

Spotlight on Woodstock Education

Teacher of the Year

The WBOE would like to congratulate this year's WPS Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Nancy Zurawka! Mrs. Zurawka has been an asset to the Woodstock Public Schools since she began teaching here in 1996. She spent the first part of her career in Woodstock teaching various grade levels at the elementary school. Two years ago, she transferred to the middle school where she has been teaching social studies to all grade six students. In her teaching, she tries to spark enthusiasm and get students involved in a variety of ways, including cooperative learning groups, play acting, and educational games and competitions.

Mr. Gamache, the middle school principal, says that, "Mrs. Zurawka is one of the most positive teachers I have worked with in my twenty five years as an educator." He also notes that she not only shows enthusiasm for the content she teaches, but she seems to have an endless supply of energy. Last year, Mrs. Zurawka used this energy and enthusiasm to direct the school wide play "Arabian Nights" after school. This two- evening performance took six months to accomplish and had two different casts because Mrs. Zurawka wanted to allow as many students as possible to be involved. She also coordinated an evening presentation called "Night at the Museum," where sixth grade students displayed, lectured, and performed for parents and community members as a culmination to a unit of study on ancient civilizations.

We are so happy to have Mrs. Zurawka on our staff here at WPS, and want to thank her for the positive influences she has had on all the students she has worked with in our district.

New WPS Teaching Staff

The WBOE would like to welcome Ms. Pamela Santerre and Mr. Paul Mulvihill to our teaching staff here at WPS. Ms. Santerre joins our staff as the new Computer Technology teacher for grades 5-8 and is also co-teaching an eighth grade Reading class. She received her B.A. from Assumption College in Worcester, MA, where she majored in English. Before coming to Woodstock, she taught 9th, 10th, and 11th grade English at her alma mater, Tourtellotte High School. She is excited to join the staff in Woodstock in order to do what she loves, which is, "encouraging students to become lifelong students and writers." She feels that, "Today's students live in the virtual world just as much as the physical world," and that, "In order to reach these students, you need to connect with them using their preferred method of communication: technology." One special project she has planned for her eighth grade students is a unit of study on the dangers they can face when they use new technology. This unit will culminate with students creating their own one-minute public service announcements on a topic of internet safety, which not only warns students of dangers, but also shares tips for keeping safe as well.

Mr. Mulvihill joins our staff as the new instrumental music teacher for grades 5-8. Mr. Mulvihill received his Bachelors of Music degree from Keene State College. He comes to Woodstock with seven years of successful teaching experience, primarily at the middle school level in the town of

Westbrook. Mr. Mulvihill is continuing all the band programs that were in place at WMS last year, and has already begun teaching small group lessons as well as larger ensemble groups. This year, he is also adding the opportunity for guitar instruction which is new for WMS students. He is excited to be here in Woodstock and is planning to put on a very lively, upbeat winter concert. He enjoys showing students how to play music in the hopes of passing down the love of music from generation to generation. The Winter Music Concert will be held at the Hyde School Auditorium on December 11, 2008, at 7:00 pm. This concert will include both instrumental and choral musical selections performed by WMS students in grades 5-8. The community is invited to attend.

Easy Ways to Help the PTO Help our Schools

“Free Money Programs add up,” says Valerie Law, Chairman of the “Free Money” program for the Woodstock PTO. She is trying to make parents and community members aware of the many easy ways they can help our schools earn both monetary and equipment donations through a variety of programs. Many stores such as Target, Price Chopper and Big Y have partner programs through which our schools will receive a percentage of the amount you spend once you enroll. SchoolPAX is a new program which partners with retailers including Subway, Travelocity and Verizon Wireless to donate funds to our schools every time you shop at one of these partners. Enrollment is required. Box Tops for Education labels have been a source of school donations for some time. These labels are found on much more than cereal boxes, so shoppers should check every item they purchase for the Box Tops logo to clip and earn money for our schools. Box Tops can be turned in to the offices at WMS and WES, or at collection boxes located at the Town Hall and at the Woodstock post offices. Parents and teachers will receive "Free Money" information packets soon. To get more information on these programs, e-mail Valerie Law at valstree@aol.com.