



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.

Wednesday, November 5, 2008

Tuesday, December 2, 2008

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Tuesday, February 3, 2009

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Tuesday, March 31, 2009

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

Tuesday, June 2, 2009

PTA Directory Correction

The phone number for Rebekah Rossman (Steifel 3rd grade) and Richard Rossman (Testa 2nd Grade) were published incorrectly in the Pink PTA directory. Please change the telephone number from the incorrect listing of (301) 605-7942 to the correct listing of (301) 605-7943.

President's Message by Julie Oldach

As you read this newsletter, you will probably be thinking of the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday as you prepare to enjoy a well-deserved break with family or friends. In this time of Thanksgiving, I would like to thank all of our volunteers who have donated their time to our many October events, such as Bingo Night/Teacher Raffle, Book Fair, our Mini-Homeless walk, Halloween parties and everything in between! In addition, many of our PTA-sponsored enrichment activities and after school programs are in full swing, so October has proved to be quite a busy month. All of these events have successfully begun due to the generosity of many parents. Thank you to all the parents, teachers, and staff who made this possible.

If you have the chance, please stop by our Recess Volunteer board up the hall from the main office. If you can spare the time, our lunch aides could use your help, whether in the cafeteria or on the playground. Our lunch period extends from 12:00 noon until 1:00pm every day. This is a great way to help out and make your child's face light up at the same time! This very same bulletin board is also housing our International Fair country sign-up sheet. Several families have signed up so far – our fair will be March 1st and is a very popular event. Please sign up for a country of your choice, or join with another family and make it a group effort!

Our PTA will be busy again this month, with our General Election Bake Sale. Please be sure to stop by the table full of delicious treats and support our PTA on Election Day. We will also enjoy two Book a Breakfasts this month – November 6th will be K – 2, and November 13th will be Grades 3 – 5. Permission slips will be sent home with students. I hope that you all have a wonderful month and I thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,
Julie Oldach

Book Fair a Success

The annual Book Fair, held October 10-16, was once again a major success! A total of \$10,210.49 in books was sold this year. The PTA keeps approximately 25 percent of the proceeds - this is a terrific fundraiser.

In addition, the PTA was able to donate books to the Word of the Week program and to the Media Center. The Book Fair would not have been successful without the hard work of the Committee, and the numerous parent volunteers who staffed the fair. Thanks to everyone!

Community Night Fundraiser

On Tuesday night, November 25th, Cold Spring Elementary PTA will host a Community Night Fundraiser at California Tortilla located in the Cabin John Mall. The PTA will receive 20 percent of the proceeds from any order placed by Cold Spring friends and family on that night, between 5:00 and 9:00 pm. You MUST indicate you are with Cold Spring when you place your order, however, or we won't get the credit. This Community Night takes place just two days before Thanksgiving - a perfect time to take the night off from cooking, hang out with some friends, and have some fabulous and fun Mexican food. Yee Haw!

Helping Hands Holiday Children

In conjunction with the Salvation Army, Cold Spring will once again participate in the Helping Hands Holiday Children program. The program provides assistance to needy children in Montgomery County. Each class is assigned a child with a wish list for the upcoming holidays. If possible, please include your child in the gift giving experience by sending in an item.

Place the unwrapped gifts in the large collection bag in your child's classroom. The Helping Hands Committee will collect the bags on Thursday, December 11 to be delivered to the Salvation Army. If you have any questions please contact Kasia Coulter at mandkcoulter@comcast.net or Terri de Raet at tderaet@comcast.net.

Cold Spring Blood Drive

There will be a Blood Drive at the Cold Spring Elementary School on Saturday, November 15 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Anyone at least 17 years old (16 with written parental consent), weighing at least 110 pounds, and in good health is eligible. Registration is preferred but walk-ins are welcome. Babysitting will be provided.

95 percent of the population will need a blood transfusion within their lifetime. Despite this demand, only 5 percent of the eligible public actually donates. Your single donation will help up to 3 people.

Please contact Lisa Rispler at (301) 762-5156 or Risplerfamily@comcast.net to register. For more information on blood donation, contact the American Red Cross at 1-800-GIVE-LIFE.

Jazz Comes to Cold Spring

On November 17, Cold Spring students will be treated to a morning of the cool jazz sounds of the Unified Jazz Ensemble. This trio of exceptional artists will be playing the bass, the vibraphone, drums and trombone as they explain the uniquely American art form of Jazz. Be prepared to swing, bop and skit-skat your way through the morning with these accomplished musicians. This first cultural arts program is brought to the students solely through PTA monies and parents are always invited to attend the shows. K-3 grades will see the show at 9:15 am and grades 4 and 5 at 10:15 am. Please join us if you can!

Direct Donation Sally Foster® On-line Sale

Due to our Direct Donation program, we are not having students and parents be actively engaged in fundraising activities. However, everyone loves the Sally Foster® family of gift products, so we are making these items available on-line. Please purchase Sally Foster® giftwrap, bath & body products, chocolates, gifts and more to help raise money for the Cold Spring PTA. These sales will be on-line only!

Also, remember to be sure to enter our school's account number (501385) so that we are able to receive credit for your purchase. Place your order today by going to SallyFoster.com, and ask your families and friends to help too. They'll thank you for sharing Sally Foster with them, while helping support the Cold Spring PTA! If you have any questions, please contact Beth Higgins at 301-294-3344.

Your School PTA, the Wootton Cluster and MCCPTA

Each PTA for a school that feeds into Wootton High School is part of the “Wootton Cluster” of PTAs; and each PTA is also a member of the Montgomery County Council of PTAs (MCCPTA).

It is through the Cluster that Wootton and its feeder schools provide testimony to the Board of Education and the County Council on the capital budgets for the schools (construction, expansion improvement of the physical plant), and on the Operating Budget (annual spending for the schools which is primarily for teachers and support staff, programs, and day to day costs of operating). At the Cluster level, school PTAs also share common concerns and work together to advance the interests of Cluster parents. Our Cluster is headed by three Cluster Coordinators: Rich Edelman, Carol Falk and Jen Pories. Our Cluster is also part of a larger “Area” comprised of the Wootton, Richard Montgomery, Churchill and Rockville Clusters.

MCCPTA is an association of the PTAs and PTSAs in the County MCCPTA are the central Montgomery County advocacy groups for parent and student interests. MCCPTA speaks on education policy issues including subjects like curriculum, grading, safety and health, student rights, and budgets. Additionally, the MCCPTA often acts as a forum for MCPS and others to make presentations on schools issues and to receive feedback from PTAs. MCCPTA has also acted as a forum for presentations/debates by candidates for the School Board.

Each school PTA participates in MCCPTA through their Presidents and Delegates who attend monthly meetings. Typically an issue will be raised at the Delegate’s Assembly and, unless there is need for urgent action, the Delegates report on the issue at their next school PTA meeting and then rely on feedback from that meeting to vote on the issue at the next Delegate’s Assembly. Each school PTA should also have Cluster representatives, who attend periodic (every few months) Cluster meetings along with other officers. At Cluster meetings we discuss issues of common concern to our schools and receive updates from our Principals about current concerns, achievements and developments.

Every Wootton Cluster School should have at least one Delegate and one Cluster Representative (they can be the same person). Since we discuss policy issues that may arise at the MCCPTA level, MCCPTA Delegates are encouraged to attend Cluster meetings. Finally, since PTA is the advocacy group for children and education in the County school PTAs should make time for discussion of policy issues that are brought to them by Delegates and Cluster Representatives so that they can effectively represent the school PTA, and MCCPTA can effectively advocate for children and education at the County level.

Respectfully,
Richard Edelman

Minutes of the Cold Spring Elementary School PTA Meeting
Date: October 8, 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, Jeff Alexander, MCCPTA Delegate, and Laurie Gira, Recording Secretary. Also in attendance were: Mr. Barnett, Mrs. Coates, Mrs. Whited, Debbie Meisegier, Carla Meister, Kara Erlich, Susan Fox, Debra Bernal, and Lisa Rispler.

WELCOME and introduction of all present.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Mr. Barnett began his report by thanking the PTA for the flowers sent when his wife was ill. He then reported that Cold Spring Elementary School (CSES) has 393 student enrolled, with a teacher to student ratio of 23.3. Mr. Barnett discussed and distributed information about the school's SIP. Some benchmarks identified by MCPS include achieving reading grade level before entering third grade, and more students in advanced math in Grade 5 and Algebra 1 in Grade 8. CSES' students continue to do well on the MSAs, with CSES maintaining the highest percentage of students in the advanced column over the past three years.

Budget concerns – Wow. MCPS has cut Principals' pay raises for the year. There is a hiring freeze, and a salary freeze is expected. Layoffs are possible within the system. Higher class sizes are probable, but CSES is in good shape at this point. Next year will present a huge cut in the budget, wherein one out of five dollars from this year's budget won't be there.

Mr. Barnett encourages parents to stay informed, to attend Wootton Cluster and County Council meetings, and to show support for maintaining the budget. We are fine for this year, but we should prepare for the worse for next year, but hope for the best.

Mrs. Coates has been working with the Parent Advisory Council for Montgomery County, whose goal is to increase communication between parents and the county school system. They are publicizing the Parent Academy Workshops being offered in the county and Drop In Coffee and Conversation opportunities on October 23. She requested feedback on their Parent Involvement Policies by November 15.

Mrs. Coates also introduced CSES' NAACP representatives for the year, CSES parents Arthur Wilson and Vera Nicimpaye, who will be attending local meetings and bringing information to our school.

School Counselor, Mrs. Whited, announced a presentation on Bullying set for October 29 at Dufief Elementary, arranged in conjunction with other Wootton cluster counselors. The presentation, featuring Voices Versus Violence, will be advertised in the Principal's newsletter.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The minutes from the PTA portion of Back to School night were reviewed. A spelling correction was noted and a motion to accept the minutes was seconded and carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

PTA Treasurer, Andrea Portes, distributed the updated budget and went over key points. The goal this year is to keep reserves to \$10,000. Per last year's recommendation and vote, she has purchased and installed Quickbooks (less expensive than anticipated). Also, the Board of Officers voted to purchase a Poster Printer for the school from last year's overage, which is not reflected in this year's budget. Regarding our voluntary donations, we have received \$5000 under our budgeted amount.

This is a concern as we do not have one of last year's big money makers, the Variety Show – which alternates with the International Fair which does not make money. We were short on the voluntary donations at this point last year, as well, but not to the same degree. It was decided that the PTA would send home a flier alerting parents to the shortfall and asking those who have not yet donated to do so, or we would have to institute a new fundraiser or start cutting programs. In addition, Andrea reported that 77% of CSES families have donated to the PTA thus far this year.

MCCPTA DELEGATE REPORT

MCCPTA Delegate, Jeff Alexander, reported on their September meeting. MCPS has recommended every school PTA have a safety committee to focus on issues such as obtaining crossing guards, portable safety issues, etc. CSES does have a Safety Committee chair.

There are coming changes in Grades 1 through 3 Grading and Reporting which will do away with letter grades and go towards a standard indicator based point system on a one through four scale. A 2010-2011 rollout is planned. It is in the testing stage now, and awaiting feedback. Thirty four schools are trying the system now (including Wanda Coates' children's school).

Next month's MCCPTA meeting will focus on their Annual Operating Budget Resolution wherein the MCCPTA identifies several priority areas for the next year's budget cycle, which is relayed to MCPS. This resolution is particularly important this year due to the anticipated budget cuts next year, and the need to send a message to MCPS about what is important to save. The five proposed areas which will be debated include appropriate student/teacher ratios; safe, secure, clean and healthy facilities, sensible curriculum rollout, school based community outreach, and remediation and support for all students who need it. Jeff Alexander will put more information about this out through listserv to all parents and will include a link to the budget on the MCPS website.

PROPOSED EVENTS

Blood Drive - Lisa Rispler is heading up a Cold Spring/Cabin John blood drive. She needs committee members and volunteer donors. The Red Cross requires 45 donors in order to sponsor the event, and the proposed date would be during the week of November 17. Discussion as to what weeknight versus Sunday afternoon would be feasible in terms of donor availability, facility availability and cost. Lisa emphasized that 95 percent of the population will require a unit of blood at some point in their lifetime. Each unit of blood collected will be used within five days of being collected. All agreed that a committee should be formed to support Lisa's endeavor. Mr. Barnett offered to pay the APR fee.

Book Fair - The Book Fair begins this Friday, October 10 at the Teacher Raffle/BINGO night. The committee is still lining up volunteers. Those interested should contact Lisa Cohen. Carla Meister suggested collecting canned food and other nonperishables for a local foodbank as admission to the event. She will get it organized, and Andrea Portes offered to deliver all the collected food to a local food bank.

Visiting Author - Acclaimed author and Mrs. Crandall's brother, Arthur Dorros, will be coming as Visiting Author on October 10. There will be an all-school assembly, followed by individual workshops with the fifth graders, the fourth graders and the combined second and third grades. Mr. Dorros will also be treated to lunch with two lucky students whose names will be drawn from those who purchased one of Mr. Dorros' books. There were 98 books sold, and the PTA purchased one of each for the CSES library which the author will sign.

Cultural Arts Assemblies - Susan Fox, our long-time cultural arts chair, described the three assemblies she has in mind for the coming year. She proposes bringing Mike Offutt's Science Show to CSES on November 17; Lesoles Dance Project, a South African dance company, on January 11; and the Fabulous Chinese Acrobats on May 18. Susan expressed thanks to the PTA for continuing to fund these valuable programs and the experiences they bring to our children.

Homeless Walkathon - Many participation forms are being turned in for the coming walkathon. The DJ used last year has declined providing its services free again this year. After discussion, it was decided that funds should not be expended to provide DJ services for the walkathon.

Recess Volunteers - Although some parents are coming to lunch and recess, we need many more volunteering to help out with all the children. All volunteers are very much appreciated.

International Fair - We still have not found a volunteer for International Fair Talent Coordinator. We have two dance clubs this year who plan to provide entertainment, but we cannot have a full cultural talent show as in the past without a coordinator. A suggestion was made to have the individual talents showcased with the countries scattered throughout the school, instead of having a separate show. Many thought this would be a better arrangement. Mila Clifton is the chairperson for the countries portion of the event, and has several countries already represented including Ireland, Brazil, Argentina, El Salvador, Norway, China, Israel, Cuba, Lithuania, Taiwan, and the UK. She is also looking for volunteers to help with cleanup. Mila plans to have information posted on Columbus Day Open House to encourage more parents to represent additional countries.

Fabulous Games and Prizes - Two drawings were held and the winners announced. Meredith Gross's name was drawn as the winner of the \$100 gift card for registering for Giant/Safeway Bonus Bucks. Simin Li and Jesse Munsat won the lunch with Arthur Dorros, their names being drawn from those who purchased books.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at approximately 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Laurie Gira, Recording Secretary

November 2008

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2 Daylight Savings
3 No School (Professional Day)	4 No School (Election Day)	5 PTA General Meeting 7:15 pm	6 Book a Breakfast (K-2) 8:00 am	7	8	9
10	11 Early Release Veterans Day	12 Early Release	13 Book a Breakfast (3-5) 8:00 am	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 Early Release (Thanks-giving)	27 No School (Thanks-giving)	28 No School (Thanks-giving)	29	30

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				

Cold Spring Courier Dirty Jobs Special
☺ Reversing Stressed ☺

10/16/0

By Ralph Nelson



Introduction: *Ever see the Discovery Channel's "Dirty Jobs?" This guy goes out to do all the dirtiest jobs he can find – for the experience. He meets interesting and fun people along the way. The only difference between him and the PTA is he gets paid – but crawls through sewers too.*

Many parent volunteer jobs at Cold Spring are dirty jobs. Many involve food (Read-a-thon) or sweating (Homeless Walk) or just grinding the paperwork (pick any board position). But if you add them up, Cold Spring has one of the finest parent groups in the country. But have you ever wondered if there are any volunteer jobs at Cold Spring that aren't dirty?

Three years ago my daughter walked into the kitchen after school during the Fall of her 2nd grade year and asked sweetly, "Can you come in and read to my class after lunch.? Just ask Mrs. O'Neil."

This was something new. Did Mrs. O'Neil really need help? Curious what was going on? Read on.

I spoke to Mrs. O'Neil the next day. She hadn't asked for a parent to read but was glad to have one. As it turned out, Heather just wanted me to read to her class.

More importantly, I didn't know you could volunteer to read to a class. Until that point, I thought volunteering in the classroom meant things like making copies or helping put up bulletin boards – although both are important to a well run classroom.

When I came in the next week, I signed in the front office, put the ubiquitous pink volunteer sticker on, and walked up to the classroom. I had no idea what I was getting into. All I knew was that I had to read to a bunch of 2nd graders for 20 minutes – after lunch. Ugh.

In the classroom, I first sat in the Author's Chair. One of the kids quickly gave me the first



Harry Potter book with a yellow stickie where they stopped reading the previous day. Then

twenty of my daughter's classmates sat around me on the floor quietly, politely with my daughter in front, of course. No pressure.

As I started to read, Mrs. O'Neil came over and put a small stuffed animal in my lap. "Fluffy" was the three-headed dog from *Harry Potter*. Now I was properly accessorized to read to 2nd graders.

Harry and his friends were just being placed into their Hogwarts houses via that cranky sorting hat. I found myself involuntarily changing my voice for the different characters. When Harry was finally placed in his house, the kids cheered. They were getting into this book – and more importantly, I was too. Who wouldn't? It's *Harry Potter*.

Anyway, while the kids were cheering, I looked up to see Mrs. O'Neil at the back of the room also looking up from grading papers and smiling. It was clear she was getting an unscheduled break from the grind and getting some other work done. In short: I'm having fun and my daughter's teacher is planning our kid's next opportunity to excel. Can you say, "Win, win?"

After 20 minutes, the reading period ended. I placed the yellow stickie in the book where I stopped and closed the book. After giving

Fluffy back to Mrs. O'Neil, she thanked me for reading to the kids.

Walking out of the room, I was curiously content. The time had gone by like a wizard on a broomstick. And best of all, my daughter was smiling the whole time. *I've been reading to Cold Springers at least once a week ever since that day – even though my kids are not in those grades anymore. It's **that** enjoyable.*

So what does this mean? **There are parent volunteer jobs at Cold Spring that aren't**

dirty jobs. As a matter of fact, when you read to a bunch of excited kids, you get the opposite of stress. Just spell "STRESSED" backwards to find out:

D _ _ _ _ _ . . . exactly.

So, consider volunteering to read in your child's classroom once a week. Ask your teacher if there are any spots open and go for it . . . You may be surprised how easy and clean it is to inspire young kids to read.



Congratulations to Meredith Gross, winner of the Grocery Receipts \$100 Amex gift card!

You can still sign up to benefit Cold Spring at Giant and Safeway

I. Sign up for BonusBucks at Giant - Log on to <http://www.giantfood.com/aplus> to designate Cold Spring as one of up to three schools eligible to receive Bonus Bucks. CSES earned over \$2400 in 2007-08! If you have misplaced your BonusCard, please call 1-877-366-2668 to obtain your number. You must have this number to participate in the BonusBucks program.

II. Sign up for "escrip" Program at Safeway - Safeway's "escrip" program works in the same way as Giant's BonusBucks. Register online at www.escrip.com. Call Safeway at 1-877-723-3929 to obtain your card # if it has been lost or misplaced.

III. Collect General Mills Box Tops - Box Tops for Education is a school fundraising program supported by General Mills that has helped America's schools raise over \$200 million. The Box Tops for Education program offers schools an easy way to earn cash through everyday activities like buying groceries or shopping online. Schools can raise a total of up to \$60,000 each year. Recently, Cold Spring raised over \$400...we can do even better this year, without spending one extra penny.

All you need to do is clip Box Tops from participating Box Tops products and drop them in your class box at Cold Spring so they can be collected and redeemed. **Each Box Top is worth 10 cents to Cold Spring!** For a complete list of the hundreds of participating products, visit www.boxtops4education.com.