



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, January 6, 2009 (cancelled)
- Tuesday, February 3, 2009
- Tuesday, March 3, 2009
- Tuesday, March 31, 2009
- Tuesday, May 5, 2009
- Tuesday, June 2, 2009

Thank You Girl Scout Troop 4225

On behalf of the PTA, the Cold Spring Community and Cold Spring Elementary School, we would like to extend a hearty thank you to Girl Scout Troop 4225. Troop 4225 did an outstanding job in preparing posters for the November PTA sponsored blood drive. Specifically, the PTA would like to thank:

Kate Lusk (3)
Dorothy Oldach (3)
Emma Thoms (3)
Meredith White (3)
Cori Alexander (4)

Abby McCann (4)
Cathy Neves (4)
Julianna Solomon (4)
Yasmine Talaminei (4)

The PTA would also like to thank Robyn Alexander (Cori's mom) who organized the poster event.

President's Message
By Julie Oldach

Dear Cold Spring friends and families:

I hope that you all had a relaxing and restful Thanksgiving. Holiday time will soon be upon us, and I know that many of you are looking forward to spending some additional time with family and friends.

We have many exciting activities to look forward to that are coming up soon. On December 4th, participants in the 2008 Reflections program will be honored at a breakfast before school. We are very proud of those who entered this year's competition, which had the theme of "WOW!" Also in December, families have the opportunity to participate in our Helping Hands Holiday Children program which benefits needy children in our area. This is a wonderful opportunity to teach our children what the holiday season is really all about.

Later, in January, don't forget to mark your calendars for our Readathon for grades 3-5. This event will take place in the afternoon after school – look in backpacks for further details to come.

Now is also the time to start thinking about a big event coming in the spring – our International Fair, which will take place Sunday, March 1, 2009. Planning meetings are underway. Many families have already signed up to be presenters – please see Deborah Parker's article in this issue for further details. We would like to have as many countries represented as possible – and you don't have to have any experience to participate!

I would like to take a moment to give a special thanks to Lisa Rispler, who spearheaded our first ever Cold Spring/Cabin John blood drive held at Cold Spring on November 15th. Thanks to Lisa and all those who helped put this event together, and thanks to all those Cold Spring staff members and families who participated. What a great example this gives to our children during this season of giving.

Thanks to all of you who have donated your time and resources to the PTA, as well as other worthy causes throughout the year. I hope you all enjoy this holiday season.

Sincerely,

Julie Oldach

Dance Club Registration

Dance Club registration forms for grades K, 1 and 2 are now available in the office kiosk and on the Cold Spring website.

The young dancers will learn several multicultural folk dances, and will perform at the International Performance on Sunday, March 1, 2009 for the community.

Space is limited so register early. Contact Rebecca Cornelius at (301) 943-0310 with any questions.

Hands on Science

Parents, Classroom Teachers and Community Leaders: Come join the Hands on Science team and encourage the world of discovery for our children.

Hands on Science activities are designed to help children become aware of how the world works. Hands on Science, a nonprofit science enrichment program sponsored by Montgomery County PTA-Educational Programs, Inc., are looking for adult leaders to teach after school classes. Each class is one hour a week for 8 weeks, generally beginning between 3:00 and 3:30 p.m.

The Hands on Science program provides curriculum, materials and training for each session. Beginning stipend is \$20 per hour or you can volunteer your time.

If you want to be a partner in opening young adult minds to the fun of science exploration, please call Hands on Science at (301) 649-0599 or email at bgrinerhos@aol.com. The winter session begins January 12, 2009.

Annual Readathon

The PTA will once again sponsor the annual Readathon on Friday, January 23rd. All grades will participate from 1:00 to 3:00 pm.

The extended Readathon, from 3:00 to 5:30 pm., is open to students in grades 3 through 5, and permission slips will be made available in the weekly newsletter.

The Readathon will conclude at 5:30 p.m. with pizza and beverage. Parents must pick up their children by 6:00 pm. Don't forget your comfy pillow and a good book!

Yearbook

Keep an eye out for forms coming home in backpacks soon. It's just about time to order 2009 yearbooks.

BIG change this year: All orders will be done online. Also, the yearbook needs photos from YOU in order to fully capture the year. We desperately need:

- 2008 End of Year Picnic
- 4th Grade Ice Cream Social
- Back to School Picnic
- Final Frontiers/Geography Bee
- Homeless Walk
- Spirit Days
- Book-A-Breakfast

As always, please take photos any time you are volunteering in the school and pass them along to Evva Starr at evvakay@comcast.net or even better, burn them to a CD and leave it for Evva in the yearbook mailbox in the main office.

International Fair

The International Fair will be hosted on March 1, 2009. This is a great program which exposes children to other cultures in an afternoon filled with fun. Each represented country will get its own table to display books, music, posters, movies, food, art, currency, maps, and hands-on activities such as games. So far we have volunteers to host the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Peru, Ireland, Lithuania, United Kingdom, Norway, China, Taiwan, India, and Israel. We will also have a booth covering American Sign Language and Deaf Culture in the US.

We are currently looking for volunteers to host other countries. You do not need to be from the country that you would like to host.

Please email Mila Clifton at milita123@yahoo.com or Deborah Parker at debbie_parker72@hotmail.com if you would like to host a country or you have any questions.

The program will also include performances by the Cold Spring Dance Clubs and individual talents will be showcased with the countries scattered throughout the school. If your child would like to perform that day please contact April Kaplan at aprilkaplan@hotmail.com.

Cabin John Middle School (CJMS) Information

Cabin John modernization is on schedule with the middle school moving to the Tilden holding school for the school year 2009 -2010. Due to elementary school boundary changes for the schools that feed into CJMS and the resulting increase in students to CJMS, portables may be necessary at the holding school. CJMS teachers have requested that school end a day earlier in June to allow time for packing classrooms. Parents will be notified when a decision is made.

In February 2009, CJMS will schedule a fifth grade parent meeting at Cold Spring ES to discuss the transition to sixth grade, dates for sixth grade orientation, and the Outdoor Education 3-day, 2-night field trip. For Cold Spring parents interested in learning more about the outdoor education field trip, CJMS will hold an informational meeting on Tuesday, January 20, 2009, at 7 pm, for current sixth grade parents. All parents are welcome to attend.

A booklet about CJMS advisory opportunities is available in the Cold Spring school office. The booklet provides a list of opportunities for Cabin John students to participate in during the Monday, 23-minute advisory period.

A handout from the MCPS Online Services Information for CJMS students is available in the Cold Spring school office. Available on the MCPS web page is Getting Set: A Guide for Middle School Students and Their Parents. This is a useful document for the transition to middle school.

Contact information for CJMS

CJMS
Office: (301) 469-1150
Guidance: (301) 469-1160
www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/cabinjohnms

Cold Spring PTA Middle School Liaison
Jane Coburn
Home: (301) 294-9440
[jacoburn@fdic.gov](mailto:jcoburn@fdic.gov)

Wootton High School Center for the Arts

Presents

GREASE

Thursday, December 4th, Friday, December 5th and Saturday, December 6th at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday Matinee on December 7th at 2:00 p.m.

Wootton High School Center for the Arts is excited to present Jim Jacobs' and Warren Casey's musical hit, GREASE, one of the longest running Broadway musicals in history! It's 1959 in Chicago and Rydell High School is filled with rebellious, thrill-loving students. Through these characters, the show tackles social issues such as love, friendship and teenage rebellion during a time of innocence in America's history. It combines a classic 1950's rock-and-roll musical score with energetic dancing and humorous characters. You may have seen the movie, or rooted for your favorites on "Grease: You're the One That I Want," but nothing compares to a live performance delivered by the top-notch talent of Wootton Theatre!

Co-directed by Ms. Carla Ingram and Mr. Adam Graham, Wootton's production features the talents of Jonathan Helwig as Danny, Lauren Fagan as Sandy, Rachel Lipman as Rizzo, Bryan Pike as Kenickie, Stephanie Helwig as Frenchy, Aaron Gage as Doody, Jordan Smilan-Goldstein as Marty, Jack Stonesifer as Sonny, Jenay McNeil as Jan, Alex Garretson as Roger, Matthew Popkin as Eugene, Lynda Cholvibul as Patty, Mattia D'Affuso as Teen Angel, Taylor Bardwell as Cha Cha, Jonathan Loewy as Johnny Casino, Rose Weinschenk as Mrs. Lynch and Spencer Wight as Vince Fontaine. An additional 23 talented students round out the cast. Choreography direction is provided by Mr. Derrick Spear. Under the musical direction of Ms. Carla Ingram, Wootton musicians will provide first-class live accompaniment.

Show times are: Thursday, December 4th, Friday, December 5th and Saturday, December 6th at 7:30 pm; Sunday, December 7th at 2:00 pm. Reserved tickets \$12; general admission \$8. Tickets can be purchased at the Wootton Box Office Monday, December 1st through Wednesday, December 3rd from 3-6 pm, and two hours before show times on performance days.

Ticket forms are available online at:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/woottonhs/academics/art/GreaseOrder.pdf>

Tickets may also be purchased online at <http://www.fieldhouse.com/woottdrama>

For more information, please call 301-279-8581. Wootton High School is located at 2100 Wootton Parkway, Rockville, MD 20850.

Minutes of the Cold Spring Elementary School PTA Meeting
November 5, 2008

CALL TO ORDER:

Julie Oldach called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

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, Christina Kyong, MCCPTA Delegate, Denise Schleckser, Corresponding Secretary and Laurie Gira, Recording Secretary Also in attendance were: Mr. Barnett, Christine Little, Media Specialist, Laurie Halverson, Carla Meister, and Ralph Nelson.

WELCOME and Introduction of all present.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT:

Mr. Barnett reported that the school will be obtaining a Promethian Board for the Media Center. The two to three year plan is to have a training model which Christine Little, our Media Specialist, will use to work with the teachers and their classes in preparation for further technological modernization. He would like to look at some fundraisers to help increase our school's technology over the next couple of years. When CSES gets its gym, we will receive startup funds which can also be used in this effort.

Ms. Little reported that she has been working on updating and revamping the school's website. She would like feedback from parents. You may email her using the link found on the bottom of the webpage. In addition, she plans to conduct a more anonymous type survey to obtain input.

Mr. Barnett reported that Richard Montgomery High School has been booked for the CSES Fifth Grade graduation ceremony for Monday, June 15, 2009. Tuesday, June 16 was also booked in the event an excess of snow days extends the school year.

Mr. Barnett has offered to pay for the Ice Cream party given to the class who brings in the most blood donors at the school's blood drive November 15.

No decision has been made regarding the proposed chess club.

All Principals and PTA Presidents have been invited to attend an important Operating Budget meeting in December. Mr. Barnett stressed that we need to be poised to have parent turnout at future meetings to address the proposed reductions in budget. We may need to write a position paper or have testimony at the meeting in January to address these budget cuts.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

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

TREASURER'S REPORT:

PTA Treasurer, Andrea Portes, reported that we have received some more donations which bring us to a little less than \$3000 under what we had budgeted to receive from donations this year. This is an improvement from last month's report that we were \$5000 under budget. We do not know Book Fair revenue yet as we

are awaiting the invoice from the book company, but the Teacher Raffle brought in over \$2000 (it was budgeted for \$1300) and the Bake Sale shattered all records, bringing in \$665 (budgeted at \$300).

We have been very fortunate to have a generous CSES parent, Andy Mitchell, volunteer his time and expertise for a number of years in helping us with our yearly audit, tax returns, and 990s. His youngest daughter will be graduating from CSES this year, so we need to be looking for someone who could take this important volunteer position over. It would be preferable to find someone soon to aid in a smooth transition. We will advertise the need in the Cougar Courier newsletter.

MCCPTA DELEGATE REPORT:

MCCPTA Delegate, Christina Kyong, reported that much of the recent MCCPTA meeting was spent debating the wording of the Resolution on FY 2010 Operating Budget Priorities being developed for submission for the Board and County's consideration. The five priorities set forth include:

- Current or improved teacher/student ratios (Amended from Appropriate teacher/student ratios)
- Safe, secure, well-maintained school facilities
- Sensible, developmentally appropriate, fully supported curriculum implementation (Amended from rollout)
- School-cased community outreach
- Tailored support especially for those who are performing below grade level and enrichment programs for all students (Amended from Remediation and support for all students who need it)

Laurie Halverson (who is a CSES parent) proposed that all schools have a Building Maintenance Plan. This proposal was approved at the MCCPTA meeting.

Regarding next year's school calendar, the Board of Education's agenda for its November 11 meeting includes a discussion of next year's calendar. The county schools most likely will start on Monday a full week before Labor Day despite MCCPTA recommendations of starting on that Tuesday. They may also be placing a Professional Day the Tuesday after Easter Monday.

The next MCCPTA meeting will include a presentation from Jerry Weast and members of the Police Department to talk about Internet Safety and Cyberbullying. It is on November 25, 2008 from 6:30 to 7:30 pm at the Carver Building. Interested persons may visit the website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/cybersafety/. The Parent Academy is also offering a free session for parents at Parkland Middle School on Thursday, Dec. 4 from 7 to 8:30 pm.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

BOOK-A-BREAKFAST: Tomorrow is our first event for K through 2nd grade. Anamika Krishna Rogers has approximately 60 students signed up. Next week will be the third through fifth grade event.

BAKE SALE: Many thanks to Terri de Raet for a record setting Bake Sale on Election Day.

BLOOD DRIVE: Lisa Rispler has been working hard organizing the November 15 Blood Drive. She manned a table soliciting donors at the school on Election Day. At this point, she is close to the goal of 40 donors required for the event. Mr. Barnett will publicize the event in the Principal's Newsletter, as well as the morning announcements. The Girl Scouts made posters publicizing the event as well. The class with the most donors will receive an ice cream party, for which Mr. Barnett has offered to pay.

CULTURAL ARTS ASSEMBLY: The first cultural arts assembly of the year will take place on November 17. The Unified Jazz Ensemble will perform two shows featuring this uniquely American music form. Parents are welcome.

COMMUNITY NIGHT: Cold Spring will hold a community night at the Cabin John California Tortilla on Tuesday, November 25. Cold Spring will receive 20% of profits if they mention "Cold Spring."

COUGARS ON THE GO: Theresa Zolet, Cougar On the Go Chair, submitted a request that the budget for the committee be increased by \$100 (the amount it was cut from last year) as she has found that participation increases when a healthy snack is offered. The request was discussed and unanimously approved.

SALLY FOSTER ONLINE: The November Cougar Courier newsletter will publicize available online ordering through Sally Foster.

WOOTON CLUSTER REPORT: PTA President, Julie Oldach, and Vice President, Susan Lusk, attended the recent Wootton Cluster Meeting. An article distributed at the meeting will be featured in our newsletter wherein the Cluster Coordinator explains MCCPTA, its organization and operation. Each school had an opportunity to discuss their schools trials and successes. It is of note that Cabin John Middle School remarked that the sixth graders coming to them are very well prepared, so hats off to our teachers for work well done!

Regarding the Operating Budget concerns, our Wootton Cluster will be giving testimony to the County Council in April and expects budget reductions. We are being asked to consider whether we would prefer a temporary increase in class size rather than having programs cut. The concern is that eliminated programs are difficult to reestablish once cut. Our input is being requested on this issue at the December 17 meeting, so our PTA will discuss it at our early December meeting.

The Board of Education will be meeting with the Wootton Cluster in the Cold Spring Elementary School APR on April 23 at 7:30 pm. They selected our school because it is one of few schools remaining to receive a gymnasium. We are asked to consider issues to raise at that meeting. Also, we would like a good turnout from our community at this important meeting.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE: Plans are underway for the Artist In Residence to come to CSES to work with our third graders from April 14 through May 4. The artist will meet 6 times with each class and will work with them in their classrooms. They will produce a wall mounted relief sculpture made out of masonite which will be placed on the Media Center wall. The theme of the artwork will be "Tools of Learning." There will be a dedication ceremony upon its completion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Barnett asked that parents park on the street when coming to school for teacher conferences or to chaperone field trips before and during school, so that there are enough spaces for the teachers. Julie Oldach will send out a listserv as conferences begin soon.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting ended at approximately 8:10 pm (a new record).

Respectfully submitted by Laurie Gira, Recording Secretary

BASIC BUDGET INFORMATION FOR PTA'S AND PARENTS

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is a county-wide school district; this is unlike the situation in many other States where each town or village has its own school system. The MCPS budget is divided into Operating and Capital budgets. The Capital Budget (sometimes referred to as "CIP") covers the buildings, grounds and facilities; this is for construction, renewal and rehabilitation of schools. The Operating Budget covers day-to-day operations. Close to 90% of the Operating Budget goes to salaries and benefits for staff, since all capital expenditures are paid out of the Capital Budget, and the product/service provided by MCPS is labor intensive: teaching students, and providing support services associated with teaching, including feeding and transporting students, protecting the health and safety of students and overseeing those services. Salaries and benefits are determined by collective bargaining and other negotiations between MCPS and employee unions and associations.

MCPS is primarily funded out of the County budget which is also divided into Operating and Capital budgets. The County derives revenue from a number of sources: 30%--property taxes, 27%--income taxes, 19%--other local taxes and fees, and 18%--State and Federal governments, 6% -other. The County is the source of about 80% of the MCPS Operating Budget; other sources are approximately: State aid and grants-14%, Federal grants-3%, other-3%. Historically, spending on MCPS has been about 48% of the County Operating Budget. (Education and public safety have long been overwhelmingly the responsibility of local governments).

Growth in the MCPS budget is constrained by the County Charter's Spending Affordability Guidelines which limit annual percentage increases in the County's Operating Budgets. To exceed the SAG level of funding (now) requires a unanimous vote of the County Council. On the other hand, Montgomery County is required by the State to fund schools at "maintenance of effort" level, but that is merely fixed dollars per student. It does not account for relatively higher growth in populations of higher cost per pupil students, unfunded State and Federal mandates and increased expenditures connected with implementation of new technology, new curriculums and teacher training. Nor does it account for effects of increases in salaries and benefits. MCPS has been one of the fastest growing school systems in the Country over the last two decades. We also have a far more diverse school population than in the past; and this has led to substantial increases in costs.

Our County now has the State's highest percentage of students for whom English is a second language; and the percentage of students receiving free meals and reduced cost meals is much higher than it once was. Also, important programs such as those dealing with special needs students, gifted and talented students and additional attention for students and student populations who are in jeopardy of not passing the HSAs or not meeting No Child Left Behind annual yearly progress have comparatively high per pupil costs. And, as more is demanded of our teachers, and as other districts have aggressively recruited new teachers, teacher compensation has increased. There are also substantially increased costs just from maintenance and logistical problems associated with putting so many students into buildings that are 20-40 years old. As with all enterprises, health benefits costs and fuel costs have increased dramatically. All of this has contributed to substantial growth in the Operating Budget.

The Budget process typically is as follows: the Superintendent offers a proposal in the Fall, the Board of Education hears testimony from the public in January and votes on a proposed budget in March, the County Executive submits an overall Operating Budget request in March, and the County Council holds hearings in April and adopts a final budget in May. Our Cluster and MCCPTA testify before the Board of Education and County Council.

December 2008

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2 PTA General Meeting 7:15 pm	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 (Hanukkah Begins)
22	23	24 No School	25 No School (Christmas)	26 No School (Kwanzaa Begins)	27	28
29 No School	30 No School	31 No School				

January 2008

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1 No School (New Years Day)	2 No School	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 Readathon 1:00- 5:30 pm	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	