



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 3, 2009
- Tuesday, March 31, 2009
- Tuesday, May 5, 2009
- Tuesday, June 2, 2009

Congratulations to “Reflections” Program Winners!

The results of the county-wide judging for the PTA’s REFLECTIONS cultural arts program are in, and the following two Cold Spring Elementary School students have received Awards of Excellence, the highest honor at the county level:

Eric Rong received an Award of Excellence in the musical composition category.

Max Jordan received an Award of Excellence in the film production category.

Both Eric and Max will have their work forwarded to the state level for further judging.
Congratulations to Eric and Max!

President's Message
By Julie Oldach

Dear Cold Spring Friends and Families:

This past month has been a roller coaster as far as the weather has been concerned. First we had snow, and then it seemed as if Spring was finally here! I would like to think that winter was over – it will be interesting to see if March comes in like a lamb or a lion!

What a busy February we had! Our month started off with announcing the winners of our Geography Week contest. Please see this issue for a list of winners. Thanks to all those children who participated. Next, we held a very successful fundraiser at the Silver Diner. Cold Spring staff waited on tables and welcomed many of our CS family and friends for a tasty night of fun. Many thanks to the many Cold Spring staff members who participated, and those parents who helped organize this event. What a fun way to spend a Monday night. The Cold Spring PTA received a check for \$705.87 as a result – thanks again to all those who participated!

I would also like to thank all the volunteers and families who worked hard to make the Cold Spring International fair a huge success. Many hours were spent organizing this wonderful event, and I'd also like to thank the staff for housing this event in their classrooms. The performances by our students and the exhibits of our families and friends were truly outstanding. An event like the International Fair is a cooperative one, one in which our entire community must work together in order to make things run smoothly. Thanks to all of you who helped make this event a success.

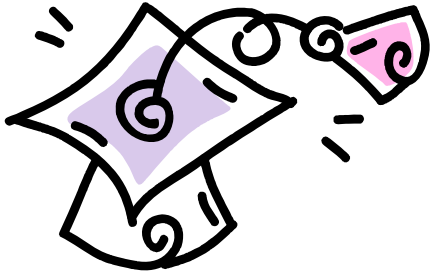
This month, our children can look forward to Book a Breakfast on March 12th. And to round off the month, we will host our annual Science Expo March 24th. This outstanding event is open to all grade levels. Come see our fantastic Cold Spring scientists! This is truly an event not to be missed.

As the weather warms up, it is not too early to think about next fall. The Nominating Committee will soon be contacting parents to see if they would like to continue on next year, or perhaps take on a new challenge! Please consider lending a hand to the PTA for the benefit of all of our children's future.

Sincerely,

Julie Oldach

End of Year Picture Request



Dear Fifth Grade Parents -

The planning of 5th Grade End of Year Activities is under way – including the production of the 5th Grade DVD. This DVD will chronicle our children's last six years at Cold Spring and include photos and videos from school events and classroom activities from Kindergarten through 5th Grade. This DVD will be shown at graduation and every student will receive a copy.

Traditionally, the DVD has also included two pictures of each 5th grader, one baby photo and one current candid picture from this year. The DVD/Memory Book committee needs to start collecting these pictures now in order to have

the DVD completed by the end of the school year. The pictures can be either hard copies (actual photographs) or digital (sent via email or burned on to disc). Hard copies and discs should be placed in an envelope with your child's name and teacher and placed in the 5th Grade EOY (End of Year) box in the school office. If you would like your pictures returned, please indicate this on the envelope. Digital copies should be sent to Sheila Menconi at smenconi@comcast.net. Please make sure to include your child's name and teacher in the email.

In order to start producing the DVD, all baby and current photos need to be submitted by Friday, March 13th. We don't want any student left out!

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Cohen at lisa@mkitchen.com or 301-340-0123 or Sheila Menconi 301-315-9342.

Thank you!
Lisa Cohen & Sheila Menconi
5th Grade DVD and Memory Book Committee

Artist-in-Residence Program begins Tuesday, April 14th

All 3rd graders will participate in Cold Spring's annual Artist-in-Residence program. This is a wonderful opportunity for our students to work in-depth with accomplished Maryland artist Tara Hall. This year's theme is "Tools of Learning" and will be a large masonite tree embellished with leaves of clay depicting various objects from a student's environment. The piece will be permanently installed in the media center.

Volunteers are needed to assist in the classroom over the course of the 2 ½ week program.

More details and volunteer sign-up forms will be sent home in March.

URGENT REQUEST FOR HELP***

**If there is a parent of a 3rd grader who has a home workshop and can help us to pre-cut shapes from templates, please contact me as soon as possible.

Thanks, Mary Meyer
Artist-in-Residence Chairperson
mcmhome@comcast.net

Geography Week Contest Winners Announced

I would like to extend my thanks to all those students who participated in this year's Geography Week contest, which involved making a postcard under the theme "Mapping the Americas." Each grade was given a particular aspect of the Americas to focus their efforts: K – United States; 1 – individual states; 2 – Canada; 3 – Mexico; 4 – Central America; 5- South America.

Two winners from each grade were selected to win a \$10 Barnes & Noble gift card. And without further ado, here they are:

K	Riley Jordan	Achintya Yedavalli
1	Yash Shahi	Keshav Sharma
2	Zoe Weiss	Manasi Yedavalli
3	Max Jordan	Amar Sharma
4	Micaela Pacheco	Eric Rong
5	Cole Abod	Zoe Wang

Congratulations to all of you!!

And finally, a big thank you to the members of the Evaluation Team for their time in judging our entries!

Bill Oldach



Cold Spring Courier Special Report
When in doubt, write a “thank you” note
By Ralph Nelson



For four years now, I’ve tried to expose our amazing staff at Cold Spring in this newsletter for what they are – amazing educators.

“Why?” you ask.

Because publicly recognizing our staff motivates them to continue inspiring our kids and writing has allowed me to give you a glimpse of just how cool the folks are that are helping us raise our children – inside and supporting the classroom.

“Your point?” you ask.

Because I need your help continuing to publicly recognizing them now that Mandy’s and my career at Cold Spring is coming to an end.

“Aren’t they paid to teach our kids?” you ask.

Yes they are paid to **teach**. But they are not paid to **inspire** our kids. The one common theme throughout all of my interviews has been our Cold Spring staff’s innate desire to make a difference in our kid’s lives. In order to want to inspire our kids – it takes passion. Passion is good.

“I can’t inspire our teachers,” you say.

Yes you can. And it doesn’t take much effort. Our county has a Professional Growth System for our teachers and support staff that even has categories for you. All you have to do is jot a note down when you see one of our school staff:

- “Performing and act of heroism
- Acting as a mentor or peer coach
- Showing outstanding performance
- Developing better procedures for a task
- Completing unique assignments, or
- Developing innovative or creative ideas.”

Then just to send it in a short email or hand written note to either Mr. Barnett or Mrs. Coates.

That’s it. You will see the motivational ripples that follow immediately. If it helps, think of your short note as an emotional deposit in the school staff’s good will bank account.

“There can’t be that many good works going unrecognized each year,” you say.

Think about it. We have 184 school days, 425 students, and 35 school staff – half of the staff being teachers. If only 1% of our student’s school interactions are inspirational, that’s still a big number. If each kid conservatively interacts with only 5 of our staff daily, that’s $5 \times 184 \times 1\% = 9$ noteworthy inspirations per student per year. Multiply it by 425 kids and that’s almost 4,000 little pieces of paper that should be sitting in our principal’s inboxes by the end of the year. Yes Green Team members, that’s a lot of paper.

“So we generate a lot of paper, so what,” you say.

By jotting down our staff’s good works, you not only continue to motivate our staff to be passionate about inspiring our children, but you help them with their careers. In Section 2: Additional Comments of our staff’s evaluations, it specifically asks to note any notes or letters of recommendation. The county wants to know when our staff at Cold Spring is inspiring! Without lots of input, their Section 2 will not be as strong. Weak evaluations are bad for teachers. Especially in a down economy.

So if you want to help keep our school as arguably the best elementary school in the country, while motivating our staff to continue to inspire our kids, give them the greatest gift of all – a prosperous teaching career.

Now stop reading and start writing. You’ll see emotional dividends the rest of your time at Cold Spring. Mandy and I have for the last 7 years.

5th Grade End of Year Activities Winter Update 2009

The EOYA Committee recently met and has decided that based on the expenses for all of the graduation activities, the contribution amount that will cover these costs is \$45 per student. Listed below are the activities covered by your student's contribution. **Please see the attached form to be turned in by all 5th graders.**

June 10th Pool Party– Popsicles and sodas

Memory Book – printed and bound for every 5th grader

T-Shirt – designed with this year's theme for every 5th grader to wear at graduation

Graduation Ceremony – invitations/programs, decorations

DVD – produced and shown during graduation; a copy for each student included with your contribution

Class Gift – A lasting gift to the school in our class's name

Teacher Gifts – 8 gifts total: each fifth grade teacher, plus Ms. Minier (Chorus), Ms. Borsum (Instrumental Music) and Mr. Barnett

Thank you to all the parents who volunteered in the fall to help with a committee. We have your names and will contact you! If you still want to help, it is not too late. Contact one of the EOY chairpersons:

Name	Phone	Email	Committee
Beth Higgins	301-294-3344	HigginsB@erols.com	Graduation
Christy Morakis	301-610-6334	cdmorakis@comcast.net	Graduation
Sheila Menconi	301-315-9342	smenconi@comcast.net	DVD & Memory book
Lisa Cohen	301-340-0123	lisa@mkitchen.com	DVD & Memory book
Alisa Mays	301-838-7629	a_mays@comcast.net	class & teacher gifts
Audrey Weissberg	301-838-4321	jorsam23@yahoo.com	class & teacher gifts
Lisa Tilley	301-762-5807	lisadianetilley@worldnet.att.net	pool party
Mary Meyer	301-838-9691	mcmhome@comcast.net	T-shirts
David Weiss	301-294-9440	eyeski@rosslyneye.com	Community Service

Or contact Denise Schleckser at 301-765-0249 or dschleckser@verizon.net.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

Community Service Car Wash and Bake Sale: Saturday, May 2 (rain date May 3), 10 am – 2 pm

Fifth Grade Pool Party at Rockville Municipal Pool: Wednesday, June 10, 10 am- 2:15 pm

Parent drivers will be needed!

Fifth Grade Graduation at Richard Montgomery HS: Monday, June 15, 7:00 pm

**5th Grade End of Year Activities 2009
Contribution/T-shirt Form**

We are requesting a contribution amount of \$45 per student to fund this year's End of Year Activities. As indicated on the previous page, this amount will help cover costs for all the activities.

All 5th graders should fill out this form and turn it in to their teacher **by March 13, 2009**. Checks can be made payable to **Denise Schleckser: EOYA**. If you have any questions, please contact Denise at 301-765-0249 or dschleckser@verizon.net.

T-Shirt Order Form

All Students: Please write your name the way you would like it to appear on your Class of 2009 T-shirt. The Class of 2009 T-shirt will be designed with the selected theme and a list of names from this year's graduating class. This T-shirt is included in the \$45 contribution.

First and last name (print clearly) _____
Your Teacher's Name _____

Circle desired t-shirt size:

Youth L (14-16) Adult S Adult M Adult L

Please be aware that these t-shirts are worn on graduation night over regular clothes, so you may want to order up a size.

Enclosed is my \$45 contribution to cover the cost of my child's participation in the 5th grade activities.

Please return this form and your check to the teacher by March 13, 2009 in an envelope marked "EOYA". Thank you.

Minutes of the Cold Spring Elementary School PTA Meeting
Date: February 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, Judi Casey, Monica and Ken Cho, Laurie Halverson, April Kaplan, Lisa Kerness, Deborah Parker, and Evva Starr.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT:

Mr. Barnett reported that Cold Spring Elementary School (CSES) is meeting its mid-year SIP goals and anticipates meeting its year end goals which include raising test scores and executing a Peace Plan for providing a better environment in the cafeteria and restrooms.

Mr. Barnett commends CSES students on their behavior during this past month's Readathon. It had excellent attendance, with 50% of our student population attending. Mr. Barnett reported this was the best Readathon we have ever had, and that he never had to quiet a single child.

CSES is continuing to plan for the purchase of a Promethian Board for the Media Center, as well as possibly one additional unit. The issue is whether it will be able to be installed due to budget cuts.

Mrs. Coates' last day at CSES was yesterday, February 2. She is now Assistant Principal at Diamond Elementary due to an immediate need at that school. We will all miss her greatly and wish her well at her new school. We are not likely to get a replacement Assistant Principal this year because our enrollment is under 400, at 393. Nor are we likely to obtain one next year, as our projected enrollment is 373.

The staff has indicated per a vote that they want a Poster Making Machine. The PTA had allocated \$2500 for the purchase of a machine. The school will pay for the yearly maintenance contract and the supplies. Mr. Barnett is obtaining information about what type machine would best fit our school's needs and the cost of the machine. If the machine costs more than the amount allocated, he will report at our March meeting and we can vote on providing the additional funds. Andrea Portes, PTA Treasurer, indicated that we could probably afford to provide the additional funding if needed.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

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

TREASURER'S REPORT:

PTA Treasurer, Andrea Portes, reported that we are doing quite well in relation to our budget. She anticipates we could be \$6,000 to \$8,000 ahead by year-end. Final numbers are in and we have brought in more income than projected. The Book Fair brought in \$1000 more than we predicted, and proceeds from Community Nights and concessions at our picnic also exceed expectations. Our biggest expenditure this past month was for holiday teacher appreciation.

MCCPTA DELEGATE REPORT:

The January MCCPTA meeting was cancelled due to snow. Jeff Alexander will attend the February meeting and will report back to us at our March meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

JANUARY EVENTS:

The **Cultural Arts** Committee provided a wonderful assembly of South African dance this past month, that was received positively, especially the part wherein staff were invited to participate. Thank you, Sue Fox.

Big thanks to Mary Meyer on a very well run **Readathon** in January. The students were on their best behavior.

FEBRUARY EVENTS:

Geography Week featured a "Mapping America" theme, and a postcard contest was a lot of fun. Winners will receive \$10 gift certificates in the mail. Many thanks go to Bill Oldach, Committee chair, who did a great job.

Lisa Cohen is chairing our annual **Valentine's Day** lunch. She has asked for \$20 for decorations. Julie Oldach reported that Deborah Bernal, Reflections Chair, generously paid for the Reflections breakfast as a donation and has left over funds in the Reflections budget, thus we can easily approve this expenditure for the Valentines' Lunch. A motion was made and seconded. The additional funds were approved.

CSES' next **Community Night** will be February 23 at Silver Diner on Rockville Pike. CSES staff will be working as servers on this fun evening. CSES will receive 20% from all profits made.

MARCH EVENTS:

International Fair will take place on Sunday, March 1 from 2 to 5 pm. Deborah Parker, International Fair Committee member, reported that there are 16 countries being represented at this year's International Fair, with multiple families working on some countries exhibits. The committee will be meeting with building services tomorrow to make decisions on what rooms will be used, etc. so that a map can be made and distributed at the event. Laura Glynn is providing programs gratis.

The event will begin with a talent show in the APR, featuring 60 students in nine performances of dance, singing, and piano which will represent nine to ten countries. After the talent show, the community is

invited to walk around the school visiting the different countries exhibits set up in various rooms throughout the building. International crafts will be available in the APR as well.

Cleanup volunteers are needed for after the event, as we need to get the teachers' rooms back to their original condition before school resumes the following morning. The committee plans to take digital pictures of the rooms before the event to aid in recreating their original form. Mr. Barnett also suggested leaving notes on the teachers' desks thanking them for the use of their rooms and indicating regret for any inconvenience.

Science Expo will be held on March 24. Chairman **Ken Cho** extended a huge thanks to Mrs. Plakas for her help in copying and distributing the Science Fair packets. The Committee has decided to sell display boards as in the past when it was determined that doing so would raise about \$2 per board. Ken will need 5 volunteers to help sell the boards after school a couple of weeks before the Science Expo.

CSES parent, Beverly Sivaslian, has volunteered to run the Hands On Science Program aspect of the Science Expo again this year. She did a great job last year, and we are so excited to have her participation again.

Ken has a few judges lined up for the Expo, and will send out a Listserve email closer to the date of the event soliciting more. Ken also plans to visit the classrooms along with a few other CSES parent volunteers to talk about the Science Expo and encourage participation.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS:

Evva Starr, Yearbook Chair, reported that the Yearbook is mostly done with the exception of a couple of events that have not happened yet. It is 68 pages. CSES students ordered 230 books, which is 60% of the enrollment – a great percentage. Evva recommends switching yearbook companies for next year. She teaches the yearbook class at Wootton High School and uses another company, Josten's, for their yearbook. In working with the software for both companies this year, she and her students have noted a huge difference in its quality and workability. The Lifetouch software is extremely difficult and time consuming to use. If we switch companies, the yearbook price would remain the same. Also, we would be able to go online and order the book. We will continue to use Lifetouch for our individual and class photographs. Mr. Barnett will look into whether our contract with Lifetouch for photography includes an obligation to use them for yearbook, but he doesn't think it does.

Beth Higgins, former Sally Foster chair, has generously offered to run the fundraiser next year if we wanted to return to our original mode of selling Sally Foster. We make much less on the online sales (about \$81 this year thus far, as compared to a couple thousand dollars when we run a traditional fundraiser). Concern was expressed that this is in opposition to the direct donation decision we made two years ago, and that reinstating the original form of the fundraiser may jeopardize donations. It was decided to publicize the online availability of Sally Foster more, go forward with direct donations, and if we are not able to reach our budgeted income via direct donations in the fall, that we turn to a formal Sally Foster fundraiser. In publicizing the online sales, Laurie Halverson suggested using an email that includes a direct link to the Sally Foster website to encourage sales.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING:

CSES is excited to be hosting a Board of Education meeting in the APR on April 23. In preparation for that meeting, our Cluster Coordinator has asked the schools in our cluster to come up with a few priority items for discussion. These should be broad issue items that relate to the cluster schools as a whole, not a concern particular to a single school. The Cluster Coordinator has asked for this input by March 15. A list of sample priorities was distributed and discussed. Many parents present agreed that there is too much emphasis on testing and test preparation. Because reading and math are tested by the MSAs, science and social studies are not being taught enough in the classroom. Also, CSES will get the teachers' concerns and perspective on the testing as a topic of discussion at the meeting. Additionally, a concern that the "Gifted" label is being eliminated was expressed. The concern is that the needs of these students will not be met.

Mr. Barnett indicated that he has asked to increase the Gifted Magnet program at CSES from two to three classes in light of our decreasing enrollment. He has not gotten a response.

PRESENTATION OF AMERICAN RED CROSS PLAQUE:

A plaque from the American Red Cross was presented to Mr. Barnett for the excellent work done on the Blood Drive in November. Many thanks to Lisa Rispler, Debbie Meisegeier, and Beth Sherman who organized this event. We look forward to doing this again in the future.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting ended at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Laurie Gira, Recording Secretary.

March 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 International Fair 2-5 pm	2	3 PTA meeting 7:15 pm	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 Book a Breakfast 8 - 8:45 am	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 Science Expo 6 - 8 pm	25	26	27	28
29	30	31 PTA meeting 7:15 pm				