



# The Pony Express

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Missoula Children's Theater: (MCT): **Open**  
eScrip: **Open**

## From the Principal

Peter Donaldson

Welcome winter. It has certainly arrived. As we move into the worst of weather complications, please pay attention to the district website for the most up to date information on possible closures, late starts, or adverse weather bus routes. You can also call 293-1201 ext 423.

Even with the change in weather, there's no apparent slowdown at the school. We're currently moving into our mid-year assessment cycle, the winter reading program is in full swing, and we're looking to hire an intervention/support specialist.

I'm also receiving lots of affirmation that kids love their school and teachers, which is always a good thing. It's a great time to be a Mustang. Thanks for all the help and work you provide for the school. It makes such a difference.

### Teaching and Learning

1. Teacher/Principal Evaluation Pilot – We're now moving into the final stages of the pilot project. Teachers will begin individual and group work encompassed by a "cycle of inquiry". This is job-embedded reflection of the highest caliber geared toward professional growth and student learning. It is one of the centerpieces of our pilot.

The principal evaluation tool is almost complete and will include multiple measures of evaluation such as effort toward student achievement and student/parent perception data. I have four persons on the staff who I am working with directly over the next couple of months to test various aspects of the system.

Finally, since the legislature is talking about teacher evaluation and reform, there are some scheduled visits by the Anacortes team to Olympia in the next few

weeks. Exciting stuff for sure.

2. New Student Support Procedures – Our staff has done an incredible job this month with new math learning. We have worked with Dorothy Geary, a professional trainer and teacher, who recently spent four days in the district. On the last day she worked with the K-2 teachers on some great diagnostic math tests which everyone found very helpful. We are also planning to use these tests to help target intervention support for our early learners.

3. Learning Assistance Program – At this point we have a superb substitute teacher covering the program while we open the position for a new hire. We expect to close it at the end of this week and make a decision soon after on our new intervention and support professional.

4. Mid-Year Assessment – All our teachers are now using district and building assessments to get a clearer picture of where students are with their learning in math and reading. Our 3-6 grade students are taking the winter MAP assessment (MAP stands for Measures of Academic Progress and is a computer-based assessment program) and K-2 teachers are administering the mid-year reading assessment.

They are also incorporating new math assessments and I plan on sharing a general overview of assessment to show how teachers use it to guide instruction at the PTA General Membership meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup>.

5. Grade Six – As some of you may know, Mrs. Beltramini has moved to the district office to coordinate more work on the evaluation pilot and in her place, Mrs. Dellutri will teach our sixth graders full-time along with Mrs.

Murray.

### School Culture

1. Student Government – I'm working with a new team of students who have been terrific so far. They spent some time with me after school last week putting together materials for the recent Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

2. CARE (Cooperation, Attitude, Respect, Effort) – This idea really seems to be taking hold. I have seen several examples of kids who have taken the message to heart and are talking and drawing about the CARE motto. It's so exciting to hear a kid say, "I love my school."

3. Mustang News – What a great program. We have so many students asking to be newscasters. There are also kids who want to perform music in the morning as well. We will use the format this week to show a short video about Martin Luther King Jr. produced by the student government.

### PTA Support

1. Reptile Man – Scott Peterson brought his travelling reptile zoo to the school for two performances last week. Thursday night was quite a show, especially the "snakes in a can" prank. Thanks to the PTA for helping to make it happen.

2. Winter Reading Program – We've had a great start to our winter reading program. Thanks to John Dumas and Megan Atterberry for coordinating. Our theme, "Reading Rocks", is new and fun. We even have a "reading rocks" theme song. Keep turning in your sheets and let's make the school goal of 10,000 hours.

Once again, thank you to all our Mount Erie parents and families for your continued support of the school. A lot of what we do is only possible because you're involved.

PTA MEMBERSHIP 2011-2012	
Membership goal	225
Current membership	222
Staff participation goal	75%
Current Staff members	79%

## Second RIF Distro

After a very successful first distribution in November, the second distribution of books to all students in grades K-3 will be Monday, Feb 27<sup>th</sup> in the Mt. Erie library. Throughout the day, each of the 11 classes will have a 25 minute time slot to hear a guest reader and select a free book of their choice to take home.

We could still use some more

volunteers to help make sure kids are finding the right book or to read aloud and share why reading is so important in their lives. So if you are available for 25 minutes or a couple of hours and would like to be a part of this important event, please contact Kim Dotzauer at 588-9491 or [kimtravisrik@frontier.com](mailto:kimtravisrik@frontier.com).



# Calling All Writers... Young Author's Conference

The Young Author's Conference is an annual celebration of young authors held every spring at Skagit Valley College in Mount Vernon. Professional authors and illustrators provide a hands-on workshop for students for a day of celebrating the art of writing and illustration.

Students begin the day getting acquainted with each other as they share their own manu-

scripts. Each student then spends one hour with the featured author, one hour with a local author, and one hour with a local illustrator.

Parents: If your 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade child is interested in attending, you can find more information at the Northwest Educational Service District website [www.nwesd.org](http://www.nwesd.org). Students will need to write an entire story on their own and

share their story with other students at the conference. Talk to your student's teacher or fill out the application below no later than January 30th.

The event is Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> (or Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup> only for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students). There is an 8:00am departure from Mt. Erie and students will return to the school by 3pm. Cost is \$25 per student and scholarships are

available through Stacey Estenson; 293-9541; [sestensen@asd103.org](mailto:sestensen@asd103.org). A school bus will be provided by the school district for transportation.

For more information, contact the school coordinator, Catherine Houck, at 293-1297 (h), 708-3855 (c), or [chouck8@msn.com](mailto:chouck8@msn.com).

Good luck to all those who wish to participate!

## Kids: Do You Like to Write?

Do you like to write? Is there a male role model who has been a good influence in your life? The Washington State PTA invites all children to enter an essay contest!

Men can make a difference in the lives of the children they care about and children are more successful in and out of school when they have the guidance of an involved male role model: a father, grandfather, uncle, brother, stepfather, teacher, mentor, neighbor, pastor, priest, coach, or friend. Washington State PTA is promoting children and family advocacy through this statewide essay contest which explores this vital relationship from a child's perspective.

All entries should be no more than 650 words describing how a male role model has played an important role in the student's personal life. Entries are due by March 1<sup>st</sup> and details about the contest and a link to the entry form can be found at: [http://www.wastatepta.org/programs/PTA\\_mens/index.html](http://www.wastatepta.org/programs/PTA_mens/index.html).

Young Authors' Conference  
Application Form

Name (first & last) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

I am doing \_\_\_\_ a story \_\_\_\_ graphic novel \_\_\_\_ five or more poems

The date I will be attending is:  
 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade – March 28 \_\_\_\_\_ 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade – March 30 \_\_\_\_\_

*The Educational Service District sponsors the event and it takes place at Skagit Valley College from 9:00 – 2:00pm.*

\_\_\_\_\_ The \$25.00 registration is included with this form. Make the check out to the **NWESD**. Scholarship assistance is available; contact Stacey Estensen 293-9541; [sestensen@asd103.org](mailto:sestensen@asd103.org)

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent contact information  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return to your student's teacher OR put in the PTA box at the front office. Thanks!*

## META Performing Arts for Mt. Erie Students

All students in grades 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> will be attending the META Performing Arts production of *Williams Window* at the Lincoln Theater in late February. *Williams Window* is a collection of vignettes from some of Shakespeare's most famous

works and will be performed live by fellow students from Skagit Valley.

Mt Erie students also will experience the grandeur of the historic Lincoln Theater in downtown Mount Vernon.

Mt. Erie was awarded an Anacortes School Dis-

trict enrichment grant that covers the ticket price and a portion of transportation. ASD enrichment grants are funded through local service organizations such as Kiwanis, Soroptimist, and Rotary. The Lincoln Theater Foundation will also be

providing money for transportation.

Many Mt. Erie students are able to attend this wonderful production because of our local service clubs and theater groups. Thank you for all your support and enjoy the show!

## PTA Announcements

The PTA General Membership Meeting is January 31<sup>st</sup> at 6:30-8:00pm in the Mt. Erie Library. Mr. Donaldson will give a special presentation at the meeting. He will talk about intervention and support programs, school assessments, and the importance of data to guide instruction.

Red Foot Theatre Co., a local group of actors, is coming to Mt. Erie February 10-15 to perform their rendition of Bremen Town Musicians for K-4 to show students how literature can come to life! Grade level groups will meet in the library for an up close and personal, engaging performance.

The Mt. Erie Americorp Volunteers are hosting a Reader's Theater event open to 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders. All interested students are invited to sign up at the front office between January 23<sup>rd</sup> and February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Participants must be available for two rehearsals after school from 3:30 - 4pm on February 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. The performance will be on February 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. If you have a question, please contact Trang Bui (tbui@asd103.org) or Liz Florkowski (eflorkowski@asd103.org).

## Mustang Points

The winning classrooms for September through December, the ones that had the most points earned for parent involvement volunteering in the school and attending PTA events, are: For K-2: Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Catlin. For 3-4: Mrs. Olsen and Mr. O'Toole. For 5-6: Mrs. Dellutri and Mrs. Brynteson. Congratulations!

Awards will be forthcoming.

Unfortunately, the Mustang Points Program will now be discontinued. The committee chair has moved and the board has decided the CARE cards are more meaningful for students. If you have any questions, please contact Silja Shjarback, PTA President.

## READING ROCKS!

The Mt. Erie Winter Reading Program has started and this year we think READING ROCKS. Our winter reading program is designed to help our wonderful teachers assist the students in building a habit and love of reading to last a lifetime. The program lasts six weeks, running from January 9<sup>th</sup> through February 16<sup>th</sup>.

The school has set a goal for Mt. Erie students to read a total of 10,000 hours during the program and every student completing a reading card will be eligible to win some really great prizes. The more cards completed, the more chances of winning! At the end of the program, an assembly will be

held to recognize all the reading accomplishments by the students.

Here is how our program works:

- Set a time for reading each day.
- Initial a square when the required reading time is met.
- Reading continues until all blank squares have been initialed – this equals a "Completed Reading Card".
- Return the completed reading card to your respective teacher.
- Pull a new reading card located in the classes or on the bulletin board and begin again.

Please see the school or PTA website for additional information.

## Facebook & Gardening

We have a new page on Facebook so be sure to "Like" us to get updates on your wall of upcoming events and activities. Click on the link <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Mt-Erie-PTA/254489947927429> or visit us on our Facebook page to get started.

Garden Plots are available at Mt. Erie for this coming season. If you or anyone you know is interested, please fill out an application and submit it online to the Anacortes Community Gardens (ACG) at <http://anacortescommunitygardens.org/>.

## Reflections

Thank you to all the students who entered the PTA Reflections Art Contest. Eight entries were selected to compete at the state level: Visual Arts - Jillian Porter, Luke Rutz, Jocelyn Hylton and Zinna Jackson; Literature - Abby Hylton and Anna Morrow; Photography - Emma Foley and Vince Jackson.

State winners will be announced in May and at the Talent Show, on May 11, we will hang all the entries in the gym for everyone to see the great work by the 23 participating students. Be sure to check them out before or after the Talent Show and entries will be returned after this event.



## MCT's Pied Piper Coming

led away from the town along with the rats!

Missoula Children's Theatre is coming to Mt. Erie in March presenting "The Pied Piper", an original adaptation of the classic children's tale.

What do you do when your town is overrun by ravenous rats? Sara, an orphan, and other Townspeople of Hamelin turn to the Mayor of Hamelin and his council when their town is threatened. They call on the Pied Piper to save them from the troublesome creatures.

The Mayor's son and daughter also join in the endeavor. Find out what happens when the town is unable to pay the Piper and the children are

Auditions for the Pied Piper are March 5<sup>th</sup> from 3:40-5:40pm. Details will be sent home at the end of February. All students are welcome to audition for the 50-60 parts. There is a \$20 performance fee after the audition for students who are cast; scholarships available; see Mrs. Estenson.

Performances will be Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 1:30pm for Mt. Erie students and Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm for family and friends. All performances are free. **Parents:** The committee needs assistance with various small tasks before and during the residency week. Please contact Silja Shjarback at [shjaresa@fidalgo.net](mailto:shjaresa@fidalgo.net) for more information.

## PTA Membership Update

We are thrilled so many parents and relatives have chosen to join the PTA and support the kids and staff at Mt. Erie. We set a goal for membership of 225 members this year and are just three members shy of meeting that goal! If you haven't joined Mt. Erie PTA yet, you still can! Help us meet our membership goal and take a stand for our kids.

Your PTA membership matters, whether you can get involved or not. As a member, you'll stay informed about PTA activities at school, learn about how you can support education on a state and national level, and have access to special discounts for PTA members. For more information about Mt. Erie PTA, visit our website at [www.mteriepta.org](http://www.mteriepta.org) and to find out about discounts, go to [www.PTA.org/benefits](http://www.PTA.org/benefits). You

will need the username and password on the back of your membership card to access these benefits.

If you haven't joined Mt. Erie PTA yet or received your membership card and PTA directory, pick up a blue membership form at the school or download one from [www.mteriepta.org](http://www.mteriepta.org). Return the form with your check to the school office. Dues are just \$10 for the year for individuals and \$16 for a family/dual membership. For more information, contact Emily Hylton at [emilyhylton@comcast.net](mailto:emilyhylton@comcast.net) or Leslie Tysseling at [casaverdegi@hotmail.com](mailto:casaverdegi@hotmail.com).

Remember: not only can parents join PTA but so can grandparents, aunts and uncles, or anyone who wants to show support for our kids. We encourage you to invite your relatives to join Mt. Erie PTA!

# February 2012

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30 <i>Application deadline for the Young Author's Conference.</i>	31 <i>General Membership Meeting: 6:30p-8:00p in the School Library.</i>	1 <i>Late start</i>	2	3	4
5	6 <b>No school day cancelled. Regular school day.</b>	7 <i>PTA Board of Directors Meeting: 6:30p in the PTA room.</i>	8 <i>Late start</i>	9	10 <i>Visiting Actors (Red Foot Theatre Co.) performing Bremen Town Musicians.</i>	11
12	13 <i>Visiting Actors (Red Foot Theatre Co.) performing Bremen Town Musicians.</i>	14 <i>Visiting Actors (Red Foot Theatre Co.) performing Bremen Town Musicians.</i>	15 <i>Visiting Actors (Red Foot Theatre Co.) performing Bremen Town Musicians. Late start</i>	16 <b>Last day to turn in Reading Rock cards.</b>	17 <i>No School.</i>	18
19	20 <i>No School.</i>	21	22 <i>Late start</i>	23 <i>School Board Meeting at 6:15p in the ASD Board room.</i>	24	25
26	27 <i>Reading is Fundamental (RIF)</i>	28	29 <i>Late start</i>			

## School Year Events



- Mar 5-10 Missoula Children's Theatre *The Pied Piper*
- Mar 5 MCT auditions at 3:40-5:40pm in the Mt. Erie gym
- Mar 9 MCT in-school performance at 1:30pm in the Mt. Erie gym
- Mar 10 MCT performance at 2:00pm in the Mt. Erie gym
- Mar 12-23 March Math Madness
- Mar 13 **Board of Directors Meeting** at 2:15 in the PTA room
- Mar 16 Early Release-Dismissal at Noon (Professional Development Day)
- Mar 20 **General Membership Meeting 6:30-8 PM in library**  
**Nominating Committee report/elections**
- Mar 28 Young Author's Conference (2nd- 5th grade students only)
- Mar 30 Young Author's Conference (6th grade students only)
- Apr 2-6 No School - Spring Break
- Apr 17 **Board of Directors Meeting** at 6:30pm in the PTA room
- Apr 26 All School Choir Performance
- Apr 28 Washington State Math Competition