RITCHIE PARK ES

PTA NEWSLETTER

2010-2011 RPES PTA Officers

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PTA Board of Directors *also includes the following members:*

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### **January 7, 2011**

# We Have Our 200th Member

We would love to give a shout out to our 200th member, Shannon Madison.  Mrs. Madison is a 1st grade teacher here at Ritchie Park and will have 200th member bragging rights and ac­claim.  We want to urge those of you who have yet to join the PTA to please do so.  While 2010 is well and gone, 2011 brings a lot of exciting events that can only happen with the support of the PTA.  Membership dues are $15 for one active voting adult. Forms are available in the front of­fice.  If you have any questions, do not hesi­tate to contact Marquette Heaven, see sidebar.

The newest benefit of PTA membership is a free “Mobile School Directory” application for your smart-phone from Directo­rease. Now you can find that critical phone number on the go. Download information for current members will be coming soon.

# Mark Your Calendars

**Manna Mania is coming!**

This program, brought to us by the PTA and Community Service Committee, will kick-off at Music & Dance Night.  Manna Mania is a chance for students and families to collect food for Manna, a local food bank that feeds thou­sands of families in our area.  Also, students over 7 years old will have an opportunity to volunteer with their parents at the Manna Warehouse.  More in­formation about Manna Mania Kick-Off and warehouse volunteer­ing will be coming soon.  Hope you can participate in this wonderful community outreach program!!!

**Music and Dance Night**

It's cold outside, so we're having a dance party indoors! Mark your calendars for Friday, Jan. 21 from 7-9 p.m. in Ritchie Park's Gymnasium and All Purpose Room. Come dance to some fun tunes from the DJs. Don't miss this free, fun family event brought to you by the PTA! Look for more information coming home in your child's backpack soon.

# ADVOCACY CORNER

**Budget Shortfalls Drastically affect MCPS**

On January 3rd, the Montgomery County Council of PTAs (MCCPTA) held an Operating Budget Forum which in­cluded 8 mem­bers of the Board of Education (BOE) and 3 members of the Mont­gomery County Council. The Operat­ing Budget funds staffing, in­structional materials, and other resources meaning that cuts could negatively affect our child­ren’s class sizes and fewer specialists may be available to them. Montgomery County expects to make signifi­cant cuts in its budget.  With 57% of this year’s budget spent on education, there is much con­cern about cuts to the education budget.

While the Forum was at times acrimonious, both the BOE members and the County Council members were in agreement that citizens of Montgomery County need to lobby their elected repre­sentatives di­rectly to show their support for quality education. You can send in your comments regarding the operating budget to Cheryl Moss Herman or Richard Hart (see si­debar for info). The Richard Montgomery cluster will testify regarding the Operating Budget before the BOE on Jan. 19 at Carver Auditorium. Please show support for our school by attending. And you’ll hear more at next month’s PTA meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 1. More information on the budget can be found at montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/budget.

# Upcoming PTA Events

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| No PTA meeting in Jan. |  |
| Jan. 19, TBA | RM Cluster Testimony re: Operating Budget |
| Jan. 21, 7 p.m. | Music and Dance Night |
| Jan. 21 | Manna Mania Food Drive Kicks Off |
| Feb. 1, 7:30 p.m. | PTA Meeting in Media Center |

# WAYS TO VOLUNTEER

**Yearbook Editor Needs Pictures**

Please send in pictures to be included in the yearbook.  We want to make sure we cover all the fun things hap­pening at RPES. We need pictures from Res­taurant Nights, the Scholastic Book Fair and Storytelling Night, and the Choral Concert. Also, there are a lot of events coming up, including Music and Dance Night, the Instru­mental Music Concert and all of the upcoming Valentine's parties in the classrooms. If you volunteer in the classroom or chaperone a field trip, take some pictures!

Pictures can be submitted by uploading them directly online or by submitting them on a flash drive or CD.  Please contact Michelle Logsdon, michelle.logsdon@verizon.net, for details.

**Silent Auction Co-chair**

The PTA is pleased to announce that we have fina­lized our spring fundraiser for this year.  We plan to hold a Spring Carnival, as we have done for the past sev­eral years, but we also plan to hold a Silent Auction at the same time as the Carnival with many more of­ferings than we had last year.  Holly Mulderig has agreed to co-chair the Silent Auction part of the event, but is looking for a second co-chair.  A Silent Auction Committee will be put together soon.  Please con­tact Holly at 301-294-6019 or holly@heliosmarcom.com if you are interested in helping out with the Silent Auction as a Co-chair or Committee member. Remember, it takes volunteers to organize events that raise money for the school and your children. Please consider helping out where you can.

**Spring Carnival Chair**

We also need some volunteers to organize the Spring Car­nival that is scheduled with the Silent Auction for May 1.  As orga­nizers, you would be re­spon­sible for finding the carnival company, selecting the moon bounces, games, and concessions, publicity, and obtain­ing and coordinating volunteers to work the day of the car­nival.  You can use the research regarding carnival companies from last year's event and benefit from an on-line volunteer system that was successfully implemented by the Scholastic Book Fair organiz­ers.  For­mer chairs of the event would be happy to help the new or­ganizers get started and discuss options.  Feel free to contact Stephanie Hart at 301-424-3446 or dr.stephaniehart @gmail.com or Jennifer Young (see side­bar for contact info) with any questions.  This is event is well-loved and much anticipated by the Ritchie Park students, but if we don't get enough organizers, it will not happen, so now is the time to volunteer.

**Hand Sanitizer Donations Needed for the Lunch Room**

We would greatly appreciate any donations of hand sani­tizer to clean the children’s hands before lunch. Thank you for your help--especially during cold and flu season! You can drop off donations at the table inside the doors to the left as you enter the APR.

# A BIG THANK YOU TO…

# Reminder

You can STILL sign up for the Ritchie Park PTA list serve! Send an email to: RPESPTA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Please include a message in your email (so that the listserv coordinator knows you’re an RPES parent). You will receive a response with sign-up directions.

* Ritchie Park community for your generous contributions to the Teaching Staff and Non-Classroom Staff Holiday Gift Collection. We were able to give each classroom teacher a $100 gift card (with amounts over $100 in many cases). Our over 40 Non-Classroom Staff members at Ritchie Park each received a $40 gift card. What a wonderful way to show the staff we appreciate all of their efforts and care. Thank you for helping make this possible!
* Cindy McLoughlin and Erin Lobato for spearheading the gift collection. Many thanks to the Grade Representatives and Room Parents who publicized and coordinated the staff gifts.