

# KP PTA Eaglenews



Volume 1, Issue 8

April 2009

## President's Message

By Susan Anderson

Spring has weakly sprung, but I have the fever, anyway! I would like to start by giving **Susan Vinal** a hearty thank you for another well-attended Shamrock Skate. She was a little nervous about switching to a Sunday evening, but that did not deter this community. I would also like to thank **Debra Egan** for her mood-setting Irish music. As far as I know, there were no injuries this year, and even I did not fall. There are so many talented and generous people in our community that I am always so astounded by all that we do here at KP.

Looking ahead into April, we start the month with the PTA Meeting on **Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup>**. Please note the different day of the week. Otherwise, the format is the same. We will start at 7:15 p.m. with coffee and catching up, and then open the meeting at 7:30 p.m. with our speaker and KP mother, **Allison Aubrey** of NPR. She will be speaking on children's nutrition and also the relationship between motion and cognitive understanding. I often hear her health updates on NPR and am so pleased to have her to ourselves. The Nominating Committee will also be presenting the slate of officers for the 2009-2010 school year. I hope you all will come and be a part of this exciting evening.

Spring Break is also an exciting time in April. Please note that we are on break from Sat 4/4 through Mon 4/13, and we return to school on Tuesday 4/14. This leads us right up to the Kindergarten Orientation being held on Thursday 4/16

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## APRIL

<b>1, Wednesday</b>	<b>PTA Meeting, 7:15PM</b>
<b>6-13, Mon-Fri, Mon</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK, no school</b>
<b>15, Wed</b>	<b>Individual and Class Pictures</b>
<b>16, 17 Thu, Fri</b>	<b>Kindergarten Orientation- no school for Kindergarteners</b>
<b>27-30 Mon-Thu</b>	<b>Terra nova Testing window for 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders</b>

## Get Ready for Italian Festival Field Day!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! On Friday, May 22, from 12:45 - 3:15, KP's FIELD DAY will have an ITALIAN twist . . . The students will spend the afternoon rotating through stations representing the 20 regions of ITALY. A combination of games, athletics, the arts, and cooking demon-strations will reflect each region's traditions. Sound like "divertimento" (fun)? It will be if we have plenty of "Italophiles" manning the booths that day!

Per favore, contact Monique Bonner (mebonner@comcast.net) to volunteer for the ITALIAN FESTIVAL FIELD DAY on May 22! GRAZIE!

\* \* \* \* \*

**MAGPIE IS COMING TO KP!  
EARTH DAY, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22  
TWO SHOWS STARTING AT 9:30 A.M.**

Living Planet - Come, explore Earth's complex web of life forms. Fun, music and sign language with ecology. Magpie celebrates the diversity of life on Earth!

Each performance gives students concrete knowledge of how they can make a difference in preserving our resources. ALL Welcome! Brought to you by the KP PTA.

and Friday 4/17. Please note our current Kindergarteners do not attend school on those two days. If you have any neighbors with a child turning 5 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>, please have them call the school office and arrange for their registration with the school.

I want to apologize in advance for the way the school and PTA calendar fell into place for the Spring. The combination of Spring Break and testing schedules left us with some tight scheduling of activities in May, and I hope you will all mark your calendars now and rest up!

May 8 Moms & Muffins (have Dads check schedules now to give a bit of pre-Mother's Day help)

May 16 Family Fun Day

May 22 Festival D'Italia

May 28 Science Fair

I would like to pass on the reminder that our school opens at 8:50 a.m. If your child is a safety patrol, their start time is 8:45 a.m. to prepare for the school opening. I realize this late start time can be difficult for families. I strong-armed my child into being a safety patrol to get the extra five-minute start to work. However, children are unsupervised before this 8:50 a.m. time, so the school would appreciate our support in this matter.

I hope to see you all on April 1<sup>st</sup> and as always feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

\* \* \*

## SCIENCE FAIR

*The Annual KP Science Fair will be held this year on Thursday, May 28th. Start thinking about ideas for your project. And remember, Science Rocks!*

\* \* \*

## SHAMROCK Skate a Big Hit

By Susan Vinal

I wanted to quickly thank everyone who came to the KP Shamrock Skate at Wheaton Ice Rink on March 8th. We had a record-breaking **241 skaters** show up! Thanks to all the teachers (Ms. Blumenthal, Ms. Stern, Ms. Marshall and Ms. Sapphire) and to Ms. Liess for coming ... and of course, to all of you and your children, who made the event so much fun! It was nice to see all the parents out there skating with (and/or trying to keep up with) their kids. I especially liked seeing all the new KP families who came with their adorable Kindergarteners in tow. Thanks, too, to Debra Egan for her fantastic Irish music selection, and to Jamie Beins, who assisted us in getting the music playing on Wheaton's tricky stereo system. We'll see all of you next year!

**Jump Rope for Heart is scheduled for the week of May 4-8. Start practicing on your jump rope and get ready to learn about heart health! Look for more info coming soon!**

## Field Update

By Susan Anderson

After receiving a few inquiries, I wanted to update everyone on our field. Currently, the field is still closed to rentals by ICB and will be through August. Thus, usage is still limited to school activities. Signs are being arranged to post around the field to keep the greater Parkwood community informed, also. In the next few weeks, Spring maintenance will be done. It will not affect recess or PE classes (well, maybe a touch of mud). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

\* \* \*

## Buy a Brick

By Heather Tinsley

Please note that the 2009 Brick order form has been loaded into the Eaglenet "files" section of the PTA website. Click on the following link and scroll down to the bottom of the list to access the order form:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kp-eaglenet/files/>

Simply download the order form, fill it out and return it with a check to the address indicated on the form.

For a \$100 donation, your brick will be imprinted with your name or message and placed within the school grounds. However, please note that delivery and placement of your brick order will be dependent on level of interest, as we need a "minimum" number in order to process an order for the school. If you have any questions please contact me at [5tinsleys@comcast.net](mailto:5tinsleys@comcast.net) or (301) 942-0778. Thanks!

## Help Gear Up for the 8K

By Mimi Youmans

The Kensington 8K Race organizers need your help. We'd like to create big, simple, colorful flags to display at the post-race festival. If you or someone you know can help us with this project, we would be extremely grateful. Free race registration :)

\* \* \*

## MCCPTA Gifted Child Committee

By Michele Santy

For any of the upcoming meetings sponsored by the MCCPTA Gifted Child Committee, any parent, student or other community member is welcome to email questions to the MCCPTA Gifted Child Committee Chair before the meetings or write questions on 3x5 cards that we will distribute to audience members at the meetings.

Upcoming meetings currently scheduled include the following:

- Wednesday, April 22, 2009, about middle school course acceleration; and
- Wednesday, May 6, 2009, about the accelerated mathematics curriculum.

All of these meetings will begin at 7:30 p.m. and will take place at the auditorium of the Carver Educational Services Center (CESC), 850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, Maryland 20850. The meeting will be open to the public and ample parking is available.

For questions, please contact Susan Joyce Thomas, Chair, MCCPTA Gifted Child Committee, [susan.thomas30@verizon.net](mailto:susan.thomas30@verizon.net) or 301-871-1345.

## Calling All Dog Lovers!!

By Mimi Youmans

On Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, the Kensington 8K Race will feature an expanded Post Race Festival. We've got lots of fun things planned – one of which is a Pup Strut (a dog parade around the perimeter of the festival site.) Please note that this will be a non-competitive Pup Strut – every dog's a winner. All participants will be awarded an organic dog treat, (please notify us in advance of any allergies – we will do our best to accommodate your dog's needs).

In order to make this as much fun as I know it can be, we are conducting a search for a CDO – (Chief Dog Officer). If you feel you possess the qualities and drive to perform the job, (which is basically getting everyone in a line and saying, "go now"), then we'd love to hear from you. Please contact me at [mbyoumans@aol.com](mailto:mbyoumans@aol.com) or 301-530-5351. I know it will be an enriching experience – and a heck of a lot of fun!

**HOLD THE DATES for fundraising dine-out nights, both in Rockville: April 16<sup>th</sup> at Fuddruckers (5-8 p.m.), and May 11<sup>th</sup> at Silver Diner (5-8 p.m.).**

## Spring Has Sprung ... Watch Your Step!

By J.E.N. Cope

The daffodils planted around the school are popping up - those wonderful signs of SPRING!!!! Please help foster their growth - especially along the median in the Franklin Street parking lot where grape hyacinths AND daffs were planted by Martin Livezey and his wonderful gardening crew - by watching your step!

## New Block Parent Signs

Need a bright, new, unfaded BLOCK PARENT sign to display at your house!?! Just call (301) 530-0884 or e-mail: [jencope@hotmail.com](mailto:jencope@hotmail.com) for a FREE sign AND FREE delivery.

## Get Ready for Family Fun Day!

Family Fun Day will be held Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, from 4-7 p.m. As always, there will be plenty of great food and fun, but new this year, we will also have FIVE GUYS serving their awesome burgers and dogs. You won't want to miss it! More details to follow, but contact Sue Chase at [suechase@verizon.net](mailto:suechase@verizon.net) or Beth Krupinski at [bkrupinski@verizon.net](mailto:bkrupinski@verizon.net) for details.

## Thanks Goes Out to Helpful Families

By Penny Rigler and Kerry Regan

The Hospitality Committee would like to thank the Knapp and Matus families for supplying such a yummy breakfast for our staff on February 3rd. We would also like to thank the Steel and Daymude families for preparing a wonderful breakfast on Friday, March 20th. Thank you so much for all that you do!!!

We would also like to give a shout out to Jeanette Roman and Jennifer Daymude for serving up all of the goodies at our February and March PTA meetings. Thanks Jeanette and Jennifer!!!

### NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION

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Copy/Distribution: Kathy Zwack  
Contributors: YOU! Send news items to [pansi1213@gmail.com](mailto:pansi1213@gmail.com) with Eaglenews in the subject line

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## The 3 R's? A Fourth Is Crucial, Too: Recess

By Tara Parker-Pope

The best way to improve children's performance in the classroom may be to take them out of it. New research suggests that play and down time may be as important to a child's academic experience as reading, science and math, and that regular recess, fitness or nature time can influence behavior, concentration and even grades.

A [study](#) published this month in the journal *Pediatrics* studied the links between recess and classroom behavior among about 11,000 children age 8 and 9. Those who had more than 15 minutes of recess a day showed better behavior in class than those who had little or none. Although disadvantaged children were more likely to be denied recess, the association between better behavior and recess time held up even after researchers controlled for a number of variables, including sex, ethnicity, public or private school and class size.

The lead researcher, Dr. Romina M. Barros, a pediatrician and an assistant clinical professor at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, said the findings were important because many schools did not view recess as essential to education. "Sometimes you need data published for people at the educational level to start believing it has an impact," she said. "We should understand that kids need that break because the brain needs that break."

And many children are not getting that break. In the *Pediatrics* study, 30 percent were found to have little or no daily recess. Another report, from a children's advocacy group, found that 40 percent of schools surveyed had cut back at least one daily recess period. Also, teachers often punish children by taking away recess privileges. That strikes Dr. Barros as illogical. "Recess should be part of the curriculum," she said. "You don't punish a kid by having them miss math class, so kids shouldn't be punished by not getting recess."

Last month, Harvard researchers reported in *The Journal of School Health* that the more physical fitness tests children passed, the better they did on academic tests. The study, of 1,800 middle school students, suggests that children can benefit academically from [physical activity](#) during gym class and recess.

A small study of children with [attention deficit hyperactivity disorder](#) last year found that walks outdoors appeared to improve scores on tests of attention and concentration. Notably, children who took walks in natural settings did better than those who walked in urban areas, according to the report, published online in August in *The Journal of Attention Disorders*. The researchers found that a dose of nature worked as well as a dose of medication to improve concentration, or even better.

Andrea Faber Taylor, a child environment and behavior researcher at the Landscape and Human Health Laboratory at the [University of Illinois](#), says other research suggests that all children, not just those with attention problems, can benefit from spending time in nature during the school day. In another study of children who live in public housing, girls who had access to green courtyards scored better on concentration tests than those who did not.

The reason may be that the brain uses two forms of attention. "Directed" attention allows us to concentrate on work, reading and tests, while "involuntary" attention takes over when we're distracted by things like running water, crying babies, a beautiful view or a pet that crawls onto our lap. Directed attention is a limited resource. Long hours in front of a computer or studying for a test can leave us feeling fatigued. But spending time in natural settings appears to activate involuntary attention, giving the brain's directed attention time to rest. "It's pretty clear that all human beings experience attentional fatigue," Dr. Faber Taylor said. "Our attention has to be restored from that fatigue, and there is a growing body of research evidence that nature is one way that seems particularly effective at doing it."

Playtime and nature time are important not only for learning but also for health and development. Young rats denied opportunities for rough-and-tumble play develop numerous social problems in adulthood. They fail to recognize social cues and the nuances of rat hierarchy; they aren't able to mate. By the same token, people who play as children "learn to handle life in a much more resilient and vital way," said Dr. Stuart Brown, the author of the new book, *Play: How It Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination and Invigorates the Soul* (Avery).

Dr. Brown, a psychiatrist in Carmel Valley, Calif., has collected more than 6,000 "play histories" from human subjects. The founder of the National Institute for Play, he works with educators and legislators to promote the importance of preserving playtime in schools. He calls play "a fundamental biological process." "From my viewpoint, it's a major public health issue," he said. "Teachers feel like they're under huge pressures to get academic excellence to the exclusion of having much fun in the classroom. But playful learning leads to better academic success than the skills-and-drills approach."

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