

# THE VILLA VOICE

November  
2008

## From the Desk of Margo O'Neill

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Nov. 1st  
Open House  
at Cheryl Campus for pro-  
spective 4th—6th graders  
10am—Noon

Nov. 8th  
Open House for  
prospective 7th & 8th  
graders **changed** to  
Weldon Campus  
10am—Noon

Nov. 11th  
Veteran's Day  
School Closed except for  
All-Day Contracts

Nov. 14th  
PP—MS early dismissal  
@ 11:30 am except  
All-Day Contracts

Nov. 27th & 28th  
Thanksgiving  
**SCHOOL CLOSED**

It was great seeing so many of you at the annual Halloween carnival. This event is such a wonderful, tangible example of what can be created by a hard-working, committed group of parent volunteers. I would like to extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to those of you who contributed your time, energy and creativity to help make this such a fun evening. Sue Watson and the carnival committee did a fabulous job!

If you noticed some flags and peace wishes hanging on school fences they were there in honor of United Nations Day on Oct. 24. With Montessori schools being schools of peace, it is an annual tradition for us to acknowledge the United Nations as the major peacekeeping organization in the world.

To update you on the progress of the Peace Wall and Garden at the Main Campus... within the next few weeks we will be adding peace quotes to the outside of the wall. We will also start planning the inside garden and hanging peace tiles the students have made on the inside of the wall. We want this garden to be a tranquil space that children and adults will find inviting and restorative.

It was an amazing experience to hear Gerda Weissmann Klein, a Holocaust survivor, speak to our middle school students last Friday. She has led a remarkable life. The middle school has been chosen to pilot a program Gerda has long dreamed about called Citizenship Counts. Please read more about this exciting opportunity in the middle school article on page 4.

This month we have two important Parent Nights:

- Wed. Nov. 5 – Elementary I Information Night for Parents of Current K's
- Wed. Nov. 19 – Elementary II Information Night for Parents of Current 3<sup>rd</sup>-Graders

These meetings will provide you with lots of exciting information regarding these program levels. Please look for flyers and emails providing the details.

Please accept my gratitude for all you do to make our school so wonderful. Once again, thanks to your support and our incredible staff's dedication and expertise, we have received an **EXCELLING** label from the Arizona Department of Education.

Even in these difficult times, there is so much to be thankful for. Have a meaningful and peaceful Thanksgiving holiday.

***Please note that the Open House for Middle School on SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8th has been changed from the Oak Campus to the Weldon Campus!***

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**MARGO'S OFFICE MATE**

**The First Indicator of Excellence**

As stated in my October Villa Voice article, my focus this year will be to flesh out the ten indicators of excellence that our staff composed to signify what professional excellence should look like here at Villa. And again, because parents are the primary teachers of their children, my hope is that you will not only be inspired by the goals of those who guide your child each day, but also see how they might apply and be integrated into your own repertoire of parenting skills.

**Teachers model and exemplify Villa's core values**

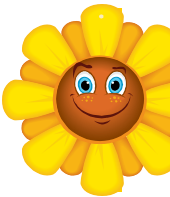
As you no doubt have noticed, teachers at Villa not only come in a variety of shapes and sizes, but more importantly, portray their own style of "individuality." We all know this is a good thing. It offers our children many worthwhile options. Yet within these diverse styles, there runs a current of commitment to certain defining aspirations and qualities that accounts for the unique flavor of Villa in the broad smorgasbord of Montessori schools. These core values that our teachers hold in common express themselves as a community of individuals who are:

- Respectful, supportive celebrators of diversity
- Committed advocates for justice, peace, the earth, and children
- Inner-directed, self-motivated, life-long learners
- Honest, assertive, compassionate communicators
- Resilient, self-reliant problem-solvers
- Courageous risk-takers who learn from their mistakes, stay open to new ideas and possibilities, stretch and hone their gifts, and accept and grow from their challenges
- Team players who choose to cooperate and collaborate rather than be competitive or divisive

Parker Palmer, author of Courage to Teach, says that teachers focus often on the WHAT of teaching, sometimes on the HOW of teaching, only occasionally on the WHY of teaching, and almost never on the WHO. Thankfully, at Villa, we strive for this not to be so.

Since the same could be said about parenting...what is your focus?

Mary Orlando



**ATTENTION ALL PARENTS OF SUMMER SCHOOL STUDENTS:**

We still have a large box of unused sunscreen in our office. If you brought in sunscreen over the summer for your child and would like to keep what's left in the bottle, please come to the office to collect it.

Any sunscreen that has not been picked up by November 14th will be thrown away.

Thank You—Office Staff

## INFANTS by Linda Harper

On October 16<sup>th</sup>, at 3:45 in the afternoon, I witnessed the birth of my first grandchild. It was a boy and I held his mother's hand as he burst forth into this world and I watched his father's face (my son) change from tired and concerned to excited and relieved. I watched my son become a parent filled with wonder and love for his son. I couldn't help but think that this is the universal cycle of life and that I am still a part of this miracle. At 61, there is still much joy and happiness ahead for me. I had kind of forgotten that. As I write this, a week and a half has gone by and everything is going well for this new family of three. It hasn't been easy, but the new parents are capable and have handled some emergencies with patience and humor. They will soon (and maybe do now!) ask the questions that we all ask ourselves when we become parents: How can you love so much someone who drives you crazy and makes such constant demands? How can you devote yourself to a vocation where you are certain to be made redundant? How can we joyfully embrace the notion that we have ceased to be the center of our own universe? To this I want to say that parenting is a way of life, chosen in great ignorance, but the bedrock of much of who we are and will become. Author Anna Quindlen says, ". . . if we stop to think about what we do, really do, as parents, we are building for the centuries. We are building character, and tradition, and values, which meander like a river into the distance and out of our sight, but on and on and on." Yow. If any of us thought about parenting as fashioning the fine points of civilization, we'd be frozen into immobility! But we take one day at a time and do the best that we know how and if we do our job with care and diligence, we have built a person reasonably resilient to the rain and we have helped build the future of his spouse, his children, even their children's children. So, here's to all of us parents, new and old and all of us grandparents – may we continue to give the best that we have and remember that there is still much joy and happiness ahead for us all!



## News from Toddler 2—Jeni Johnson

This month we will be working in the gardens freshening things up a bit and planting some vegetables. This is always a fun activity that the children love. They are able to care for and explore the gardens on a daily basis whether it be watering them, helping to pull the grass, or simply watching for worms and ladybugs. This is the time of year to remember all we have to be thankful for, especially your healthy, happy little ones. Thanks for sharing them with us. Have a wonderful month!

## Pre-Primary — Sherra Sieben

All of the Kindergarten children have begun a really exciting new unit of study called Writer's Workshop. This is a new curriculum to all of us, so we will be learning it along with the children. The goal is to give the children the skills they need to create readable writing. We will be working hard to teach them to stretch words out, saying them slowly and recording whatever sounds they hear. We will encourage children who are novice spellers to reread their own work often and to do so with a finger under the word, making small changes so their print matches what they say. When you begin to see writers workshop papers coming home, I hope you will see your child rereading often, giving his or her own writing the test of "Can I read this?" I hope your child also brings his or her writing to you and asks "Can you read this?" When this happens, let the child see you working really hard to decipher the print. And if in the end you can't read it, ask the child, "What did you want to say?" and help the child try again, recording one word at a time, spelling the best he or she can.

Not to leave the younger children out, here's an easy and fun way to practice making letters and words. Start with a big roasting pan or a large Tupperware container. Pour a thick layer of salt into the pan and shake it from side to side until the salt is spread evenly. Now you're ready to write! Children get a better "feel" of the letters when their fingertips shape them. And if they are unhappy with the way something looks, they don't have the frustration of scribbling over it or the tedious job of trying to erase. All they have to do is give the pan a shake!

Our **Elementary I** classes are gearing up for the continent study of Australia. I hope that each child gets to take a visit to the library. Since the children need at least three different resources for their reports, it would be great to teach them how to locate and select their own books. The children's section really does have wonderful resources. When children are responsible for choosing their own reading materials, regardless of their content, they tend to enjoy them even more.

Going to the library is such a wonderful academic extension away from the classroom. It is so important to let your children know that learning can happen in so many different environments. My own children love the library. To them, it is as exciting as visiting the zoo or a museum.



What a fascinating and exciting month to come for the **Elementary 2** students. In class, we're exploring the human body, learning about how and why the Ancient Wonders of the World came to be through creative research projects, timelines and activities. From the Timeline of Man to Ancient Egypt, we are uncovering the incredible gifts passed on from our ancestors. This month, while the fourth graders study how animals are classified, our fifth graders will appreciate the intricacies of the skeletal structure of the human body. The sixth graders will explore the Ancient Sumerians/Mesopotamia and through hands-on experiments will discover the vital functions of plants. Mock elections and Kids Voting have kept everyone interested and excited about this upcoming election. It's been a pleasure to witness the enthusiasm the kids display when discussing/debating the "hot topics" of these times. Have you asked your child whom they will vote for???



Shannon Smith

### **Middle School Pilots "Citizenship Counts" Program**

The middle school is honored to be chosen to pilot a new and exciting citizenship program. Citizenship Counts, the dream of Holocaust survivor and humanitarian Gerda Weissmann Klein, is spearheaded by Villa parent, Cheryl Walsh. By participating in the program, our students will expand their existing global studies to include an in-depth look at human migration, especially the historical waves of immigration to the United States. The Citizenship Counts curriculum also focuses on the naturalization process, as well as the rights, responsibilities and privileges that accompany U.S. Citizenship. The curriculum is solid; furthermore, there is an experiential component that sets the program apart from other citizenship curriculum.

Our students will be directly involved in planning and enhancing a naturalization ceremony for nearly 300 new citizens. Our students will write letters of invitation and gratitude to the presiding judge, guest speakers and guests of honor. The students will create decorations, programs and other accoutrements to enhance the new citizens swearing-in ceremony. Students will also create supplementary activities for the time before the ceremony with possibilities including interviews with new citizens, games for the children in attendance, tables for new citizens to register to vote or to apply for their passport. We know that adolescents learn best when their work is purposeful. By participating in the Naturalization Ceremony, our students will get a chance to understand, feel and practice what citizenship is all about.



Jennifer McGonagle-Dziedzic – Weldon

## November Villa Voice—Oak Campus by Doug Dziedzic

It is hard to believe, but here we are heading into the first week of November. This school year has progressed with amazing speed. The middle school, which consists of four separate cycles, has completed our first cycle. The second cycle, which takes us to winter break, is filled with many different and exciting activities. Along with our regular curriculum, we will be attending our second land lab in Oracle, AZ on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. These are always fun and a great way for our community to continue to grow.

Another exciting event was our participation in the Halloween carnival on October 25<sup>th</sup>. Students from both middle school campuses worked in a face-painting booth and prepared and served food at our food booth. These are both fundraising opportunities for students to earn money for their spring adventure trip. Everyone had a great time at the carnival.

Middle school is always busy. We have so many different activities that keep us occupied. After completing the first quarter of our year, we are really growing and learning about ourselves, about each other, and about a myriad of things academically.



# CIRCLE NEWS

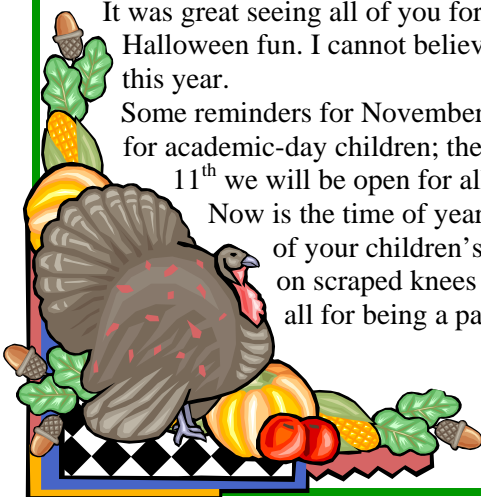
Hi, all!

It was great seeing all of you for fall break. We all had a chance to relax a little bit and have some great Halloween fun. I cannot believe I am now planning for Thanksgiving already! It sure came out of nowhere this year.

Some reminders for November: Our last soccer game is on Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> is a half day for academic-day children; there will be no pizza Friday, so please remember to pack a lunch. Tuesday the 11<sup>th</sup> we will be open for all-day contracts only.

Now is the time of year to think of all we are thankful for, and I am very grateful that I get to be a part of your children's lives. Seeing their smiling faces, getting kind hugs and even putting band-aids on scraped knees really warms my heart and brings so much joy to my everyday life. Thank you all for being a part of this program; I am blessed to be able to be here for it each day.

Sarah Harper—Preprimary Circle



## E1 and E2 Circle News

Welcome to the breezy weather of autumn, friends! Hopefully it will actually be chilly by the time this prints, as it is currently still quite toasty. October has come and gone and with it several fun activities. Circle spent the month exploring environments! Surprise, surprise...the marshmallow polar bears went over splendidly along with the shark pop-up cards and rainforest hanging vines.

Many of our circle friends spent Fall Break with us and to put it lightly, we had a ghoulish time! The children and staff passed a relaxing time painting pumpkins, making Halloween dirt treats, playing zombie tag and, of course, making cornstarch slime (parents-you are welcome for that, by the way!).

In November, we are diving into outer space and delving into healthy living. Please remember to send a labeled circle snack for the afternoon and do not forget to sign your child out. Circle is still open on Veteran's Day (Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>) and on early release days (Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>). As usual, I am always open to your questions and concerns. Have a fantastic November, everyone!

Gobbles,  
Jillian Scott  
Circle Director



## FROM THE DESK OF SUE WATSON



### HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL – ANOTHER GREAT SUCCESS!

We want to thank all of the parents that worked so hard to make this the best carnival ever. The most time-consuming part of the carnival is the Haunted House. This committee starts their planning the first week of September. Thanks to the following dedicated parents who worked so hard to scare you to death:

**BUILDERS:** Fred Bates, Brett Gaines, Dave Zukerman, Jeff Trembly and all of the incredible workers that worked all Friday night, Saturday and Sunday Morning.

**DECORATORS:** Jill Zimmerman and her group of wonderful creative decorators.

We also want to acknowledge **Becky Barmore, Salli McCartin & Steve Janson** (our new Food Court leader) for a spectacular job at the Food Court. **Sheri Johnson** (now an alum parent) and **Denise LeComte** ran the finance and check-in and it never ran smoother. **Terry and Todd Madeksza** ran a fantastic Toddler Game Area that made many small children smile! **Vince Watson** kept everything lively with his great dancing music. Our facilities crew run by **Manuel Chimal** worked very hard to help set up and clean up for several days. I want to personally thank all of the parents who worked their shifts and made this carnival a great experience for all the children at Villa. I also want to thank all of the Classroom Coordinators for the time spent calling the parents of their classrooms to cover the volunteer areas. *We really appreciate all of the parents who baked and bought the wonderful desserts for the Cake Walk and the food court. We had enough desserts to keep the Cake Walk open until 9:00. This is by far the favorite game!*

**HONEY BEARS BARBEQUE** - (Gary & Elizabeth Clark) **DONATED** the barbeque platters, chips, condiments, buns, hot dogs and hamburgers!

**HUNGRY HOWIES** (46<sup>th</sup> & Thomas) gave us a large discount on pizzas for the event.

**KRISPY KREME DONUTS** donated many boxes of tasty donuts.

*Please patronize these restaurants and thank them for their continued support of Villa.*



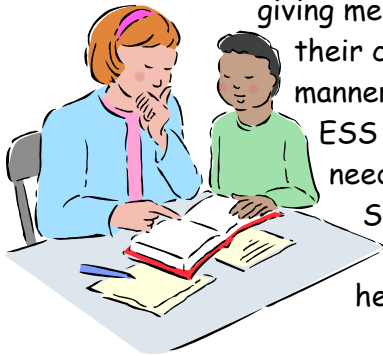
**2008 TAX CREDIT CAMPAIGN:** This program allows you to prepay your Arizona State Taxes. This is a dollar-for-dollar tax credit. The Tax Credit packets were sent out last month, one per family. Please check with your child/children if you did not receive one. I can send another one out to you immediately if you did not receive a packet. This is by far our biggest fundraiser. There are extra tax credit cards in all of the school offices if you need more. *Married couples filing jointly can give \$400 and single parents or head of household can give \$200. You can also make your donation online on our secure website [www.villamontessori.com](http://www.villamontessori.com).* The goal this year is \$300,000, which is possible if all families bring in three tax credits. Ask friends with children in private schools to give to your charter school and in return you can give to their private school. All taxpayers can give tax dollars to private and public/charter schools in the same tax year. Please put your child's name on all cards before you distribute them. We will start listing the donors in next month's newsletter.

**Tax Credit checks must be written and mailed by December 31, 2008.**

**Hollywood Nights – On the Red Carpet with Villa Montessori** is the auction theme this year. Mark your calendars for April 25<sup>th</sup>. We will be sending out donation forms throughout the school year. Please help us get items for the auction. **Every item counts!** You will receive double hours if you work the night of the auction in the silent auction area, so let me know if you are interested. Also call me if you are interested in working for any auction committee (Sue's cell 602 363-5006). We can always use more help!

## Exceptional Student Services Notes:

- ◇ Fall assessments and 45-day screenings have been collected, scrutinized, and filed according to need. If a concern was noted by the Child Study Team, parents will be notified and advised of the intervention plan by the classroom teacher. This may involve monitoring, classroom observation, use of differentiated teaching strategies in the classroom, additional screenings with permission of parents, intensive academic intervention, or a referral to the ESS department.
- ◇ The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) will be at Villa November 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> for monitoring. Teams will be visiting every campus, interviewing teachers and administration, and checking student files to make sure Villa is in compliance with the regulations and federal laws. The following people will not be available on those days between the hours of 8:30 am and 3:30 pm: Margo O'Neill, Liza Prince, and Annie Middlemist.
- ◇ The first IEP progress notes will either be handed out during parent/teacher conferences or mailed by the end of November.
- ◇ Finally, I would like to express my thanks to: the Villa Students for making me smile and



giving me a reason to work a little harder every day; the Villa Parents for giving their children support by being involved with their education in such a loving manner; the Villa Classroom Teachers for giving their all to every child; the ESS teachers for unfailing dedication to make every child with special needs feel the thrill of success and accomplishment; the Villa Support Staff and Teachers for the balance and harmony they bring to the Villa environment; and to Villa Administrators for being the often unseen heroes who keep Villa Montessori on track to greatness. - Liza Prince

## SALLY FOSTER WRAPPING PAPER UPDATE:



### TOP FIVE FAMILIES IN ORDER OF SALES ARE:

The Bates Family, The Newman Family, The Fitzpatrick Family, The Winter Family and The D'Aubyn Family. GREAT JOB!

### AIMS NEWS CORNER

There has been a slight change in the AIMS testing schedule due to the testing requirements. The writing test will be Monday, March 30, 2009 instead of Monday, April 6, 2009. The rest of the test will be as scheduled: April 7-10, 2009.

Contact Bernita Gilliam at 602-443-7771 if you have any questions.



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Villa Cub Scouts Pack 324 is proud to announce the **EAGLE SCOUT AWARD** for five Villa Alumni and former Cub Scouts.

Congratulations:

**Josh O'Boyle**  
**Liam Leonard**  
**Shea DeLano**  
**Ted Crowe**  
**David Crowe**



Webster's dictionary describes an eagle as a large bird of prey with sharp vision and powerful wings, famous for its strength, size, grace, and keen vision. It is the national emblem for the United States. Though the eagle is found throughout the world, it is never found in abundance; it is always rare and it is always a superb specimen.

In Scouting the eagle stands for strength of character and for knowledge of all phases of Scouting. The eagle represents an understanding of community and nation, and a deep respect for the same. The eagle is a symbol of what a young man has done as well as what that young man will do, and will be, when he grows to manhood. The eagle is a leader. The eagle is respected, both by his peers and by his adult leaders.

The fact that a boy is an Eagle Scout has always carried with it a special significance, not only in Scouting but also as he enters higher education, business and industry, as well as community service.

Famous Eagle Scouts include:

**Michael Bloomberg**  
**H. Ross Perot**  
**Neil Armstrong**  
**Steven Spielberg**  
**President Gerald R. Ford**

The **EAGLE SCOUT AWARD** is the highest award available to youth members of the Boy Scouts of America. It represents many years of dedicated effort, and the successful completion of a long process which started when the young man became a Boy Scout. Not every boy who joins a Boy Scout troop earns the Eagle Scout rank; only about 5 percent of all Boy Scouts do. It is a demonstration of how people, working together, can truly help mold a young man with a solid sense of leadership, citizenship and responsibility.

Pack 324 is where these young men started their scouting experience and we are very proud of their accomplishments.

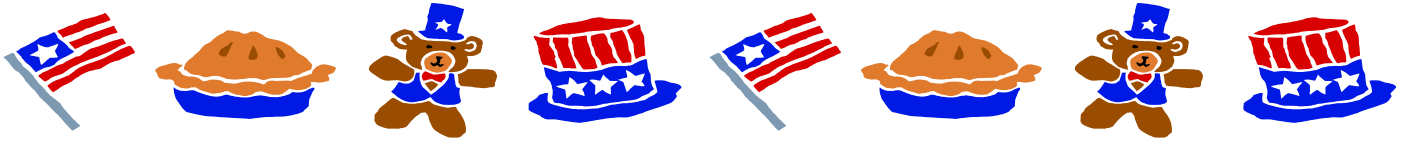
Veronica Blair, Ken & Elizabeth Pulley

Excerpts taken from: [www.eaglescouts.org](http://www.eaglescouts.org)

For information on Villa Pack 324, please visit our website: [www.villapack324.com](http://www.villapack324.com)

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Brownie Troop 1711 is having a blast. We are working on our patches, getting ready for investiture and planning our year. We had a great time at Rawhide and learned a lot about blacksmithing. Fall Extravaganza is November 8th and we have lots of SWAPS to share. If you want to know anything about Brownies, just ask one of the girls wearing the shirt that says "Brownies can do anything!"



Troup 1693 is off and running. Over the next month, our juniors will be focusing on learning what it means to be patriotic. We are working on our patriotic badge and also handing out flags with the Boy Scouts on November 11th at the Veterans Day Parade. The girls are also participating in the Fall Extravaganza on November 8th with Girl Scouts. Happy Thanksgiving from Lesa, Brenda and the Juniors in Troup 1693.



We are still trying to get our Daisy troop going. If there are any kindergarteners or 1st graders who are interested in Girl Scouts, please email Rochelle at [rachiffelle@cox.net](mailto:rachiffelle@cox.net). Thanks!

#### LIBBY'S FAMOUS PUMPKIN PIE

##### Ingredients:

1 (9 inch) unbaked deep dish pie crust	3/4 cup sugar	1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt	1/2 teaspoon ground ginger	1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
2 eggs	1 (15 ounce) can Libby's 100% pure pumpkin	
1 (12 fluid ounce) can Nestle Carnation Evaporated Milk		

##### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425 F.
2. Combine sugar, salt, cinnamon, ginger and cloves in a small bowl. Beat eggs lightly in a large bowl. Stir in pumpkin and sugar-spice mixture. Gradually stir in evaporated milk. Pour into pie shell.
3. Bake for 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 350 F; bake for 40 to 50 minutes or until knife inserted near center comes out clean. Cool on wire rack for 2 hours. Serve immediately or refrigerate. (Do not freeze as this will cause the crust to separate from the filling.)





# Box Tops for Education

Box Tops for Education has helped Villa Montessori earn money over the past few years.

We would like each classroom to have a coordinator who will clip the extra paper off the box tops, separate and place them into sandwich bags in groups of 50 Box Tops, write the teacher's name on each bag, and turn the bags in to the main office.

**What is Box Tops For Education?** It is a program where we purchase brands from General Mills and Kleenex that have a Box Tops for Education logo. There is a collection box in each classroom. The Box Tops are brought in by the children and placed in the collection box. Each box top is worth 10 cents. We send in all the box tops once a year and receive a check for the total amount.

A recap of progress will be sent out every other month.

## Participating Brands:

Hundreds of your family's favorite products from **General Mills**, **Ziploc®** and **Kleenex®** products



**If you have any questions please feel free to contact:**



**Stacy Vivas—602-264-6774**

**Karen Crowder—602-494-7889**

The goal this year is to earn \$600.00 or 6,000 Box Tops!



# November 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b> Open House at Cheryl for prospective 4th—6th grade students 10am—Noon
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> E 1 Info Night for parents of Kindergarteners 7:00 pm	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Open House now at Weldon for prospective 7th & 8th grade students 10am—Noon
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Cookie Dough and Tamale Orders Due	<b>11</b> Veteran's Day School Closed EXCEPT All-Day Contracts	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Early Release @ 11:30 a.m. PP-MS EXCEPT All-Day Contracts	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> E 2 Info Night for parents of 3rd Graders 7:00 pm	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23/30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> School Closed	<b>28</b> School Closed	<b>29</b>
						

## NOVEMBER FUN FACTS

November is National Peanut Butter Lovers Month  
 November 4th—Election Day  
 Sesame Street debuted on Nov. 10, 1969  
 November 10th—National Young Readers Day  
 November 28, 1835—Mark Twain's Birthday  
 Thanksgiving was first celebrated in the US in 1789.

