



The PALO Press

Fall, 2011

Volume 2, Issue 1

Welcome Back!

By Dr. David Martin



PALO Principal
Dr. David Martin

Dear Students, Families, and PALO Staff and Faculty,

The 2011-2012 school year is up and running and, for those of you who were with us last year, welcome back! We also have a new group of students who recently enrolled in PALO and I would like to welcome you to the PALO family. I want to take this time to thank our students and families for choosing PALO as an educational option, and I know that our school will provide you with a community of educators to support your educational needs. I would also like to thank our PALO faculty who have been

so dedicated to our students. Your hard work is greatly appreciated. I- along with the other PALO administrators- are committed to supporting all who are enveloped in the PALO family, and we look forward to an exciting school year, as well as getting to know you over the coming months. Please consider attending our Open House, which will be held from 5:30-7:30 on November 17th at the AIU3 building. This is a great opportunity to meet your teachers and fellow students.

Sincerely,
Dr. David Martin
PALO Principal



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Fuel up to Play Challenge

By Mr. Scott Stiteler

The Fuel Up to Play 60 competition is under way!! This competition encourages all students to get active for 60 minutes a day and eat healthy. All PALO students are welcome to join us in making our school healthy and active. Go to www.fueluptoplay60.com to join. PA Learners Online would like every student to enroll in the Fuel Up to Play 60 organization in Blackboard so you can see how your fellow students are making changes for a healthier school.

Instructions on how to enroll can be obtained by contacting Mr. Stiteler. If you need more information or have questions, please email Mr. Stiteler (stiteler@palomail.com). Let's get active and stay healthy together!!



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Guidance Corner

By Mrs. Mandy Rauenzahn

It is never too early to plan for what you will do after high school. As a freshman or sophomore, you can start researching different types of jobs and in-demand careers. There are several websites that your counselor can direct you to look around and learn about how your interests and abilities relate to the world of work. As a junior or senior, you should be taking a proactive approach and look at specific colleges and pro-

grams. If you have any questions about scholarships, financial aid, testing (SAT etc.), college applications, or required High School coursework, please make an appointment to talk to your counselor. Also- make sure you understand what is required to graduate and where you stand. Each student has a 'graduation plan' that your counselor keeps and would be happy to discuss it with you.

Remember- your counselors are here to help you and listen to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Wellness Notes

By Mrs. Sharon Rice, R.N., M.S.N., C.S.N.

Welcome back to school!

I am Sharon Rice, R.N., the cyber school nurse. Please contact me with any questions or concerns you have. You can reach me by e-mail at sharon.rice@aiu3.net.

Here are a few things you can do that will help us work together this year:

- The State of Pennsylvania requires students to be screened for hearing, vision, height and weight yearly. Please send in a copy of your child's last physical and dental exams. Please send in any new immunizations your child may have received.
- For Kindergarteners, the school law requires all current immunizations and a copy of a physical exam within the last year.
- Please let the school nurse know of any changes in your child's health that may have happened over the past year.
- A good breakfast is very important to start the day! You child will do better in school and have less headaches and stomach aches if they have a healthy breakfast.
- Our primary concern is your child's health and well-being because good health and successful learning go hand in hand.

The percentage of overweight children has almost doubled since the 1970's. There are many theories as to what is causing the childhood obesity epidemic, and it is probably a combination of many things. The beginning of a new school year is an excellent time to start new habits, and here are **three simple household routines** you can do today that will lower the risk of obesity in your children:

1. Have family dinners: at least five nights week
2. Get enough sleep: 10.5 hours per night
3. Limit weekday TV time: less than two hours per week day

For more information see www.highmarkhealthyhigh5.org



Jess Adams' Girl Gov Experience,

by PALO student, Jessica Adams



Jessica and State Representative Joseph Markosek

What is the Girl Gov Program?

The program is for girls only and it gives girls the chance to experience working for the government. Administrators teach girls about the rights we, as women, have and how we got those rights.

How did you find out about the program and how did you get accepted?

I heard about the Girl Gov program from my history teacher, Mrs. Verner. I went onto the website, filled out the application, and waited to hear if I got accepted. My acceptance letter arrived in the mail and I also received a letter from the PALO principal, Dr. Martin, congratulating me.

What did you do to prepare for the event?

The event occurred Tuesday, October 18th. Monday night, all the participants went to a hotel and viewed a PowerPoint about women's rights, as well as some current bills going through the capital to later discuss with our state representative.

What did you do on the day of the event?

Tuesday, we left at 5 am for Harrisburg. At the capital, our representative picked us up and we shadowed their activities for the day to see what a day in government is like.

What was it like?

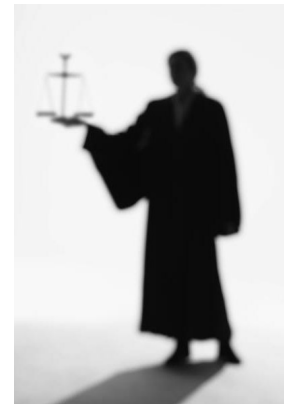
It was a lot of fun! I shadowed Joseph Markosek, who is the representative of District 25 (parts of Allegheny and Westmorland County). He was very kind and very busy. There was another girl who shadowed him too. We had to run around a lot with his assistant, Tara Friel. We learned a lot about the representative's office and how he is chairman of the Appropriations Committee. We sat in on his meeting, "caucus," as well as everything else that he had planned for the day. At the end of the day, I ended up with six blisters on my feet from running around so much!

What did you learn?

On the bus ride home, because it was through Girl Gov, we watched a movie showing the many struggles women had to fight for in order to get equal rights. Men, including their husbands, didn't support them. They thought women having voting rights was a joke, but many women were willing to die for the cause. The movie was about Alice Paul and how she went on a hunger strike all in the name of women's suffrage.

What is the number one thing you took away from this experience?

Today, I am a female who has the right to vote when I come of age. I am grateful for those many women who fought for me and other females to have that opportunity.



Memo from Tech Support



Did you know that you can submit an electronic ticket to PALO tech support instead of calling?

- 1.) On the PALO homepage, click on the "Help" tab (or click here:<http://216.151.110.70:8080>).*
- 2.) In the table, click on "Technical Support Form".
- 3.) Enter your Blackboard username and password.

4.) Click on "New Request"

5.) Enter the description of your technical problem and hit "Add Request"

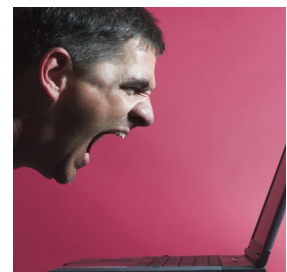
E-tickets may be submitted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A tech support specialist will return the request during business hours (8:00 am- 4:00 pm) Monday-Friday.

E-tickets will expedite the time it takes to place your request and it's easy!

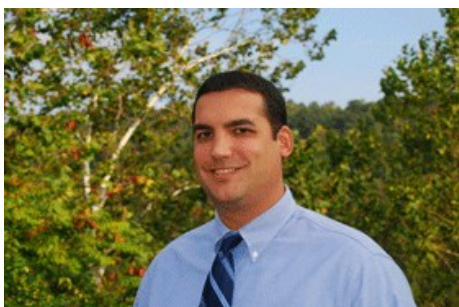
You can also check on the progress of

your ticket to see if a support person has called YOU back yet.

*You may also access this form through Blackboard.



Teacher Spotlight , Mr. Darren Gerlach



In this edition of the newsletter, we are highlighting PALO Social Studies teacher, Mr. Darren Gerlach. Mr. Gerlach has been teaching with PALO for seven years. Before teaching with PALO, Mr. Gerlach worked for the Holy Family Institute in Emsworth, PA. For PALO, Mr. Gerlach teaches Civics for

high school students. He earned his undergrad degree in Secondary Social Studies Education from Edinboro University and a master's degree in School Administration from California University of PA. When asked why he enjoys teaching at PALO, Mr. Gerlach stated:

"I like teaching at PALO because I enjoy using technology to help students to learn in different ways."

Some students may be familiar with Mr. Gerlach's new course, Games Through the Ages. In this course, starting from ancient Egypt, through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, to the dawn of video games, students learn about the relationships between a culture, the desired forms of that culture's entertainment, and

how games expressed the technology available to the culture.

This is a foundations course for other art, programming, or video game design classes. The experience students gain by hands-on research, presentations, prototyping and game-playing can help them decide whether to pursue a career in the game industry.

Outside of the classroom, Mr. Gerlach enjoys golfing and hanging out with his dog, Cooper.



Study Skills

By Mrs. Louise Hilty

Being an online student definitely has its own benefits and challenges. My name is Mrs. Hilty and I have been teaching PALO's High School "Study Skills" course for the last six years. This course is designed to help students learn how to tackle challenges and become more effective online learners. I have a unique perspective, as I earned my Master's degree in an online program, so I know the challenges of online learning. Each month in the PALO newsletter, I will share some tips and strategies to provide you with what you need to succeed.

Within the first few days of starting an online program, many students learn right away that managing their time can be one of the most demanding aspects of being an online student. With a busy schedule of classes and assignments, students can learn time management skills that can make all the difference. Check out my list of top time management tips for students!

Make a schedule and use it! There are many tools available to make your schedule. Our new Outlook email has a calendar option

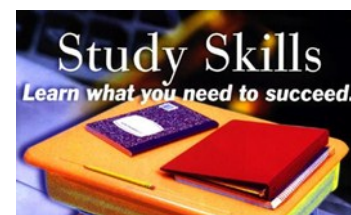
where you can add in all your live class times and set reminders, so you won't be late for class. Some students like to print out templates in Word or Excel to make a schedule to follow, while others opt to use a planner.

Use an assignment checklist! Create a way to keep track of all your assignments and their due dates each week. Again, Outlook has a great tasks feature allowing you to add in all your assignments, prioritize them, add due dates, and set reminders. You can also make an assignment checklist to fill out each week or use a pre-made planner. Cross off the assignments as you submit them so you can easily keep track of what you've done!

Use your spare minutes wisely! Those spare minutes throughout your day can help you be more efficient and use your time wisely. Waiting for a class to begin? Review your notes or check your school email. Waiting at a doctor's appointment? Get some reading done or some practice math problems. Need some extra time to study? Review flashcards during commercials of your favorite show.

Plan your work and work your plan! Spend some time at the beginning of each week and day to plan what you need to do. Add study and homework times to your schedule. Come up with a back-up plan if something unexpected happens so that you don't get off track. For example, I have an appointment at 2:30 and I will miss my live class, so I will set a time when I get back to watch the archive and submit the work I missed.

Do it the first time! Save time by getting it done the first time. When you open an email, read it, decide if you need to respond, and then file it. If you start an assignment, finish it and submit it. Think about the time you waste by starting things and not finishing them, and make it a rule to do it the first time!



Congratulations from PALO

- Congratulations to our 2010-2011 graduates! The PALO staff and faculty are proud of all you have accomplished. Graduates were recognized in the annual PALO Graduation Ceremony that was held at the Carnegie Music Hall of Homestead on June 10th.
- Way to go Jess! PALO student, Jessica Adams, was accepted and participated in the Girl Gov program. Read all about her experience in her article on page 3.
- Special Education Supervisor, Dana Farrand, was selected to the PA Fellowship for Special Education Leaders. Congrats Ms. Farrand!
- Congratulations to Mrs. Naugle who received her Masters degree in Reading Education from Slippery Rock in May. She also received certification as a Reading Specialist. Way to go!
- Nice work Mr .Burchell! Mr Burchell has received his certification from the National Association of Speed and Explosion (NASE) as a Certified Specialist in Speed and Explosion for Sports Competition.
- Caitlin Start was recently accepted into the NAPW (National Association for Professional Women).
- Congratulations to PALO graduate, class of 2011, Leah Streng. Leah was recognized for an Outstanding Senior Award from Parkway West in the field of Cosmetology.
- Have you won an award or contest or been recognized for an achievement? Contact Caitlin Start to share your good news at caitlin.start@aiu3.net!

Upcoming Events and Important Dates

- PALO's annual Open-House will be held on Thursday, November 17th from 5:30-7:30 in the central office. Stop by and meet your teachers and classmates! Look for a flyer in the mail and more info on our website.
- PALO is holding a field trip for PALO Elementary students (grades K-6) on November 18th at the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium from 10:00 am-2:00 pm.
- The first marking period ends on November 4th. Report cards will be mailed home shortly thereafter. Along with the report card, included will also be the Internet Reimbursement Form.
- The 12th grade PSSA retest for Math, Reading, Science, and Writing is scheduled for October 24– November 4th. Students required to take the exam will be contacted by the Guidance Department.
- Know a student who wants to enroll? Our admissions specialist is available to answer any questions students and parents have about PALO and the enrollment process. Call today at 412-394-5733!



PALO's Vision

The students, families, and teachers will all be equal, collaborative partners in facilitating the development of lifelong learning skills through a content rich curriculum that is delivered using technology as the tool. This community of learners at PALO will be personally connected via current multimedia. The daily utilization of technology provides educational opportunities previously unavailable. Students graduating from PALO will be prepared to enter the 21st Century workforce or collegiate setting with a skill-set second to none. Students of every learning style and learning rate will be challenged to meet high expectations. The teachers will use innovative methods to ensure the successful assimilation of knowledge for all students.



475 East Waterfront Drive
Homestead, PA 15120

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Upcoming Events and Important Dates (con't)

- PALO Elementary School is excited to bring to you Career Days for the 2011-2012 School Year. Once a month, students in grades 1 – 6 will engage in learning activities to learn more about careers, holidays and cultures from around the world, famous inventors, performing arts, healthy lifestyles, and fire safety. All holiday related activities will be optional. Assignments and activities posted for Career Days will be completed and submitted by 9pm on the day in which they are assigned.

Here is a list of topics and dates:

| Month / Date | Topic / Career |
|---|--|
| November 4, 2011 | Firefighter and Fire Safety |
| November 23, 2011 | Farmer and Thanksgiving |
| December 22, 2011 | Geographer and Christmas Around the World |
| January 27, 2012 | Public Speaker and Civil Rights Movement |
| February 24, 2012 | Heart Surgeon, Dietician, Heart Health and Valentine's Day |
| March (during PSSA testing weeks) More information will be forthcoming. | PSSA Careers (Grades 3- 6) and Photographer (Grades 1-2) |
| April 27, 2012 | Inventors and Leonardo da Vinci |
| May 25, 2012 | Performing Arts |

On the Career Days, students will have an abbreviated schedule. Live classes will take place in the morning and Career Day activities will be in the afternoon. Your homeroom teachers will have detailed instructions on which live class links to attend for the sessions on these days along with other grade level information.

Please contact your homeroom teacher, or meet with them during Open House on November 17th if you have any questions.

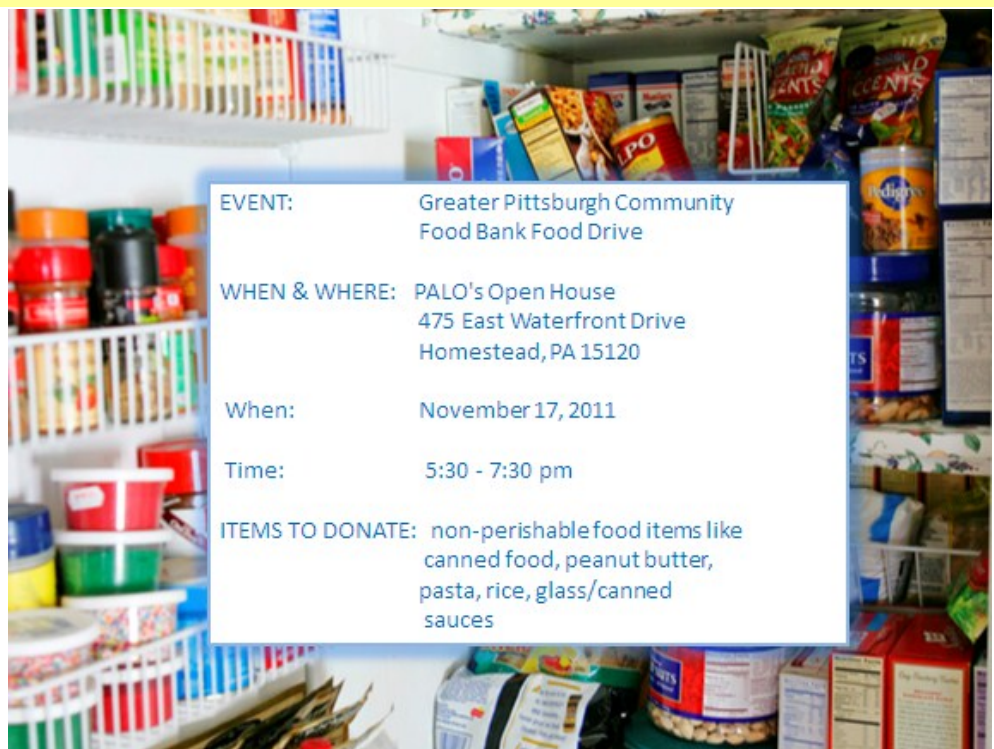
We need your help so we can help others in need. The 5th and 6th grade classes would like to inform you of a PA Learner's Online Food Drive, which will take place during Open House.

The nonperishable food items that everyone donates will be given to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. There are many people in the Pittsburgh area that are in need of food. These people would be so grateful for the donations we collect and give them.

We would like to reach a goal of 100 nonperishable items to be donated by November 17th.

Examples of items to donate are canned goods, cereal, pasta, rice, peanut butter, jelly, crackers, cookies, and other healthy nonperishable foods that will not spoil or go bad.

Thank you for your support!



EVENT: Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank Food Drive

WHEN & WHERE: PALO's Open House
475 East Waterfront Drive
Homestead, PA 15120

When: November 17, 2011

Time: 5:30 - 7:30 pm

ITEMS TO DONATE: non-perishable food items like
canned food, peanut butter,
pasta, rice, glass/canned
sauces

This Issue's Contributors:

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| Guidance Corner: | Mandy Rauenzahn |
| Wellness Notes: | Sharon Rice |
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| Tech Memo: | Christian Engelbert and Caitlin Start |
| Teacher Spotlight: | Darren Gerlach and Caitlin Start |
| Study Skills: | Louise Hilty |
| Food Drive: | 5th and 6th grade PALO classes |
| PALO Press Editor and Creator: | Caitlin Start |

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ONLINE**
REGIONAL CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL
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SERVICES, RESOURCES, AND RESEARCH FOR EDUCATION

