



COUGAR COURIER

*Cold Spring Elementary School
9201 Falls Chapel Way
Potomac, MD 20854
Phone (301) 279-8480*

www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/coldspringes

The Cold Spring Parent Teacher Association

www.coldspringPTA.glynn.com

PTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Julie Oldach
julieoldach@verizon.net

President-Elect: Pete Thomson
pete@pjthomson.com

Vice President: Susan Lusk
susan@ipo.org

Treasurer: Andrea Portes
aggportes@verizon.net

Recording Secretary: Laurie Gira
tlebgira@aol.com

Corresponding Secretary: Denise Schleckser
dschleckser@verizon.net

MCCPTA DELEGATES

Christina Kyong:
ckyong@stoneridge.org

Jeff Alexander:
jeffalex@stanfordalumni.org

PTA MEETING SCHEDULE 2008-2009

Cold Spring All Purpose Room, 7:15pm;
Babysitting provided for ages 4 and up.

- Tuesday, March 31, 2009
- Tuesday, May 5, 2009
- Tuesday, June 2, 2009

BE TRUE TO YOUR SCHOOL



It's time to give Cold Spring a much needed makeover this Spring! Please join us for some

leaf raking, mulch spreading and general clean up on Sunday, April 26th from 1:00 to 3:00pm. The kids will love the getting dirty part and you will benefit from knowing you helped your child's school look its best. Make sure to bring some gardening gloves, rakes and shovels. We do this only once a year and are counting on the Cold Spring community for their assistance, so come on out.

President's Message

By Julie Oldach

Dear Cold Spring Friends and Families:

As we all can finally observe Spring has finally sprung. Nothing says Spring better than our Bradford pears in bloom along Falls Chapel Way! I hope that many of you will enjoy a well-deserved Spring break filled with fun times with your families.

Thanks to all who helped with our most recent Book-a-Breakfast. Many children enjoyed breakfast while perusing their favorite book. A wonderful time was had by all!

Once again our Destination Imagination teams represented CSES well. Both of our competitive teams were working on the same challenge, "Instinct Messaging". The team with 4th and 5th graders, the Wild Wolves, came in second place and the team with 3rd and 4th graders, the Desert Dudes, placed fifth. Our primary team, the Cold Cougars, participated in the challenge "Hidden!" which is not competitive. The participants delighted the audience with their wonderful presentations. All three teams enjoyed the exciting adventure at Clarksburg Height School on March 7th. Thanks to all those who volunteered their help to make this possible.

Many families and friends also enjoyed our annual Science Expo. Truly amazing projects were on display for all to enjoy. The kick-off ceremony was a great delight. Thanks to all the children who participated, as well as the many parents who volunteered their time as planners and evaluators. (And I am sure many of those projects would not have happened without some friendly "prodding" by our parents!) Without your help, this event would not have been the success that it was.

Spring welcomes the arrival of our Artist in Residence program. This year our 3rd graders will work with our visiting artist to create a mural to be displayed prominently in our media center. The theme will be "Tools of Learning." We all look forward to seeing their amazing creation.

Please mark your calendars for our Cluster meeting including members of the Montgomery County Board of Education. It will be held at Cold Spring on April 23rd at 7:30 p.m. This is a rare opportunity for each of you to show how important your child's education is to you. This is your chance to discuss issues which are important to us with our elected officials. Please come and let your voice be heard at this very important forum.

If you are interested in helping our PTA be a success next year, please contact our President-Elect Pete Thomson now to discuss your ideas. Be a part of the PTA tradition at Cold Spring!

Sincerely,
Julie Oldach

5th Grade Community Service Project

Dear Fifth Grade Parents –

This years Community Service Project will be a Car Wash/Bake Sale with the proceeds benefiting the Stepping Stones Shelter.

Stepping Stones Shelter is a local shelter serving homeless families with a member of the Cold Spring ES family serving on their Board of Directors. Stepping Stones is a place where families can get their start and take steps toward independence. Stepping Stones provides hope for the future, strengthens family values and enables self-sufficiency in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. Programs focus on education, career and financial planning and family focused activities.

The Car Wash/Bake Sale will be held Saturday, May 2 (rain date Sunday, May 3) from 10AM – 2PM to coincide with the Fox Hills West Community Yard Sale.

I will be looking for many 5th Graders to participate in addition to parent volunteers. Those unable to attend can show their support with a donation of a Baked Good to be sold at the event. More information will be your child's backpack.

I hope everyone at CSES takes advantage of the opportunity to finally get all that road salt off your cars, contribute to a worthy cause and maybe bring home some new dessert.

If you have any questions contact:

David Weiss

eyeski@rosslyneye.com

301-294-9440 6-9PM

COLD SPRING LOOKS AHEAD TO 2009-2010

It's time to start preparing for next year! PTA provides wonderful opportunities to become involved with the school and your child's educational experience. These elementary years go so fast, and there are increasingly fewer opportunities to become closely involved at the middle and high school levels. Additionally, it is a great way to meet some of the wonderful people in the Cold Spring Community and keep in touch with the school.

The nominating committee would love to hear from you if you are interested in holding an office or chairing a committee next year. We always need more volunteers!

Additionally, as we work through the nominating process there will likely be specific positions that we need to fill. We will announce specific needs in the Courier and via the listserv.

Please contact Pete Thomson to volunteer or with questions. pete@pjthomson.com

Gaithersburg West Master Plan

In February, the Park and Planning Division of Montgomery County issued a Preliminary draft of the updated Gaithersburg West Master Plan. This Plan covers the area around Traville Square, Shady Grove Road by John Hopkins and University of Maryland, Belward Farm, etc. , and calls for the development of 5,000 residential homes, 10,000,000 sq feet of commercial space which will focus on biotech, the build out of the CCT transit system, and more. Details of the draft plan can be viewed at http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/gaithersburg/documents/gwmp_format_final_2_6.pdf.

The timing and impact on the schools in our Wootton Cluster is unclear at this point but talk of a new elementary school and the reappearance of the “new technology high school” have been heard. As such, the Wootton Cluster Coordinators will become involved in the movement of this plan, advocate as necessary, and keep you advised of its progress. Communications will be made through your local PTA.

Attend the Montgomery County
Board of Education Meeting
at Cold Spring on April 23, 2009



Mark your calendars for April 23rd! An additional, rare opportunity for each one of you to show how important education is to Cold Spring and the Wootton Cluster community as a whole is coming on Thursday April 23rd. That evening, our PTA/PTSAs will be hosting the members of the Montgomery County Board of Education **at Cold Spring ES** for our quadrennial meeting. This is our opportunity to dialogue with the men and women we elected to determine MCPS policy on everything from gifted and talented education to special needs; from school air quality issues and maintenance to parental involvement; from math curriculum to curricular fees. Please come show your support.



Cold Spring Elementary Courier

Cougar Mail Bag

By Ralph Nelson



Since the publication of my last article in the March Courier, **“When in doubt, write a “thank you” note,”** my mailbox has been filling up with your questions about the best way to write a thank note for our Cold Spring staff. I’d like to share one of the more common letters:

*“Ralph, I’m a big fan of your column and enjoyed your **“When in doubt, write a ‘thank you’ note,”** article. I’ve never written a note like this to the school and am not sure about the best way to write it. Do you have any suggestions? Thank you for your help. Sincerely, Mrs. Julie Oldach”*

Thank you for your letter Julie, and yes, it is not as hard as you think writing these notes. Remember, it can be as simple as a one-sentence thank you e-mail to a full blown letter. The big thing is to send it in.

For those of you who want to send in a more formal letter, I’m providing an example to the right. It includes three main paragraphs:

- **Introduction** – letting Mr. Barnett know you appreciate one of his staff
- **Specific Kudos** – telling the county what the staff did and trying to include it in one of the 6 categories shown because these categories are in their evaluations.
- **Conclusion** – Really send it home that you appreciate this staff member being a public servant at Cold Spring.

Mr. Martin Barnett
Principal, Cold Spring Elementary
9201 Falls Chapel Way
Potomac, MD 20854

March 16, 2009

Dear Mr. Barnett,

[INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH] I would like to let you know about the superior service we have received from Mrs. <<Full Name>> your <<Job Title>>. We are writing this letter because Mrs. <<Last Name>> has made a large difference to our child and to our family and we don’t want her public service to go unnoticed. Besides being professional with all of our parental needs, she has been very helpful and generous to our child.

[SPECIFIC KUDOS PARAGRAPH] Specifically, over the last year, Mrs. <<Last Name>> has been my daughter’s ___th grade teacher. When we started the year, she surprised us with: <<Pick one or more of the following areas with specific things the person did>>

1. **“Performing and act of heroism**
2. **Acting as a mentor or peer coach**
3. **Showing outstanding performance**
4. **Developing better procedures for a task**
5. **Completing unique assignments, or**
6. **Developing innovative or creative ideas.”**

It is very comforting knowing our teachers are staying on top of these difficult areas. **[CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH]** In conclusion, I have met many public servants who directly impact my family’s life. I want you to know Mrs. . <<Last Name>> is one of the most personable and concerned about my child’s welfare I have ever met. Thank you for having someone like Mrs. . <<Last Name>> on your staff and thanks to the entire Cold Spring Elementary staff for their excellent public service.

Sincerely,
Motivated Parent

Cc: Mrs. <<Full Name>>

There are two big things to remember when you write these notes: they will be read by the staff’s supervisors and they will be read by the staff – now and many years from now. By acknowledging them, you are thanking them now for your child and motivating them in the future to continue making great citizens – which reminds me of another great quote:

“One generation plants the trees...Another gets the shade.”
Chinese Proverb

Thank you again Julie for your letter and thank you fellow parents for taking the time to continue making Cold Spring the greatest elementary school in the nation!

Minutes of the Cold Spring Elementary School PTA Meeting

Date: March 3, 2009

CALL TO ORDER:

Julie Oldach called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm. Welcome and introductions were made.

ATTENDANCE:

Presided over by Julie Oldach, PTA President.

Those officers in attendance were Julie Oldach, PTA President, Pete Thomson, President-Elect, Susan Lusk, Vice President, Andrea Portes, Treasurer, Denise Schleckser, Corresponding Secretary, and Laurie Gira, Recording Secretary.

Also in attendance were: Mr. Barnett, Nancy Van Grack, Carla Meister, Jonah Odum, Laurie Halverson, Lisa Kerness, and Ken Cho.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT:

Mr. Barnett thanked Mrs. Van Grack for representing the third grade at this month's PTA meeting. As a follow-up to last month's discussion of Cold Spring Elementary School (CSES) PTA's budgeted expenditure for a poster machine for the school, Mr. Barnett indicated that it had not yet been ordered. Regarding the school's plans to acquire two Promethium boards, maintenance staff is coming to assess the media center wall's ability to support the 400 pound display. Plans remain to purchase two, one for the Media Center and the other perhaps in a set aside room next year for all classes to share. CSES is up for Technology modernization in 2011-2012 and Mr. Barnett hopes that will lead to more boards for the school.

Mr. Barnett reported that CSES will likely lose one teacher, as numbers indicate a need for only two fifth grade classes next year. CSES' projected numbers for next year is 373. We have 393 this year. Mr. Barnett will find out more later this week, and will report at our next PTA meeting. He is hopeful that we won't have to face cuts in our Art/Music/PE allotments for next year. Mr. Barnett received a response to his suggestion for a third center class in the future. There can be no third class because the domino effect would be the need for expansion of middle school magnet capacity.

Regarding the county budget, Superintendent Weast is not indicating a need for Paraeducator cuts for next year. The stimulus package may help the state avoid education budget cuts, but the budget is still up in the air.

The school is busy preparing for MSAs, particularly Mrs. Pappano. These tests will be completed in the next few weeks.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

The minutes from the February meeting were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made, seconded and carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

PTA Treasurer, Andrea Portes, reported little activity during the past month. We did receive income from Boxtops of \$376.50 and Safeway receipts of \$69.54. She anticipates that we are still doing well in meeting our budgeted goals.

MCCPTA DELEGATE REPORT:

Jeff Alexander was unable to attend and report on the February Delegates meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FEBRUARY EVENTS:

Two CSES students received County awards for excellence in the **Reflections** competition: Max Jordan and Eric Jong. Thanks to **Debra Bernal** for organizing that program.

Differences Awareness Chair, Lisa Kerness, reported on a very enjoyable and informative teacher talk/workshop held this past month during the lunch period. Lisa hopes to acquire a few of the books referenced by the speaker for our staff's use. Lisa would like to have the speaker back this year to work with the teachers again.

This year's **Valentine's Lunch** was a huge success, with close to 300 parents joining their children for lunch. Thank you to **Lisa Cohen** for organizing this fun event.

This month's **community night**, held at the Silver Dinner, was also a huge success, making \$705.87 for the school. The kids loved seeing their teachers serving their food. Thank you so much for all the staff members who generously gave their time to attend, and to **Lynn Jordan** for making it happen.

MARCH EVENTS:

The CSES bi-annual **International Fair** took place on March 1. The performance went very smoothly, and the classroom exhibits were fun and informative. Many liked the fact that the exhibits were spread out this year. Mr. Funkhouser wanted to thank the many willing volunteers for their help in getting the

classrooms back to their original condition after the event. It worked out well that we had the snow day on Monday, which gave him a bit more time to finish up. Big thank yous to **Debra Parker, Mila Clifton, and April Kaplan** for their hard work in organizing the day.

The **Science Expo** will be held on March 24. **Chairman Ken Cho** reported that over 100 projects and 150 scientists have registered for this year's event thus far, which is similar to last year. **Ken, Pete Thomson and Jim Schleckser** visited all the classes to promote participation in the Science Expo. He plans to have the exhibit boards for sale after school during the last two weeks prior to the Expo. There was some discussion as to selling the boards through the classrooms, but it was decided this was too much administration for the teachers. Ken will send out a listserv soliciting volunteers to sell the boards after school. He has ten to fifteen "reviewers/judges" lined up thus far, and will need ten to fifteen more. He doesn't anticipate a problem locating reviewers as he had more than he needed volunteer last year.

CSES parent, **Beverly Sivaslian**, will provide the science demonstrations in the APR room again this year. After some discussion, it was decided that continual hands on science activities will not be provided throughout the duration of the Science Expo as has been done in the past. In the past, these activities have created pandemonium, as well as requiring many volunteers to staff. Another concern is that these activities detract from the individual students' displays. The PTA appreciates Beverly being willing to provide the Hands On activities in addition to her wonderful demonstrations, but we will see how it goes without the activities this year. The evening will begin with setup and pizza available from 6:00 to 6:45 pm; "Opening Ceremonies" and science demonstration at 6:45 pm, and evaluations beginning at 7 pm.

FUTURE CONSIDERATION:

Presently, our PTA provides childcare for parents bringing children 4 years old and up during PTA meetings. **Carla Meister** has been the childcare coordinator this year and reported that we have no children this year, although we have had middle schoolers present to watch the children. The question discussed was whether to continue to provide this service if it does not appear to be needed. New insurance requirements mandate that unless there are two childcare providers both over eighteen years of age, the children must remain in the same room as the PTA meeting. Julie Oldach suggested that a RSVP link could be added to the PTA's Listserv announcement of PTA meetings wherein parents could request a sitter if needed. The issue will remain in consideration for next year.

ELECTION OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

President-Elect Pete Thomson presented the following names for approval as this year's Nominating Committee: Debra Bernal, April Kaplan, Lynn Jordan, Lalitha Yedavalli, and Pete Thomson. A motion was made to accept this committee as presented. The motion was seconded, and the vote was unanimous. This committee will work over the coming months to ensure that all officer and chair positions are filled for the coming school year.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING:

CSES is excited to host a Board of Education (BOE) meeting in the CSES APR on April 23, from 7:30 to 9:00 pm. Our Cluster representative has asked that we have two PTA representatives from each school ready to speak. Last month, our school decided that our two topics for discussion would be GT labeling and over testing. We anticipate that two to three representatives from the BOE will be in attendance. Laurie Halverson questioned why the whole BOE would not be here as our elected officials.

We want to provide an organized, informative and pleasant evening for all, so we will discuss refreshments at our next meeting. Mr. Barnett suggested that we have simple nameplates for the BOE seats for identification.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT:

Remember that April's regular PTA meeting will actually be held on March 31, due to Spring Break. Please make a note of it.

Respectfully submitted by Laurie Gira, Recording Secretary.

April 2009						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Spring Break Apr. 6-13	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Artist in Residence begins	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 CSES cluster meeting w/ the MCPS Board of Ed 7:30pm	24	25
26 CSES Spring Spruce Up	27	28	29	30		