognition, have improved; fine motor skills have increased; and responsibility levels have grown as students realize that they lose the privilege of using the iPods if the units are not powered down and properly stored!

The iPods are proving to be a valuable learning tool.

**Way to go  
Kindergartners!!**

## Volunteers of the Month



**David Sides**

You probably have seen David Sides around Woodlake at some point this year. He has helped unload cookie dough, helped his wife re-package Cookie Dough prizes, and lended a hand on Fall Spruce-Up Day. David is also a Watchdog Dad who assisted students getting off the bus, security walks and playground duty. He is a very Active Woodlake Dad. Thank you!



**Molly Hoffeld**

Molly has been involved at Woodlake PTA for years. She helps as an office volunteer and serves on the PTA committees for the Post Office and Snowflake Shop. She gives her time for other school events when needed throughout the year. Her daughter Ava is in Ms. Meyer's classroom, where Molly also devotes volunteer time. Molly always has a smile and never says NO. Thank you for helping the PTA's successful year!

## Pelican Palooza 2012

At Morning Meeting on Wednesday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, the winners of this year's Pelican Palooza and Pel-I-CAN run T-shirt designs were announced. Natalya S. created the first choice picture for the Pel-I-CAN run T-shirt and Sam D. crafted the winning design for the Pelican Palooza Carnival shirt.

The Run and the Pelican Palooza will be held on March 24, 2012 at the Mandeville Lakefront at the Jackson Avenue boat launch park area. The run will kick off with a 5K at 8am followed by a 1 mile Fun Run at 9am and the inaugural Students vs. Faculty Relay Race at 9:30.

At 10am the Pelican Palooza will open with games, food, and activities including Spin Art, Plinko, Basketball Toss, and Silent Auction that will culminate with the turtles making their annual swim in Lake Ponchartrain at 1:30pm! After the swim we will celebrate Woodlake's 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday with singing and cake!

A \$5 donation to Woodlake Elementary PTA enters a bright green rubber turtle in the race. Turtle "parents" receive a Turtle Trekking Number and official adoption papers.

Congratulations to all those recognized! Thanks to ALL students for drawing so many fantastic drawings, it made the choice that much harder!



2012 Pelican Palooza T-shirt Artists Sam D. and Natalya S.



## Faculty Column: Of All the Things, Ms. Beckham

Of all the things I've lost, I miss my mind the most. It's the small stuff. Where are my keys? Has anyone seen my glasses? Where did I park? Amazingly, as tricky as the day to day details can sometimes be, I distinctly remember, with great precision and detail, specific events from my early childhood.

Up until I was six years old, we lived in a family home built in the Civil War era. It had a meandering floor plan due to decades of additions for modernizations, innumerable drafty areas, lots of creepy crawly things, and an incredible allure for young imaginations. My mother was a master at making a bad situation turn completely around in less than 1.5 seconds. For example, my sister and I noticed a very large spider hanging out at the top of the wall. Naturally, we were quite alarmed and somewhat scared. My mother assured us that this was, in fact, The Friendly Spider. So friendly was this spider that we would actually see her come out and watch Bonanza with us. Our fear had been banished by the "mommy spin." Not long afterward, my parents had the house tented and fumigated by an exterminator. When we returned, my sister and I gasped as we realized that The Friendly Spider may have met her demise. Again, my mother was in full spin form. She gingerly told us that The Friendly Spider had actually packed her little suitcase and went to visit some friends. While there, she told her friends about two little girls named Sabrina and Susan and all

the fun things they did each day. What a relief! And the Oscar goes to.....

When my sister and I turned 4 and 5 we were enrolled in a ½ day nursery school and kindergarten. This pulled us from the lap of our soft, gentle, nurturing grandmother. A situation that could have been somewhat traumatic was rescued, again, by the "mommy spin." We went to school every day in an ancient non air conditioned VW Beetle and sang our hearts out altogether. "*School Days, School Days*" and "*Daisy, Daisy*" were the two songs I remember most. We actually sang for many years, well into upper elementary. Nerds. But, what a rich experience. No phone, no tv, no radio, no CDs—just us singing and laughing together. A deep memory - a memory that matters.

I totally get it when my sweet kindergartners don't want to nap. I was never a napper myself. It was a character trait that frustrated my parents to no end. One day my daddy had the privilege of getting us down for a nap. He was a wonderful oral reader. He would tuck us in and then sit on the side of our bed and read to us. It was from him that I first heard of Longfellow's Hiawatha and the shores of Gitche Gume. It was he who explained to me why Pinocchio's friend Candlewick had such a name. And it was from him that I first visited "The Sugar Plum Tree"—or at least tried to. "The Sugar Plum" Tree is a wonderful poem by Eugene Field that tells of the Lullaby Sea which leads you to Shuteye Town where there is a sugar plum tree. When the chocolate dog barks, the

gingerbread cat jumps all around in the tree and the sugar plums fall down. You can keep as much as your apron can hold. At the end of his poetry reading, my daddy went into the kitchen and got two aprons for us. He wrapped them around us and tucked us in again. When we woke up, my sister was alive with her account of the sugar plums she had picked off of the ground. I said I didn't get any. I was told I didn't sleep long enough. Sigh.

We did lots of other things in my early childhood. But, if I had to choose the most delicious memories I have of that precious time, then these are the winners. They were simple and free. Just time well spent with each other. That is the perfection of the early childhood years. Time --just time... time for imagination, time for stories, time for exploring, time for singing, and time for doing nothing special.

In the end, it doesn't really matter if I temporarily can't find my glasses or my keys. I know the "mommy spin" is more effective than any modern day cure. I know that even a spider has worth. I know how to sing in the car so I can make myself happy. And, I know how to get to the Sugar Plum Tree.

Sabrina Beckham,  
Kindergarten



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# KIDS FUN NIGHT!



**6-9 pm**  
**\$12.00**

3 hours of Supervised Free Play on  
Gymnastics Floor, Diamond Mine,  
Bounce House, & Trampolines

**ONLY 1 Kids Fun Night in  
February**

**DON'T MISS OUT  
Friday, Feb. 3rd**



## Register NOW Mardi Gras Holiday Camp!

**February 20, 22, 23 & 24**  
**9:00 – 3:00 pm**

Children can spend their day at the gym participating in free play on gymnastic floor, trampolines & equipment, Diamond Mine, Bounce House, playing beach volleyball, outdoor sports, learning new things and making new friends.

**Only \$30 per day**

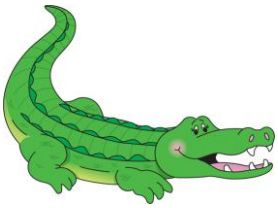


**Before Care,  
After Care, &  
Lunch  
Available**

## Registration still Open for Recreational Gymnastics

- Boys Gymnastics
- Girls Gymnastics
- Cheer Tumble
- Trampoline & Tumbling
- Tots
- Mommy & Me





## Woodlake Celebrates Louisiana Cultural Arts Day



Mrs. Vinson helps Genila Z. and Katlyn D. tie strings on their necklaces at the Northlake Nature Center station.



Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries show kindergarteners a two year old alligator.



Carson H. participates in oil spill clean up during Louisiana day at Woodlake.



Andrew L. speaks French with the Louisiana Swamp Band.



Avery Z. enjoys bananas foster from N'Tini's Restaurant.



Skyler M. stamps a wood necklace from The Northlake Nature Center.



Tyler C. dresses as an alligator for Louisiana Cultural Arts day.



Jonah B. learns to clean pelicans after an oil spill.

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## Woodlake Receives \$2,715 Grant from Lowe's

Woodlake Elementary School received a \$2,715 Lowe's Toolbox for Education grant to build a garden and walkway for use with the Pelican Pals program, a program partnering special needs students with other WES students. Our grant application was based on the goal of building a stronger school community through outdoor education and inclusive friendship. We look forward to sharing the Inclusion Garden with the Woodlake Elementary School community.



The large garden will replace an existing small garden located in the grassy bricked area by the carpool drop-off/entryway. Children will work with Ms. Gagnon's class and help plant and harvest herbs and vegetables during recess. A seating area and other garden features will be added to improve the area. We expect that this project will be a benefit for the WES community for many years to come!

All K-12 public schools in the United States are eligible for the Toolbox for Education program. More information is available at [www.ToolboxforEducation.com](http://www.ToolboxforEducation.com).

## Helping Your Student Get the Most Out of Homework

*from the National PTA website [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)*

Many students try to avoid it, but teaching and learning research indicates that children who spend more time on regularly assigned, meaningful homework, on average, do better in school.

Here are some quick hints to help your child get the most out of homework.

### Homework Hints

- Assume that your children will have studying to do every night.
- Ask your children if they understand their homework. If they do not, work a few examples together.
- Ask your children to show you their homework after the teacher returns it, to learn where they're having trouble and where they're doing well. See if your children did the work correctly.
- Stay in touch with your children's teachers. Ask about their classes and what they are studying. Ask their teachers how you can support what they are studying (flash cards, spelling, etc.).
- Remember, you and their teachers want the same thing—to help your children learn.
- Don't be afraid to get in touch with the teacher if you and your child don't understand an assignment or if your child is having a great deal of trouble. Almost all parents run into these problems, and teachers are glad to help.
- Don't do your children's work for them. Help them learn how to do it themselves.
- Show your children that you think homework is important. If you are at work during homework time, ask to see their work when you get home.
- Praise your children for doing well. Make praise a habit.
- Maintain a portfolio of "best pieces."
- Ask your school about tips or guides for helping your children develop good study habits.
- Help older students organize their assignments by recording them on calendars or planners, along with due dates, dates turned in, etc.

## January Samaritan Center Food Drive

Our January Samaritan Center Food Drive was a huge success! We collected 983 items for a total of 2105 items collected since the beginning of the year. WOW! Since we met our school year goal of 2100 items, we have extended it to 3000 items during the next food drive. Your generosity is very much appreciated! The following Pelican classes won the food drive contest: Ms. Dickinson, Ms. Stipe, Ms. Meyer, Mr. Blake and Ms. Valenti. Congratulations!

Also, we would like to thank our head "Watch Dog," Glenn Nunenmacher, for helping to deliver all those items to the Samaritan Center. The student council officers also assisted in counting and organizing the items. It was a great team effort.



Kaira A. from Ms. Stipes' class brought in over 50 canned goods. Thank you Kaira!



Mr. Blake and his 2<sup>nd</sup> grade helpers.



Ms. Dickinson's Kindergarten Class.



Ms. Meyer's Multi-Age Class.



Ms. Valenti's Third Grade Class.



### Woodlake Elementary School

1620 Livingston Street  
Mandeville, LA 70448  
(985) 626-8842

### WES PTA Executive Board 2011-2012

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Gail Owens

[president@woodlakepta.org](mailto:president@woodlakepta.org)

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President:

Jennifer Boudreaux

[membership@woodlakepta.org](mailto:membership@woodlakepta.org)

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We're on the Web!

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## Turtle Adoptions: Coming Soon!

The Turbo Turtle Race is coming! Don't miss out on your chance to win the \$1,000 first prize. Adopt one turtle or twenty to support WES and come watch your turtle race in the lake during the 4th annual Pelican Palooza on Saturday, March 24<sup>th</sup>.

Please look for your turtle adoption forms to come home on February 27<sup>th</sup>. All adoption forms are due by March 9<sup>th</sup>.

The TOP seller for the school will win their choice of an Authentic Team Jersey or American Girl Doll or Nintendo DS!!!

Anyone can adopt a turtle, so spread the word! Good luck!



## WES Restaurant Night Success

Congratulations Woodlake families! Your support of our local restaurant partners has earned the WES PTA over \$500 in donations! Our partners understand the importance of providing children with the best education possible. And, in turn, our support of their establishments allows our local community to grow. It's a win-win for everybody! Please continue to support our local restaurants that make our children's success a priority!



## About the Pelican Press

The Pelican Press is published by the Woodlake PTA once a month and sent home with your Pelicans. We would love to hear your comments and ideas for future issues. Please contact your Pelican Press Editors, via email at [newsletter@woodlakepta.org](mailto:newsletter@woodlakepta.org).

A color, electronic version of the newsletter is available online at [www.woodlakepta.org](http://www.woodlakepta.org), click on "Pelican Press."