

# Bobcat Pride

## Happy Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays because it is the one holiday that is truly focused on taking the time to reflect and pay respect for all the things you are grateful for having in your life. As Felix Frankfurter so poignantly shared, "Gratitude is one of the least articulate of the emotions, especially when it is deep."

I am sincerely grateful for being able to serve as Gwendolyn Brooks' Principal. I am grateful for being in a position to watch our greatest resources enter these doors day in and day out with the brightest smiles

on their faces! It is through their spirit that I am always reminded that it is indeed a wonderful and hopeful world.

I am grateful for being able to assist our wonderful PTA and parents by being available when needed. When you say goodbye to your children as they march off to school, you have chosen to entrust the safety, security and welfare of your loved ones in my hands which I humbly share with my esteemed colleagues.

Lastly, I am especially grateful for being in a position to learn and grow from the greatest staff in

DeKalb. Not a day goes by that I do not witness great passion, motivation and joy that comes with being around advocates for children.

I want to wish each and every one of you a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,  
Ms. Spears  
Principal



## National American Indian Heritage Month-November 1st-31st

Although the first "American Indian Day" was declared by the state of New York in 1916, a month long recognition of Native Americans was not achieved until 1990. In that year, former President George

Bush declared the first National American Indian Heritage Month on August 3rd. His action was based on legislation presented by Senator Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii) and Congressional Delegate Eni Faleomavaega

(D-American Samoa). In each of the four previous years, Congress had enacted legislation designating "American Indian Heritage Week." This consecutive legislation allowed for  
*See pg 3: Native Americans*

## Gwendolyn Brooks Elementary School

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### Friendly Reminders

- ☺ Nov. 10th: Early Release Day; Parent Conferences
- ☺ Nov. 11th: No School; Parent Conferences/ Veterans Day
- ☺ Nov. 17th: Picture Retake Day
- ☺ Nov. 21st-22nd: Vision and Hearing Screening
- ☺ Nov. 23rd-25th: Thanksgiving Break

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# Reading Aloud: Tips for Reading Success

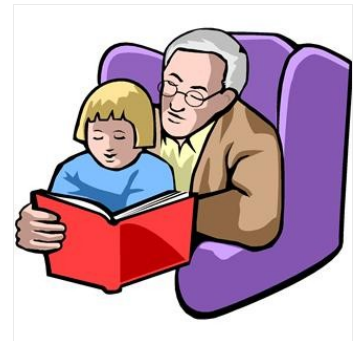
"I always stumble because I read too fast." "I'm afraid my child won't listen to me." "I was laughed at when I read aloud at school."

Do you have worries like these when you read aloud? You're not alone. Many parents avoid reading aloud to their kids. However, reading aloud is one of the best ways to help your child succeed in school. Keep these tips in mind.

1. Everybody makes mistakes. If you make mistakes when reading aloud, your child will learn that it's okay for him to do so, too.
2. Practice makes perfect. Find a book that you like and read it aloud by yourself until you feel comfortable.

3. Involve your child in the story. Have him turn the pages. Or, read one line and have him read the next.
4. Take your time and don't rush the story. Your child can tell if you're in a hurry. Reading slowly will help you read clearly.
5. As you feel more comfortable, try changing your voice to show the character's feelings—joy, sadness, fear. These variations can make the story more exciting for both of you!
6. Remember that you are helping your child learn to enjoy reading. Try different types of reading materials, such as comic strips and poetry.

7. Above all, try to relax and enjoy the time your spending with your youngster.



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## Teacher Conferences

Like us, we know that you want your child to succeed and progress at the best rate for them. Parent-Teacher Conferences allows both parties to collaborate in an effort to meet student needs. As an additional resource I am sharing a planning checklist as you prepare for one of the most important meetings regarding your child.

### Before the Conference

- Have I decided on specific questions to ask the teacher? For example, Is our

child doing as well as he should in reading?

- Am I prepared to answer questions that might be asked by the teacher pertaining to my child's hobbies and interest? Special health problems? Provisions for study at home?
- Have I expressed interest in the conference with my child? Have I noted an especially good experience or problem area my child has had in school to relate

to a teacher?

### After the Conference

- Make note of the important points of the conference
- Share the results of the conference with your child
- Design together a definite action plan that will promote improved academic growth for your child
- Feel free to confer with teacher again

## K-2nd Grade Winter Concert

On Tuesday, December 13th, from 6:30-7:30 pm, we will showcase the musical stylings of our K-2nd grade students for this years' winter concert. As you may already know, by having the Winter Concert at Brooks, we will save a lot of money due to hall rental and transportation costs. The dollars saved will allow the Brooks PTA the opportunity to explore various ways to use PTA dollars on behalf of our students.

With approximately 145 students from K-2nd grade, and due to occupancy levels, each

student will receive 2 tickets for parents/guardians to attend this years' performance. If you know that your K-2nd child will be unable to attend/participate in this year's Winter Concert, please return your tickets to the school. We would very much like to offer those tickets to families who would like to bring more than 2 guests. As we get closer to December, a letter requesting additional tickets (if available) will be sent to all families. Additional ticket requests will be distributed on a first asked, first given basis. In an effort to be as fair and as accommodating as possible to as many families, if

extra tickets are available we will offer no more than 2 additional tickets per family. If you have any questions/concerns, please do not hesitate to call the school.



## Native American Indians (con't)

the establishment of a month-long observance.

The purpose of National American Heritage Indian Month is to honor and recognize the original peoples of this land. In 1996 former President William J. Clinton gave a proclamation regarding the contributions, past and future of American Indians and Alaska Native peoples. In his proclamation he declared November as National American Indian Heritage Month. He urged all Americans, as well as their elected representatives at the Federal, State, local, and tribal levels, to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

### Notable Native American Indians

**Charles Curtis (1860-1936):** Kaw Senator and Vice President under the Hoover administration

**Betty Mae Jumper (1923-):** Seminole tribal leader and publisher

**Pocahontas (1595-1617):** Peacemaker

**Will Rogers (1879-1935):** Cherokee actor and humorist

**Sequoyah (1766-1843):** Cherokee Syllabary

**Maria Tallchief (1923-):** Ballerina



Osceola: Chief of the Ottawa Tribe

### Original Inhabitants of Illinois

Chickasaw Tribe

Dakota Sioux Tribe

Ho-Chunk Tribe

Illini Tribe

Miami Tribe

Shawnee Tribe

### Other Indian Tribes That Migrated After European Arrival

Delaware Tribe

Kickapoo Tribe

Ottawa Tribe

Potawatomi Tribe

Sac and Fox Tribe

## Parent to Parent: Helping at School

One morning when I dropped my daughter off at school, I noticed that the mom helping the kids cross the street looked familiar. "That's Jordan's mom," Lisa told me. I felt jealous of parents who had time to help out at school. But with my work schedule, I didn't see how that was possible for me.

I wrote a note to Lisa's teacher asking if she had any ideas. She called the next evening. "We can always use classroom

volunteers," she said. Thinking she didn't understand my situation, I explained that I worked during the day.

But Lisa's teacher understood perfectly. She told me about another working parent who helps create banners, posters, and bulletin board materials for the classroom. I'm not very artsy, but I am handy with a pair of scissors.

It's been several months now. I enjoy helping out and Lisa feels proud to tell her

classmates, "My mom helped make that!"



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## Celebrate American Education Week

*"Public education is the link between our Nation and our dream of liberty and justice for all."*

~Elaine Griffin, 1995

*"National Teacher of the Year"*

Since 1921, the first full week before Thanksgiving has been celebrated as American Education Week. During the week of November



13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> teachers, staff and volunteers will be thanked for doing what it takes for the benefit and welfare of America's students. Schools are the backbone of our democracy, and we are a greater Country due to the dedication, sacrifice and hard work from all who choose

a career in education and from those who give of themselves to volunteer.

Everyday teachers, staff and volunteers should be thanked for a job well done. Please take the time during the week of November 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> to show your appreciation by thanking the very people who contribute to the development of your child's innate greatness.

## Gwendolyn Brooks Elementary School

3225 Sangamon Road  
DeKalb, IL 60115

Phone: 815-754-9936

Fax: 815-754-1345

"Promoting Academic Excellence and Sound  
Character"



### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Brooks School would like to wish all the students born in November, Happy Birthday and may all your wishes come true. We would also like to wish the following staff members Happy Birthday.

Mrs. Chris Sawicki, Soc Wk: Nov. 2nd

Ms. Daphne Rodriguez, EC Assistant: Nov. 3rd

Mr. Dan Kenney, 4th Grade: Nov. 5th

Mrs. Kandi Talley, Health Assistant: Nov. 19th

Mrs. Pam Sullivan, Office Assistant: Nov. 20th

Ms. Penny Hallstrom, 1st Grade: Nov. 21st



## Brooks PTA News

September and October have been very busy months for the PTA. During the months of September and October many activities have taken place, which include our annual membership drive, catalog fundraiser, Fall Fest, helping with school activities and filling room and head room positions. During our annual PTA membership drive, we had 87 families and staff, join the PTA. Thank you to everyone who joined the PTA. If you have not joined the PTA, it is not too late to join. Contact either Tracey Harris at [tracy\\_harris@comcast.net](mailto:tracy_harris@comcast.net) or Victoria Newport at [vnewport1@comcast.net](mailto:vnewport1@comcast.net) for more information.

The fall box top and soup label collection ended on October 21<sup>st</sup>. Thank you to everyone for collecting and sending in box tops and soup labels. A total of

6,388 box tops were collected. The fall box top collection raised \$639 dollars for Brooks School. Please continue to collect box tops and soup labels for the spring box top/soup label collection which will take place in early February. Mrs. Lundgren's class has won a lunch courtesy of the PTA for winning the box top collection challenge. Congratulations!

Thank you to all of the parents who volunteered to be head room parents and room parents. Based on the smiles on the students' faces and the excitement at the Halloween parties, it seems the parties were a huge success. The Holiday class parties will take place on Wednesday December 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:45.

The fall catalog order is wrapping up with the pick up of orders on October 27<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to everyone who or-

dered items and helped with the fundraiser. We were able to raise over \$6,000 from this fundraiser. The money raised provides fall teacher allocations, fall field trips for the 2nd grade classes and kindergarten *Time* and *Scholastic* magazines for classrooms and 2 document cameras.

The fall book fair will take place in the library from November 29<sup>th</sup> thru December 2<sup>nd</sup>. The book fair will be open from 8:15 to 3:45. The theme for this year's Fall book fair is "To the Book Fair and Beyond! Reading Is Out Of This World!"

See pg 5: Brooks PTA News

## BROOKS PTA NEWS

During this book fair, Brooks Elementary will be participating in Scholastic's "One For Books" program. This is a great program that raises money, which is then used to purchase books and get them into the hands of those that may not have books readily available to them. During any time that the fair is open, there will be a "One For Books" collection box by the cash registers.

The recipient of this fall's fundraiser will be Hope Haven. Every cent donated will go towards putting books into the hands of those needing the services and shelter provided by Hope Haven. The "One For Books" program is a great way to let Brooks students know how important reading and books are, and to help share with others who are less fortunate.

The morning of Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, the book fair will be hosting a "Grands Event" from 8:15 to 9:00 AM. This is a special opportunity for students to attend the fair, before school hours, with an adult who is grand in their life. Students can bring someone special in their life to share a great time before school shopping at the fair and enjoy some breakfast goodies. All guests are invited to attend Rise and Shine at 9:00 AM in the gym.

On Thursday December 1<sup>st</sup>, there will be a Family Reading Night from 5:00 PM thru 7:00 PM. This is going to be a great event, pizza will be served. There will also be stations for parents to visit, such as a writing group, a reading group, and a special presentation by Ms. Prellwitz in regards to how SmartBoards work and how they enrich the students' classroom experiences. The book fair will be open during the reading night. Proceeds from the book fair will go towards books for teacher's classrooms and on Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, each student will have the opportunity to choose a book valued up to \$5. The PTA is looking for volunteers to help with the book fair. If you are interested in volunteering, please email Heather Borgardt at [heatherborgardt@comcast.net](mailto:heatherborgardt@comcast.net).

The next PTA meeting will take place on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30, in the library. Free child care will be provided for the PTA meeting.

Thank you to everyone who helped make all of the PTA fall events successful.

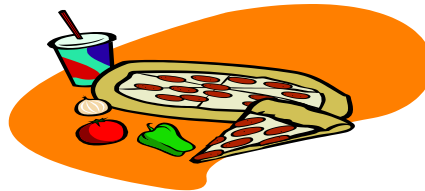
Co Presidents

Tracey Harris and Victoria Newport



## ITEMS OF INTEREST

**SAVE THE DATE!** Our first Family Reading Night will be Thursday, December 1st! Don't make dinner -- we'll be serving pizza! We'll also have a variety of interactive sessions that parents and kids can attend together. You'll be reading, writing, checking out our new Smart Boards, and having tons of fun! Don't forget to stop by the Book Fair or the DeKalb Public Library table for even more great stuff! More details will be coming home soon.



**Daylight Savings Time:** As you may know, Saturday, November 5<sup>th</sup> is the end of daylight savings time. As a result, it will be getting dark an hour earlier. For those that walk or ride their bike to school, please encourage your child to go straight home immediately after dismissal. For those that ride the bus, please encourage your child to go straight home immediately when they get off the bus. I would also like to encourage the parents of kindergarten students who may not have an older sibling, that you meet or identify a trustworthy individual to meet your child at the bus stop.