

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

CITIZENSHIP • CHARACTER • EDUCATION • WISDOM • KNOWLEDGE • SCHOLARSHIP • SERVICE • INTEGRITY

December 2001

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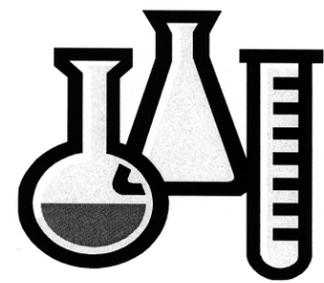
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# WCS K-12

# LEARNING FAIR

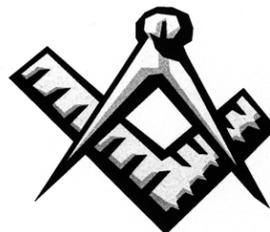
MARCH 9, 2002  
1:00 - 4:00 P.M.

WILLIAMSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

THE PURPOSE OF THE LEARNING FAIR IS TO SHOWCASE STUDENT LEARNING THROUGH:

- GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS
- AT-HOME OR CLASSROOM PROJECTS
- MATH, SCIENCE, SOCIAL STUDIES, LANGUAGE ARTS, FOREIGN LANGUAGE OR INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECTS

START THINKING ABOUT IDEAS FOR THIS EXCITING EVENT!



Dear Community Residents,

As I begin this message, I find myself mulling recent events in American History. We as a nation, knew things changed dramatically on September 11, 2001. The physical changes are evident: a vastly different skyline in New York City, a horrendous death toll for civilians in a nation not at war, a scary breakout of anthrax, a nation sending its young men into battle. Although these changes are clearly evident, there is much more going on.

Our school district is facing many new challenges. Most will have financial impact on Williamson Central School. First, the destruction of September 11 will have devastating effects on the New

York State budget. Timeliness will not be our only concern. There will be billions of dollars in lost revenue, as well as increased costs for added security, disaster relief, and for the rebuilding of New York City.

Secondly, there will be no additional funds for schools attached to the NY State baseline budget as earlier thought. This means we will be using our fund balances to offset additional expenses this school year.

Thirdly, Wayne County is pursuing the elimination of sharing sales tax revenue with county schools. If this happens, Williamson will lose approximately \$420,000. This loss can only be offset by raising the school tax next May.

At this point, none of the total impact is definite. However, as we start the school budget process, you as taxpayers need to know the potential problems we as a school district will face. The Wayne County Board of Supervisors has set a budget hearing for Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at the County Office Building in Lyons. Tom Wetherell, as Supervisor, is our representative to this board; but the public is also welcome to attend. Williamson Central is beginning the budget process in December, and the public is encouraged to attend School Board meetings.

Being informed and working together as citizens will help assure a fair budget at all levels of government. Thank you and Happy Holidays.

**Richard Jordan**  
WCS Board President

## Message from the Superintendent....

Much has happened since I wrote you in the beginning of September. As a community, we were shocked by the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Our students' health and safety were foremost on my mind in the days that followed. Since the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> we have examined our Safety Policies and made several adjustments to assure that we are ready to handle any emergencies that might occur. One measure we will be taking will be an unannounced evacuation drill in the month of December. This drill has been held bi-annually but has always been announced. We hope that by taking this drill to the next level we will be able to evaluate our performance and make any necessary adjustments to our plan.

A major focus for the district in the upcoming months will be to discuss our mission – which is to educate our future citizens. In order to do so, we would like to hear from all different segments of the community. We have developed two ways to hear what you have to say about the future of education here at Williamson. One will be to hold a series of focus groups in the months of December and January. These groups will represent the various stakeholders – parents, students, retirees, community and civic leaders, religious leaders, teachers and staff. The second way will be to host a community meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup>. This meeting will be held in the Middle School at 7:30 p.m. and is open to all members of the community. The questions we asked at the focus groups will be repeated so that all voices can be heard. All of the information gathered from these meetings in the next few months will be used to develop a plan for the future of the district. It is my hope that this plan will unite us in our mission to educate our students for their future. We hope to work on this plan throughout the remainder of the 2001-2002 school year. When we are finished, we will again hold a community meeting to share it with you.

I truly believe that all of us have a role in shaping the future for our young people. I will again ask that you take an active role in this task. Please plan on attending one or more of the concerts regardless of whether you have a relative performing. Let's pack the house and show our support for the youth of our community.



Maria Ehresman,  
Superintendent

### WCS Gets Funding for Resource Officer

The Williamson Central School District will soon have a School Resource Officer. This officer is being funded through grant money from the U.S. Department of Justice. Williamson and Red Creek will share the services of NYS Trooper Greg Brinkman. The trooper was one of 12 candidates interviewed for the position. Trooper Brinkman will assist the district with developing school safety plans, provide training and assistance with topics such as conflict resolution, serve as a counselor and role model and possibly assist with investigations initiated by the district. While on school property the officer will abide by policies established by the Board of Education and will report to the Superintendent. Trooper Brinkman will be uniformed and although he will be based in the school building, will respond to community emergencies as needed.

The Williamson Central School District is one of twelve school districts (four within Wayne County) in the Troop E Zone to receive funding for this initiative. Trooper Brinkman along with his supervisor, Major Mark Fischer, will be attending the December 19<sup>th</sup> Board of Education Meeting to answer questions and explain details of this program.

## Williamson, New York 2002 Bicentennial Calendar



March 9

Kickoff Events

1:00 - 4:00pm  
7:00 - 9:00pm

Williamson Central School District Learning Fair  
Celebrating Our Unity Celebration  
Williamson Middle School  
Miller Street

Williamson Bicentennial Raffle Tickets go on sale.

May 16-19

Williamson Apple Blossom Festival -  
Main Street & Route 21

June 9

1:00 - 6:00pm

Sunday in the Park Celebration  
Williamson Town Park

July 14

Kelly Miller Circus  
Rt. 104, Williamson, New York

July 10

9am

Pultneyville Homecoming Antique Show & Sale  
Lake Road and Route 21  
Pultneyville, New York

5:00 - 10:00pm

Patriotism - Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow  
Forman's Park, Lake Road

July 1

1:00pm

Patriotism - Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow  
Forman's Park, Lake Road

September 21

9:00am - 5:00pm

Pultneyville 13th Annual Community Garage Sale  
Sponsored by The Pultneyville Historical Society  
Pultneyville, New York

October 5

5:00pm

East Williamson Fire Department  
Roast Beef Dinner  
East Williamson Fire Hall, Townline Road,  
East Williamson  
Williamson Bicentennial Raffle Drawings

7:30pm

October 11 & 12

7:00 & 8:00pm

Pultneyville Historical Society's Candlelight  
Cemetery Tours

Please continue to watch this newsletter for more information  
on these events as it becomes available.

Dear Community Members,

The Wayne County Board of Supervisors is once again considering a proposal to eliminate the sharing of County sales taxes with Wayne County School Districts as part of its tentative 2002 budget plan.

Williamson currently receives \$420,000 annually as a result of the current sales tax distribution plan. Should this proposal become part of the County's 2002 budget it is likely that the District would have to either raise taxes into the double digits or reduce programs and services.

I am asking for you to help keep this from happening. Your voice and presence will help with this. Please voice your feelings on this proposal to our Town Supervisor, Tom Wetherell, and plan to attend the budget hearing where this decision will be made. The hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, December 5th at 7:00 p.m. in the Wayne County Court House in Lyons. More information on this issue is available through Cable Channel 12. A half-hour presentation is scheduled for both 5:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The decision being made Wednesday night will not only affect schools, but also farms, businesses, and residential taxpayers. No group in town would pay less in taxes through this proposal. Future economic development could also be affected. That is why your participation in this process is essential.

Please feel free to contact the District Office for further information or to answer questions you might have.

Sincerely,

**Maria Ehresman**

## Holiday Concert Schedule

### Middle School

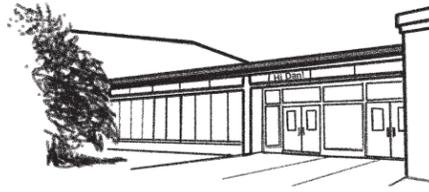
5/6 Vocal Choir	December 12 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 p.m.
7/8 Vocal Choir	December 19 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 p.m.

### High School

Vocal & Instrumental	December 17 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 p.m.
Drama Club Play	December 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 p.m.



# HIGH SCHOOL



## Academy of the Professions

The Academy of the Professions program continues to grow at the Williamson High School this year. Started in the 2000-01 school year, the Academy provides opportunities for students in the high school to take "Gemini" courses. Students taking these courses can earn high school credit and college credit at the same time. High school teachers acting as adjunct professors to the Finger Lakes Community College instruct the classes in the high school. Students successfully completing the courses are awarded credit from the Finger Lakes Community College.

Students participating fully in the Academy of the Professions have the potential to earn one year of transferable

college credit while completing their high school requirements. The courses are taken at a reduced tuition rate, which results in a substantial savings in college costs. Current areas of concentration in the program are Networking and Education.

Student enrollment in Gemini classes at the high school is currently 147. The courses available to students include Freshman English, Psychology, Microcomputers, Economics and Business. During the spring semester, students will also be able to participate in Sociology, Pre-Calculus and Foundations of Child Care.

## Eighteen Minutes a Day for Silent Reading

Norlyn V. Legler

Silent reading programs have been in existence for more than thirty-five years. Lyman Hunt at the University of Vermont first proposed it in the 1960's. Throughout the past few years, many high school students could not tell when they had last finished reading a book on their own. The students blamed their inability to finish a book on a lack of leisure time.

Our sustained silent reading time at Williamson High School is known to students as DEAR, Drop Everything and Read. This program provides a set time for students to read silently every day, choose their own book, observe the teacher modeling good reading habits, and not be required to take tests or write reports on what they read.

The primary goal of our silent reading program is to increase the students' enjoyment of reading. Studies have shown that students who enjoy reading also read more books and develop better skills in reading comprehension, spelling, and vocabulary. It is also our desire at Williamson High School to positively influence each students' reading habits, their literacy skills, and their attitudes toward reading and school. The DEAR program will help develop independent readers and thinkers through this daily reading opportunity.

Thank you for your support of this important reading high school action plan for 2001-2002. We appreciate your timely guideline reminders and purchases of books to read.

## Fiscal Outlook

As we begin to think about budgetary decisions that need to be made for the 2002-2003 fiscal year, a number of issues come to the fore front:

- A continuance of State budgetary dysfunction-the current revenue year's baseline budget has left most districts in a shortfall situation with no supplementary aid expected.
- The recent economic downturn-now defined by some as a recession.
- The short and long term effects of the WTC terrorist attack-in the short term we are likely to see significant increases in insurance costs. In the long term, the loss of income tax revenue to NYS will be staggering. This has already led the State to tell us that we should not expect any increases in aid this year and perhaps worse the following year.
- We expect significant increases for the NYS retirement systems for our employees.
- Interest and earnings have been significantly diminished.
- Health insurance costs continue to escalate in the mid teens percentage range.
- Continued increases to provide progress and services to our special education population.

As if the aforementioned does not paint a difficult picture, once again schools are facing the dilemma of the County Board of Supervisors with drawing the essential sales tax share that the District has relied on since the 1960's. A percentage of the sales tax was promised to schools at the time that the proposal was voted on. The loss of this revenue would be very detrimental to the progress here in Williamson and would have an adverse effect on all businesses in the area.



Mike Stitt,  
Assistant Superintendent

## Public Notice of Access to Student Records and Directory Information

As required by law and school district policy, this public notice is made to advise parents and guardians of students, and to students 18 years of age or older, about access to and use of student records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

### Release of Directory Information

The Williamson Central School will release or publish in school newsletters, school or student newspapers, athletic programs, musical or theatrical programs, news releases, district web page some and/or all of the following directory information pertaining to students as may be appropriate under the circumstance: name of students, photographs of students, name of parents, grade, age, height & weight of athletic team members, major fields of study, participation in school activities, extra-curricular activities and sport programs, academic honors, degrees, achievements, awards and scholarships. Under Title 34, Part 99, parent or eligible students who **do not** want this information released must make a request in writing to the Superintendent of Schools **within 30 days** of this notification. Failure to make such a request shall be deemed consent to release directory information during the present school year.

## Rights of Parents/Guardians and Eligible Students

Student records are privileged and confidential. Records are not disclosed to persons other than a student's parents or guardian, or the student, if over age 18. At the time of inspection of student records appropriate school personnel must be present.

Parents or Guardians and eligible students over 18 have a right to:

- inspect and review a student's educational record
- know that the intent of the school district is to limit disclosure of personally identifiable information in those records, except:
  - (a) by prior written consent of the student's parents or guardian, or student, if over 18
  - (b) disclosure as "directory information" as defined below
  - (c) as otherwise legally allowed for access by school officials
- request that records be amended to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of a student's privacy or other rights
- file a complaint with the US Department of Education alleging failure of the school district to comply with FERPA rules & regulations

Requests for access to student records or procedures to be followed for amending student records should be directed to the Superintendent

# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

Miss Anne Ressler, our Elementary School Principal recently underwent surgery. For the past two weeks, members of the administrative team have been providing coverage for the Elementary School. At this point, it appears that Miss Ressler will be out recuperating until after Christmas Break. To provide rotating coverage for a period of this length would not be in the best interest of the Elementary School or the District. However, to bring in someone who does not have knowledge of the District or building for four weeks would not be the best situation. I believe that using a member of our teaching staff as a teacher on special assignment between now and Christmas would provide the best solution.



Ellen Saxby

Beginning on November 28th, Miss Ellen Saxby will be spending half-days in the Main Office providing administrative coverage. Miss Saxby has been both a first and third grade teacher in the District, and for several years has been the facilitator for the Elementary School Shared Decision Making Team. She also has recently been involved in staff development efforts for the District.

I believe that Miss Saxby will provide exceptional leadership for the Elementary School until Miss Ressler Returns. I will be meeting with her regularly to help her in this new role and hope that you will offer her your support as she assumes this position.

Sincerely,

Maria Ehresman,  
Superintendent of Schools

## *Peter and the Wolf*

The actor in the picture is from the Merry-Go-Round Youth Theatre. This company from Auburn has been visiting the elementary school for three years. Students attend a workshop prior to every performance. In this case, kindergarten students are watching a performance of *Peter and the Wolf*.

It was a great day for a hayride as the Williamson Elementary School celebrated their annual Big Pumpkin Day!

*Due to the fact that the 4th Grade Chorus has not yet begun, the Elementary School Holiday Concert that was originally scheduled for Tuesday, December 18th will NOT be taking place.*

# MIDDLE SCHOOL

## Giving Thanks for America A Celebration of America's Spirit

The eighth-grade students joined together to create an evening to show their support and respect for their country. The event, "Giving Thanks for America: A Celebration of America's Spirit" was presented to the community on November 19, 2001 in the Williamson Middle School Auditorium. The evening featured various patriotic narratives presented by Ryan Noble, Krystal Jones, Derek Wood, Stephanie Crichton, Alex Maroselli, Lauren Forget, and Sam Gerken. Musical selections were presented by Jeanine Follette, Stephanie Crichton, Adam Noto, Kendall Shultes, Lauren Forget, Megan Shay, Allison Smith, Mackenzie Tuchrelo, Renee Ast, Amanda DeCann, Katie Bacon, Leela Shields, Dusty Shove and the Eighth-Grade Band Ensemble. The evening also featured multi media production created by Amanda Gage and Ami Kush. The evening began and ended with a tribute to the flag with an honor guard of Anthony Hollebrandt, Ashley Frank, Krystal Jones, Anthony Skerrett, Chris Koudelka, Sam Gerken, Megan Shay, Mackenzie Tuchrelo. The entire event was built on an idea presented by eighth-graders Geoff Haywood and Devin Greaney. It was directed by Carol McMahon and Della Ludwig. The Williamson Middle School PTA provided refreshments for after the show. The Williamson Middle School Art Club debuted their "Proud to Be An American" note cards that are being sold to raise funds for WTC disaster relief. The collection of cards cost \$5.00 and are available in the WCS Middle School Main Office.

