RITCHIE PARK ES

PTA NEWSLETTER

2010-2011 RPES PTA Officers

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### **January 21, 2011**

# TONIGHT!

 **Music and Dance Night** is on Friday, Jan. 21 from 7–9 p.m. in the gym and APR. This is a free family event sponsored by the PTA. Parents do need to stay with their children, and siblings are welcome too. Come dance the chill away with fun tunes from the DJs.

 **Kick-off for our Manna Mania program!  Please bring non-perishable food items with you to Music & Dance Night.**  These items will be collected at the door but are not required for entry to the event. Please stop by the Manna Mania table to find out more about this event and how you and your family can help sort food at the Manna Ware­house.  The Community Service Committee has ar­ranged three volunteer shifts for Ritchie Park families.  This is a won­derful way to give back to your community and to teach your children about service to oth­ers.  To work in the ware­house, children must be at least 7 years old and accom­panied by a parent. All par­ents who volunteer must fill out a Vo­lunteer Agree­ment Form, avail­able at the Manna Mania table, or on the day of your shift at the warehouse. Questions?  Contact catgoodyear@gmail.com.

# Cultural Arts Assembly: So This Is Opera, Part Two

Yvette Lewis returned with a fun-filled sequel to the original "So This Is Opera."  Students were involved with singing, playing, and movement activi­ties.  With lots of laughter sprinkled through­out, students found themselves tuned into the exciting world of opera. Ms. Lewis presented music from the Merry Widow and Porgy and Bess--which chronicles early American life with beautiful melodies and stories of hope.  Following the assemblies, the 4th grade classes also partici­pated in a workshop where students learned more music from opera.

**Yvette Lewis is a** lyric soprano **who has performed in such places as the Washington Opera, the Baltimore Opera, the Opera Theatre of** Northern Virginia**, the Baltimore Symphony and the** Spoleto Festival **in** Melbourne, Australia**.** She has been a finalist in both the Metropolitan Opera Mid-Atlantic Region and the Opera Company of Philadelphia/Luciano Pavarotti competitions. She has taught elementary general music in the Montgomery County and Baltimore City, MD Public Schools.  In addition, she has written curriculum for the Montgomery County elementary general music guide and conducted teacher workshops. Cur­rently, Yvette Lewis is appointed to serve on the Commission on Presi­den­tial Scholars by President Barack Obama. Ms. Lewis’ website is www.operakids.com.

# MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**February PTA Meeting, with Guest** **Speaker on Bullying,** is on Tues­day, Feb. 1 at 7:30 p.m. in the Media Center. After the business part of the meeting, Mrs. Capoccia will make a presentation on bullying, in­cluding, among other things, the MCPS rules that address it, the differ­ence between bullying and teasing, and how parents can talk to their children about bullying. A question and answer session will follow. Child care will be provided. Hope to see everyone there!

**Valentine's Day parties** will be held in the classrooms at 2 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 14. Contact Class Room Parents if you would like to help with the parties. Help is also needed before the party in purchasing and preparing items, so contact your Room Parent if you would like to help with preparations or during the party.

# Upcoming PTA Events

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| Jan. 21, 7 p.m. | Music and Dance Night |
| Jan. 21 | Manna Mania Food Drive Kicks Off |
| Jan. 24 | No School for Students |
| Jan. 27, 7 p.m. | Instrumental Music and Choral Concert |
| Feb. 1, 7:30 p.m. | PTA Meeting in Media Center |
| Feb. 8&9, 6:45 p.m. | Variety Show Preview of Acts |

**Variety Show and Preview of Acts** are back! The Variety Show will be held the evening of Thursday, Mar. 3 at Julius West MS APR. A Pre­view of Acts will be held on Feb. 8 & 9 starting at 6:45 p.m. in the RPES APR for students who would like to take part in the Variety Show. In addition to performers, we need to fill many positions needed to produce the show, such as an­nouncers, stage crew, ushers, advertising team, and set decorators.  **All students who wish to participate, either as per­formers or in another role, must come to one of the preview nights.** Please bring any materials you need for your act to Previews and wear what you will be wearing the night of the show. Look for more details coming home in your child’s backpack. For more infor­mation, con­tact Tonya Greenspan at tonyagreenspan@ymail.com. Come to the Previews and get involved!

**Save the Date: May 1st is Spring Carnival and Silent Auction.** Stephanie Hart and Lisa Bosse, both second grade parents, have agreed to organize the spring carnival and Alpa Kaji and Tonya Greenspan also offered to help.  Holly Mulderig, who is chairing the auction part of the spring event could still use some help from parents interested in ob­taining donations from businesses and in organizing the event it­self.  Please con­tact Holly at 301-294-6019 or holly@ heliosmarcom.com if you are interested. This event is well-loved and much anticipated by the Ritchie Park students, so a big thank you to these volunteers for making it happen.

# ADVOCACY CORNER

**Advocacy Corner: Budget season is underway!**

The process: Superintendent Weast recommended his operating budget, which starts July 1and funds all staff, teaching and training resources, security and most maintenance for the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), to the Board of Education (BOE) on December 15. The BOE held hearings on Jan. 12 and 19 and will vote on its recommen­dation in early February. The Richard Montgomery Cluster testified, with input from your RPES PTA representatives, on Jan. 19. MCPS receives its local funding from the Montgomery County Council. The County Executive will receive the BOE recommendation and recommend his budget to the County Council in the coming months. The County Council will hold hearings, vote on a budget and let MCPS know its budget in late spring. Then, the BOE will have to decide on funding for specific education line items.

Bottom line: MONEY IS TIGHT at the Federal, State and County levels. Funding for education will be competing with other public programs in the State and County budgets. It is not likely that the BOE request will be fully funded. Your voice is CRITICAL TO ENSURE THAT EDUCATION PRIORITIES ARE MET. Watch this space and the listserv for more info. Meanwhile, consider speaking out for education at a community forum hosted by County Executive Ike Leggett on the 2012 Operating Budget on Monday, Jan. 24 at 7 p.m. at Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda. It is important that he knows that education matters to his constituents!

# WAYS TO VOLUNTEER

**Send in those Box Tops**

# A BIG THANK YOU TO…

* Natalie Childs for organizing the lost and found and taking any long-term, unclaimed, and unlabeled items to donate to Interfaith, a local charity.

We’re collecting box tops in the month of February so they can be mailed on Feb. 28. Box Tops for Education can be found on hundreds of products that you buy for your fam­ily. Just cut out the Box Tops and send them to school in baggies or envelopes to your child's teacher. We re­ceive 10 cents for every pink rectangle. Also, we receive money for shopping online at the Marketplace at www.boxtops4education. com. We have already mailed over 6,000 Box Tops this school year. Contact Roxana Hall, roxanafh@att.blackberry.net, for more information.