



Neelsville News



The Neelsville MS PTSA Newsletter

April/May 2009

Parent to Parent

Steve Thornberry

PTSA President

This May seems to be a month of finality. For one thing, it is the final full month of school for this school year. That should cheer up the students at least. May is also the final month in which this Newsletter will appear, at least until the 2009-2010 school year. For the last two years Mary Jane Siok has been our editor. She has done a very fine job in putting the Newsletter together and supervising its distribution. The task has not always been easy and did not always seem rewarding, but Mary Jane helped the PTSA reach on the goals I set when I became President in October 2007. That goal was to have a Newsletter each month from October through May. We missed no more than one or two, a job well done. Mary Jane, please accept my personal thanks for all you have done.

This month, we also had our final PTSA meeting for the 2008-09 school year. On Tuesday, May 12, new officers were elected. They will assume their duties July 1, 2009, the beginning of the new PTSA fiscal year. The new officers are:

President	Jodi Bierlair
Vice-President	William Jarvis
Treasurer	Mary Jane Siok
Secretary	Pam Flatow

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From the Principal's Desk

Dollye McClain

Principal

As a school, we really need assistance from our parent community in following rules and helping us reinforce this to students. Our goal is always to have a safe, secure and respectful environment where all students can learn and thrive. We are looking at preemptive efforts and student support and modeling of appropriate behaviors including things as simple as getting to class on time. We have pursued rewards for students for going above and beyond, with our PBIS coupons, which so many of them do when they demonstrate elements of good citizenship and sometimes simple kindness. Somewhere along the line some of our students have not mastered the social skills that will help them in all aspects of their lives and we need to help guide and encourage them. One of the ways parents can assist is by modeling and respecting rules and policies. An example is the main office secretaries are often put in an uncomfortable position when parents insist they need to see their child, or need to give them their lunch, clothing, homework, equipment, etc. It is a significant disruption to call students out of class for nonemergency situations. There are days when secretaries are holding up to a dozen lunches that students forgot, in addition to gym bags full of sporting equipments, projects, etc. Certainly everyone understands that occasionally a student forgets something important and parents respond to that frantic call, but in some cases it is on an almost daily basis and is a problem. We certainly want to be sure we respond and are helpful in emergency situations but need your support in minimizing interruptions that could be avoided.

We spend a great deal of time dealing with lost or stolen cell phones or iPods. In the majority of cases, they are items left unattended and students are shocked when their belongings disappear. I wish it wasn't this way, but phones, iPods, MP3 players, etc. are tempting

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From the Principal's Desk *(cont. from page 1)*

items for thieves, and students more often than not make it convenient for their belongings to be taken. Please reinforce to your children that if they bring valuable items to school, it is their responsibility to ensure they are secured and to not make themselves vulnerable to unscrupulous and criminal behaviors of other students. An additional issue also has to do with cell phones. Students are not allowed to use cell phones during the school day they are to be off and out of sight. This is MCPS policy. There is constant abuse by students, texting on their phones instead of listening to their teachers and the instruction they are providing. Please help us by following and modeling the rules we need students to follow.

On a very positive note, it is extremely rewarding to see students, parents and community members who are attending our music, drama productions, athletic and special events. To me, the test of a successful school and its programs is when parents and community members come to activities and events at the school when their own children are not participants, and when students come to support their friends.

The beginning of a well-deserved summer vacation is just around the corner. With that in mind, I would like to encourage parents to remind students that school does not end until June 16th, so they need to continue to complete homework, study for tests and quizzes, come to school on time, and follow our school policies and procedures.

Parent to Parent *(cont. from page 1)*

I wish them all the best and believe that they will do an excellent job of continuing and improving the Neelsville PTSA.

The election, of course, signifies that the May 12 meeting was my final one both as President and as a member of the Neelsville PTSA. I have reached the end of the two consecutive one-year terms allowed by the by-laws, and my son will move on to Clarksburg High School next school year. It has been an interesting and in many ways profitable two years as President; I was only too happy to do what I could for Ms. McClain and the staff, teachers, and students of Neelsville Middle School.

Our PTSA has had some successful fund raisers, increased membership from 72 in 2007-08 to our current 134, held meetings every month (October to May) except for one month, and had some fun along the way. It is my hope that the PTSA will begin to do more, and that more members will become active. More involvement by the parents will reduce the pressure on the teachers and staff and free up more of their time to focus on educating our children, which is their primary responsibility. I encourage those of you who will be returning parents next year to join the PTSA and become active. Helping out at just one event would be a marvelous help.

To those of you whose children will go on to high school next year, I wish you and them all the best on this next, and most important, step in their education.

And to Caleb Price, best of luck in Manhattan!!

School / PTA Calendar

May

20	HSA Algebra
20-21	Spring Concerts
25	Memorial Day Holiday
26	HSA Algebra Make-Up
28	Awards Night at Clarksburg 7:00
29	SGA Dance 2:45

June

4	Last Day for Activity Bus
9-12	Final Exams
15	Exam Make-Up
16	Last Day of School for Students – Early Release
23	Report Cards Mailed Out

Student Service Learning (SSL) Tips **Give a Little Time...Make a Big Difference** **May 2009**

Students practice positive civic behavior.

- Documentation of service performed during the second semester is due to the school SSL coordinator by the Friday before second semester exams begin (June 5, 2009). Senior hours are due earlier.
- Middle school students who successfully pass select courses and fully participate in the SSL aspects of those courses will be awarded 10 SSL hours on the final report card.
- High school students who successfully pass the second semester of National, State, and Local Government and fully participate in the SSL aspects will be awarded 7.5 SSL hours on the final report card.
- Frequently asked questions about the MCPS SSL program are answered on the website at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/ssl/faqs/faq.shtm>.
- Consider ways to make a difference by addressing real need: Find organizations and opportunities of interest at www.mcpsssl.org.

SIXTH GRADE NEWS

In social studies, students are busy exploring different cultures around the world. Currently, students are learning about the five major religions of the world. We are discussing the origins and common ideas of Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. After learning about the religions students will be choosing a country to do an in depth study about its culture. Although most of the project will be done in class over the remaining weeks of school, be on the lookout for directions and due dates for this assignment. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher with any questions or concerns.

In sixth grade science we plan to test our ROV's or Remotely Operated Vehicles after they were checked by the engineers at the Naval Warfare Center in Bethesda, MD. The Sea Perches were checked in class to test their mobility, and they will be launched by science students. Newton's Laws and the forces involved in motion are going to be our focus as we launch our submarines, which were built entirely in class. To end the year we will study the forms of energy and how energy affects our world.

Students in 6th grade reading are getting acquainted with the newspaper format and terms. Some of their daily class activities include reading articles and identifying the main ideas using the 5 W's (who, what ,when, where, and why), working on section scavenger hunts in order to identify particular features and information, and using critical thinking skills while reading and discussing editorials and cartoons. The students are also working on creating a newspaper using the newspaper format and terms. They will complete a review packet for the unit newspaper test which will be given as their exam. Students should continue to read every night and take tests when they finish a book for the Accelerated Reading component of their grade.

SEVENTH GRADE NEWS

Seventh Grade scientists are preparing for the culmination of our Human Structure and Function unit – the frog dissection. This will be followed by the MCPS Structure and Function Exam. Next up, Astronomy – at the speed of light. We will be having a semester exam during Finals Week in June. Topics on this exam will include Heredity, Human Structure and Function, and Astronomy. It has been a pleasure working with your children this year. Enjoy the summer! Come back ready to rock and roll with 8th grade Earth Science!

Seventh grade math students will be finishing out the year by working on Unit 6 which is on Measurement. Students will be solving real world word problems by using Surface Area and Volume formulas. Please look for their summer math packets in June for them to work on throughout the summer. They are due the Monday after Labor Day. Have a wonderful summer and see you in a few months!

World Studies 7- The 7th grade world studies classes have started our unit on economics. We will mainly be focusing on the world between the years of 1450-1750. In the beginning of the unit the classes worked on a simulation that showed them how the world was changing from traditional economies to market economies. This week we just finished a world map that showed the students the major trade routes throughout the world in the year 1450. Next we will be exploring the Renaissance, exploration and colonization.

English 7 classes continue to read, analyze, and perform William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream. Many of the students are enthusiastic about dressing up and performing as their favorite character. Students are taking the MAP-R (Measures of Academic Progress in Reading) test for the last time this year. Be sure to ask your son or daughter about their score on this test.

Accelerated Reader (A.R.) points are due by the end of the quarter. All 7th graders are expected to earn 34 points this quarter.

National Junior Honor Society News

On Friday evening, April 17, 38 students were inducted into Neelsville Middle School's National Junior Honor Society. Of the 38 inducted, 32 were 7th graders. Qualifications included a 3.5 grade point or higher in addition to achievements in character, citizenship, leadership, service and academics.

This is the 4th year the society has been in existence in only one of 4 middle schools in Montgomery County. Ms. Dollye V. McClain and Dr. Edward Newsome, Jr. provided introductions and welcome. The following students were inducted:

8th grade

Lili Garnett
ZaMari Love
Eric McIntire
Adrian Singley
Devin Suvarnasuddhi
Dianna Tappert
John Vasquez

7th Grade

Ricardo Cale, Jr.	Miranda Lochner
Jenny Chen	Grace Magdamo
Dorothy Cho	Emily Matthews
Paul Cunningham	Jordan Mayo
Kathleen Dillon	Dustin Munro
Raja Goyal	Calarina Muslimani
Laura Hampe	Frederick Nijhai
Ariel Jarvis	Joseph Paige
Shaana Jhangiani	Saisindura Pasupuleti
Navjot Kaur	Abigail Ross
Don Lam	Alexis Rusnak
Nathalie Llerena	Vrinda Sabharwal
John Schap	Ikechukwu Sharpe
Rasika Singh	Emily Siok
Kylee Sklar	Kserson Stephens
Jonathan Zuniga	

In addition, 46 members attended a teaser production of *Bye Bye Birdie* at Clarksburg High School on Friday, May 1, 2009 under the supervision of Mrs. Vickey Brown and Ms. Sue Beckerman, honor society advisers.

The Neelsville Good Knights

As you know the Good Knights is a group that was designed to recognize and reward students who demonstrate great initiative, effort, achievement, improvement, citizenship, and respect in our school. Students are recommended by teachers and elected by their peers to serve as role models and positive representatives of Neelsville.

The Good Knight members participate in a number of activities designed to recognize achievement and help the community. We have helped raise awareness of the genocide in Darfur, co-sponsored a trivia contest for Hispanic Heritage Month, and have raised money to aid victims of natural disasters. This past February we made holiday door decorations for patients at Children's Hospital and we recently spearheaded a Teacher Appreciation Week activity involving the entire school. Soon we will be starting our annual *Change for a Cure Fundraiser* to help fight Juvenile Diabetes. If you would like to help with future fundraisers or events, please contact Ms. Nachlas at Sarah_B_Nachlas@mcpsmd.org or ask a Good Knight what you can do to help.

We are pleased to announce that 10 of our 8th graders, 12 of our 7th graders, and 12 of our 6th graders have been recognized as being positive members of our community and have been elected by both their teachers and their peers to be Good Knights. Please congratulate them on receiving this great honor.

8th Grade Good Knights

Jasmine Benjamin	Deondre Jolly
Zamari Love	Ahn Ho
Rohini Manickam	Adrian Singley
Adrienne Lee	Devin Suvarnasuddhi
Linda Wu	Zack Weston

7th Grade Good Knights

Jasmin Sanchez	Jared Barnes
Shaana Jhangiani	Glenester Thomas
Abby Ross	Josh Climenson
Reyna Portillo	Ike Sharpe
Dorothy Cho	Anthony Chan
Jenny Chen	Raja Goyal

6th Grade Good Knights

Ilana Bleich	Xavier Benjamin
Angelique Ryan	Akash Bhargava
Tara Bhardvaj	Michael Bonds
Kristin Melvin	Michael Castellano
Paris Tyson	Patrick Gaegler
Caroline Hanson	Matt Finn

Staff Appreciation

National Teachers Appreciation Week was held May 4-8th. Our teachers and staff were overwhelmed by the “showering” of appreciation.

Our Parent Teachers Association would like to thank the following people and local businesses for their generous assistance with our celebration. This would not have been possible without their support.

PTSA Members:

Steven Thornberry
Yetty Logan
Mary Jane Siok
Jodi Bierlair
Charlie Hall
Vonetta Moore
Genevieve LaClair

Local Business:

Giant Food- Neelsville Plaza
Pizza Hut- Crystal Rock Drive
Red Robin Restaurant
Red Rock Canyon Grill

A special thanks to Ms. Nachlas and the Good Knights club for the “Wall of Appreciation” on display in the foyer all week.



PTSA Executive Officers & Committee Chairs

Executive Officers

President	Steven Thornberry	301-515-1347
First Vice President	Jodi Bierlair	301-972-9297
Treasurer	William Jarvis	301-916-1575
Corresponding Secretary	Pam Flatow	301-740-8794
MCCPTA Representative	Don Mewha	301-972-9297
MCCPTA Representative	OPEN	

Committee Chairs

Book Fair	Steven Thornberry	301-515-1347
Family Programs	OPEN	
Fundraising	Mary Jane Siok	301-540-6540
Membership	Yetty Logan	301-540-1884
NAACP Representative	OPEN	
Newsletter Editor	Mary Jane Siok	301-540-6540
Newsletter Copy/Mailing	OPEN	
Staff Appreciation	Vonetta Moore	301-528-5915
Student Directory/Ads	Gerald Hall	301-515-0477
Volunteer Coordinator	Genevieve LaClair	301-916-4675
8 th Grade Matriculation	Charlie Hall	301-515-0477

General Information

Neelsville Middle School
11700 Neelsville Church Road
Germantown, MD 20876

School Phone: 301-353-8064

Office of Transportation: 301-670-8275

Special Education Routes: 301-353-0982

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/neelsvillems/>

Neelsville Middle School PTSA
11700 Neelsville Church Road
Germantown, MD 20876

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