



# Paw Prints

The Monthly PTSA Newsletter of Washington Middle School

<http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/washingtonms>

FEBRUARY 2008

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## Our School, Our PTSA

Memories of *Winter Break* are barely fading and already we find the *Mid-Winter Break* looming ahead. From experience, we know that all too soon, *Spring Break* will slip past and then suddenly it will be summer again...another school year come and gone. These annual milestones provide tangible proof that time indeed passes quickly. They also serve as a reminder that we must actively take steps to ensure the goals we set are reached. If you have been meaning to get around to volunteering for the PTSA, I urge you actually pick up the phone and do so. Don't let another opportunity pass you by.

Each of us has the power to change things for the better. By volunteering your time and talents, you can make a difference. Whatever level of commitment you are able to make, the WMS PTSA has a place for you. If you have an hour or two to spare, volunteer to help out at the PTSA's single largest fund raiser, the fabulous *Spring Fling Auction*. Have a little more time on your hands? Maybe helping out at the upcoming *Ice Cream Social* or at other year-end events would be for you. If you feel that you're ready to have a longer-lasting impact on WMS, I encourage you to consider chairing a committee or serving as a PTSA officer next year. As you know, the PTSA is an all-volunteer organization and we need your help to keep it moving forward.

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## A Note from the Principal

Brrr...Winter is officially here. Ice and snow have crusted the streets, the sun is poking its head out only sporadically, and the cold chill outside during arrival and departure times pierces even the warmest of coats. Offering slight hope for the optimist in all of us is the slight, but noticeable, change in afternoon daylight as we creep towards spring. Hang in there!



Before venturing too far, congratulations and thanks are due to the entire Washington family for their support of our *Cans and Coats* food and coat drive the final two weeks of December. In just six days of collecting, students were able to gather over 1,000 pounds of canned and packaged food and an incredible 300 plus coats and sweaters. These items were donated to two of the community charities working in our neighborhood, both of which were quite surprised and pleased by the level of donation brought in. *Thank you.*

A second note of thanks goes out to all the parent volunteers who are helping with our 2008 Parent Tours. **Stephanie Bower**, from the WMS PTSA, has again done a fantastic job of organizing the January and February tours. Our parent

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## Spring Fling Auction and Dinner Celebrate Life!

6 p.m., Friday, March 14 at St. Demetrios Church, Montlake

**Donate items, volunteer on auction night, help in any way.** Do your kids want to volunteer? Send them our way. We have plenty of jobs for kids!

Make your reservations by February 21. Early Bird deadline is Feb. 15. Contact **Su Chase** (722-1103) or **Elizabeth Lowry** (725-0288) [WMSauction2008@hotmail.com](mailto:WMSauction2008@hotmail.com).

## We Need Wine, Wine and More Wine

Dig into your wine stash or pick up a couple of extra bottles on your regular trips to the wine shop. High-end wine is gathered and sold as instant wine



cellars during the live auction.

Wines priced up to \$35 a bottle become part of the *Wine Toss*. On the night of the auction, you may buy a bottle of wine for \$15 at the bar. Or you can pay an extra \$5 (for a total of \$20) for the chance to win a bottle of fine wine during the *Wine Toss*. You toss three rings, and you win whatever bottle your ring lands on. \$20 buys you three chances to ring a winning bottle of wine.

The best part is everyone is a winner during the *Wine Toss*. Even if you don't ring a bottle, you get a bottle of the house table wine. Contact **Paula Wieber**, (760-1931, [home@dbrlaw.com](mailto:home@dbrlaw.com)) to donate wine from \$15 a bottle to \$100, or more.

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## A Note from the Principal, *continued from page 1*

guides are well prepared, with excellent maps and materials to help guide the 200 or so visitors we see on each tour session. Not only are these volunteers championing the wonderful opportunities that Washington has to offer, but they also speak highly of the faith they have in Seattle Schools and Public Education. *Thank you.*

A third note of recognition goes to the ASB Cabinet, the First Period Representatives, ASB coordinator and 6th Grade House Administrator, **Mrs. Jones**, and the WMS student body for the planning and presenting of a fantastic MLK assembly and celebration. Student body officers and representatives coordinated a school-wide celebration of the dreams and hopes our students have for our school, for our country, or for the world. *Thank you.*

Congratulations are also in order for all the students who participated in the *Spelling Bee* and the *Geography Bee*. When the dust settled, Sixth Grade students stood at the top of both competitions. Congratulations to **Jessica Hui** (first place), **Alice Mar-Abe** (second place), and **Sam Fair** (third place), who emerged as our top three spellers after two hours of grueling words. In the *Geography Bee*, **Kai Stern** finished first, followed by **Spencer Keating** and **Patrick Finney**. Special thanks to **Ms. Hill**, who stepped in for **Ms. Hoffacker**, **Ms. Amster-Burton**, and **Ms. Shadow** who helped run both events.

We also want to take a moment to wish two staff members all the best as they depart at mid-semester. **Peter Behr** is returning to his work with medically fragile students as he accepts a new position at Nathan Hale High School. While staying at WMS was high on Peter's list, his true heart and calling is with the medically fragile community. Also departing at mid-semester is **Ben Kagy**. Mr. Kagy has been a long-term substitute in our ELL program during the first semester. His work has been excellent. *Thank you and good luck*, Mr. Behr and Mr. Kagy.



And finally, Second Semester has now begun. Within the next few days, reports cards from First Semester should arrive home. While applauding the large number of students in all of our programs who have done exceptionally well during the first semester we also recognize that there is still a lot of work to be done. Take the time to sit down with your student and discuss the grades earned. Check in on the goals you set together back in September. What worked? What needs help? What are the goals for second semester? Do we need to get counselors and teachers together for a conference? What else do we need to do to ensure Second Semester is successful? Keep talking with your student, and above all, let us know what we can do as we head into the second half of the year.

*Jon Halfaker, Principal*

## Honored Chinese Guests

WMS recently hosted a delegation from our sister school in Jiamusi, PRC. While they were here the seven dignitaries including **Ms. Wu**, the vice mayor of the city in charge of education, **Ms. Xu**, the principal of our sister school #1 Middle School,



**Mr. Yan**, the Superintendent of the Education Bureau, one parent and three teachers enjoyed the hospitality of WMS families who hosted them and showed them around the city.

Our guests were able to have lunch at *Microsoft*, thanks to two parents who work with the company, they visited the city hall and were very pleased to meet **Gary Locke** at his office. The delegation was particularly interested in promoting a continuation of our friendship and in re-starting the excellent exchange program that for a number of years brought Chinese Language instruction to the students of WMS. One former student who is now at Garfield joined us for the day with the former Governor and another former Chinese language student who is now in college joined us for lunch. This shows the long lasting effects of our exchanges and instruction.

Because of the uncertainty of getting visas, it was not possible to make arrange to meet with district officials but the group made the best of their time, enjoyed working with **Mr. Katz's** geography students and enjoyed the holiday season in Seattle.

*Marcy Shadow*

### Tours for Prospective WMS Families

WMS tours have begun. The last two will be held on February 7 and February 14. Tour programs start at 8 am in the lunchroom and should conclude by around 10 am. For more information, please contact the WMS Main Office at 252-2600.

### Our School, Our PTSA, *continued from page 1*

Even if you've never volunteered before, it isn't too late to start. In fact, now that your child is moving through the teen years, it may be more important than ever to become involved. By participating in the school community and interacting with teachers, administrators and other parents on a regular basis, you will gain first-hand knowledge and understanding of your student's daily activities. This can provide insight into the trends and fads of school life that will help you communicate with your child as he or she grows and changes (all without intruding on your child's privacy or personal space).

Please contact our volunteer coordinator, **Lisa Coughlin** ([lisac@cycla.com](mailto:lisac@cycla.com)) to volunteer for any position, large or small. As always, the PTSA would love to hear from you with any ideas, questions or concerns.

*Jackie Smalley, PTSA Co-President  
Mother of 6th grader Tristan Smalley*

## You Oughta Be in (Yearbook) Pictures

*Yearbook* wants your photos of the WMS band, orchestra or choir performing! Even if it is just one picture, please consider emailing or dropping off in person your one image. *Yearbook's* deadline for music pages is in March. Thank you in advance! **Jennifer Matter**, Technology and Yearbook Teacher, Room 120, (252-2600, [jematter@seattleschools.org](mailto:jematter@seattleschools.org)).



## WMS Music News



### Upcoming Events

**February 4** **Bellevue Jazz Festival**, Senior Jazz Band, Bellevue Community College.

**February 14** **WMS Jazz Night**. 7pm at Mount Baker Community Club. Senior Jazz band, and possibly Junior Jazz Band, Beginning Jazz Band.

**April 18** **Gypsy Jazz** at Town Hall, 7pm; Senior Orchestra will perform with Grammy-nominated violinist **Darol Anger** and maverick multi-instrumentalist **Joel Craven**. Volunteers are needed to serve food and help with advertising sales. Contact **Suzanne Thompson** ([suzannadanna1958@yahoo.com](mailto:suzannadanna1958@yahoo.com)).

### Spring concert CDs

The Spring CD preorders from last year have all been distributed. If you missed out on the preorders, there are still limited quantities available for purchase. The merchandise table will be up and running at the Jazz Fundraiser on February 14th so you can purchase one then for \$12. If you have any questions, e-mail **Nancy Smith** ([nancoissmith1@comcast.net](mailto:nancoissmith1@comcast.net)).



### Auction help still needed

We are still looking for *FOWM* parents, families or friends to donate a CD, dessert or flowers for the "Year of Flowers/ Desserts/CD's" auction items. We are hoping to get two 1 year sets of each of these items for the auction since they are a very popular item. If you would like to participate in this way, please e-mail **Nancy Smith** ([nancoissmith1@comcast.net](mailto:nancoissmith1@comcast.net)).

### FOWM Email

Our email list is up and running, and you should now be receiving communication via email. If you would like to be added to this list, please email **Laurie de Koch** ([WMS.Music@gmail.com](mailto:WMS.Music@gmail.com)). Please approve this email address in your system so that *FOWM* email doesn't get sent to your junk file.

### Attend a Friends of Washington Music Meeting

All parents are welcome to attend *FOWM* board meetings on Wednesday, February 6 and Wednesday, March 5 at 7:00pm in the band room (room 8). Your participation can help make this a great year!

## Planning a Tour of Nathan Hale High School?

Nathan Hale has had another tour schedule change. Their evening presentation will be Wednesday, February 6 rather than the originally scheduled date of Thursday, February 7. This is to avoid a conflict with Roosevelt's evening presentation, also scheduled for February 7.

### Spring Fling Auction, continued from page 1

Not sure what type of wine to buy? Stop by **Urban Vines**, 3605 S. McClellan (near Mioposto, and right across the street from Mt. Baker Park), [www.urbanvines.com](http://www.urbanvines.com), and ask **Lisa** or **Garrett** for recommendations. You also can e-mail [mail@urbanvines.com](mailto:mail@urbanvines.com) for suggestions. Or just call 721-3456, and buy over the phone. The auction committee will pick up your wine and deliver it on auction night.

### Donate now

Our procurement team has been working hard, and we have already received many silent and live auction donations. Feb. 14 is the deadline. Please submit items now! Use the enclosed donor form and mail it in. Donor forms also may be downloaded from [www.seattleschools.org/schools/washingtonms](http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/washingtonms)

### How to Submit Forms

- Mailing to the school, 2101 S. Jackson, Seattle, 98144. Write AUCTION on the envelope.
- Return to the office
- E-mail to [WMSauction2008@hotmail.com](mailto:WMSauction2008@hotmail.com).
- Arrange pick up of your auction item by contacting **Su Chase** (722-1103) and **Elizabeth Lowry** (725-0288) [WMSauction2008@hotmail.com](mailto:WMSauction2008@hotmail.com)

### What we need

**Hosts for theme parties.** Donate the use of your home for an evening. Or, prepare and present a meal or cocktail party at someone else's home.

**Cabins and vacation homes.** Donate a week or weekend's worth of time at your vacation home. Is your home rustic? Is it divine? Either works! These are some of the best selling items at the auction.

**Gift certificates** for restaurants, gourmet shops, salons, etc. Ask your massage therapist for a gift certificate, or your favorite coffee shop. Ask your local nursery to donate... You get the idea.

**Experiences.** Do you speak French? You could donate one-on-one French lessons! Are you a gourmet cook? Give a few hours of your time to tutor a beginner. Do you bike to work? Spend a few hours helping a beginning bike commuter map the best route.

There are two advocacy opportunities in Olympia coming up for WMS parents: *Gifted Education Day on February 8th*, and *PTA Focus Day on February 13th*. Traveling to Olympia can be fun and educational, and meeting legislators face to face is effective. Parents may also want to bring students with them. If you can't take the day off, participate by sending email messages, letters, or calling your legislators.

Talking with legislators is very important and it's easy because they're regular people who do want to hear from you, their constituents. As parents, grandparents, and educators, Coalition members know all about the needs of our gifted children, so

you can provide great insight and expert advice to legislators. Legislators are particularly interested in personal stories and reports from your children.

### **Gifted Education Day**

On Friday, February 8, The Gifted Coalition and its supporters from throughout the state join together on a special day to contact their elected lawmakers in Olympia either in person or by phone, letter or email. The goal of Gifted Education Day is to deliver a uniform and consistent message about the Coalition's top legislative priorities to as many lawmakers as possible. You will also have the opportunity to participate in other activities, such as general sessions led by speakers who can help you better understand how to participate in our support work on behalf of gifted students, Capitol Campus tours, and legislative hearings.

### **Issues for Gifted Education Day**

It is unlikely that the legislators will consider increasing funding for highly capable to the 3% level this coming session, as advocated by the State PTA, but we need to thank them for the increase in 2007 and start building support for our 2009 effort. After all, it took nearly 10 years of unceasing effort to break through the 2% ceiling last year. We want to maintain and build on our momentum.

Another issue that deserves attention on February 8th is the rewrite of the math and science standards mandated in SSHB 1906. The math rewrite is nearly completed and will be presented to the legislature by the end of January. The science review is just getting underway. Currently, the math rewrite as presented since it makes no provision for the special needs of mathematically advanced and highly capable students. Since the legislators have to approve the new standards, we need to make every effort to educate them on the needs of gifted students for acceleration and differentiation and convince them that provision needs to be made in the standards themselves.

### **PTA Focus Day, February 13th**

Plan to join PTA advocates from across the state in Olympia for the WSPTA annual *Focus Day*. A full day of activities is planned, and includes the following:

- Issue briefings on WSPTA's five Priority Issues
- Pre-arranged visits with legislators and legislative staff
- Brown bag lunch with fellow PTA members
- Legislative committee hearings
- A tour of the newly renovated Capitol Building
- Networking with other advocates from your area
- Additional learning opportunities
- Call-in and email opportunities for those who cannot attend the event in Olympia.

*Janis Traven, WMS Legislative Chair  
285-7375, janistraven@comcast.net*

## **Help Improve School Nutrition and Preserve Our Farmland**

The environmental community is working with farmers, children's advocates and public health folks to pass a new law that aims to dramatically increase access to locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables in our schools. The *Local Farms—Healthy Kids* campaign seeks to increase sustainable markets for Washington's small and mid-sized farms, get more nutritious foods to kids and families that need it most, and raise awareness about the importance of strong connections with our farming communities.



1. Representative Pettigrew (one of the three legislators representing Madrona, Leschi, Mount Baker and areas south) is doing an amazing job spearheading the effort. Please consider emailing him at [Pettigrew.eric@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Pettigrew.eric@leg.wa.gov) to thank him for his work. The more he hears from his constituents, the stronger of a champion he will be!

2. There was a great op ed in the Seattle PI about this effort. Here's the link: [http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/opinion/344051\\_localfarms19.html](http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/opinion/344051_localfarms19.html). Consider submitting a short (under 200 words) letter to the editor ([editpage@seattlepi.com](mailto:editpage@seattlepi.com)) expressing support for getting more Washington grown fresh fruits and vegetables into our schools.

3. Get involved. If you're interested in getting email updates on the campaign and being advised of other opportunities to weigh in with emails, phone calls to your legislators, etc., contact **Kerri Chehovic** at the Washington Environmental Council ([kerri@wecprotects.org](mailto:kerri@wecprotects.org)).

4. Pass this on. The more we can engage parents across the state, that better chance we will have in turning the tide and getting more nutritious farm food to our kids.

*Mo McBroom  
Policy Director, Washington Environmental Council*

## Thanks for Giving of Yourselves



The *Washington Middle School Student Intervention Team* would like to extend our many thanks to the Washington Middle School family for your generosity during the *PTSA Holiday Giving Drive*. Together with our community partners, Cameron Brandt and the **Molecular and Cellular Discovery group at Zymogenetics** and **Lauri Harris and the Bakery Division of Starbucks**, our

S.I.T. group was able to supply over 50 WMS students with new backpacks, school supplies, warm clothing items, gift cards for new clothing, as well as much-needed grocery shopping assistance at both Thanksgiving and the Winter Holidays.

Again, we thank each of the donors listed below, along with the many individuals who donated during the Winter Music Concert and even in the Washington M.S. parking lot! Your heartfelt caring during the holidays and throughout the school year really makes a difference in students' lives.

Rachel & Daniel Abramson  
 The Bakken Family  
 The Bronsdon Family  
 Cathy Chutich & Charles Martin  
 The D'Alessandro Family  
 Delene Deforest-Dale & The Dale Family  
 Kathy Feldman & Dana Warren  
 The Frantzen Family  
 David & Kim-Terry Gordon  
 Jim, Jill, & Emily Harris  
 Barbara Hopp  
 Melissa Huther & Gordon Hof  
 Julie Keaton  
 Hyland, Alicia, & Brian Lee  
 Drenda Matthews  
 Marnie O'Sullivan  
 Karen Overstreet & John Reed  
 The Pengra/Sult Family  
 Deborah & Bill Phare  
 Deborah Piccard  
 Larry & Michell Pihl  
 Jane Sheridan & Bill Luna  
 Katherine Triandafilou

*The Washington M.S. Student Intervention Team*



## Girls' Volleyball, Anyone?

February 4 at 9am is the first opportunity to register for the University of Washington's **Summer Volleyball Camp**. Spaces for this wildly popular camp usually fill up within hours, so be ready if you are interested. The camp is run by head coach **Jim McLaughlin**, and teaches the system used by many Seattle high schools. For details, please visit the camp website, [www.jimmclaughlinvolleyball.com](http://www.jimmclaughlinvolleyball.com).

## 8th Grade STARS for December

Madison Hall	Ava Klein
Evan Futran	Claire Tonelli
Maya Rosenfield	Georgia Ray
Jasmine Schwartz	Vince Moll
Bergen Hendrickson	Ben Geyman
Dennis Smith	Mitchell Dinwiddie
Yusuf Ibrahim	Brianna Dearing
Xueying Chen	Madison Bui
Vinh Mao	Tre' Owes
Darien Gates	Azor Cole
Georgia Ray	Yohannes Effrem
Ja'Wan Harris	Ben Feldman
Grace Franada	Sophia Schinske
Jia Wong	Graham Henry
Shu Ting Chan	Trung Vo
Gabe Wang	Nicholas Schleck
Cameron Vohr	
Rachel Abramson	
Tracy Yeung	

## All the News That Fits We Print

*Paw Prints* is always looking for articles and ideas from the entire school. Submissions can be emailed to [elizanders@yahoo.com](mailto:elizanders@yahoo.com). Deadline is the 15th of each month. Feel free to call me at 324-0222 with questions and/or ideas.

*Elizabeth Sanders, Editor*



# Paw Prints

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Jeff Storz

**Next Pawprints Deadline  
FEBRUARY 15TH, 2007**



## February Calendar

- Feb 6 EARLY RELEASE, 12:15pm
- Feb 6 *Friends of Wash. Music (FOWM)* Board Mtg, 7pm
- Feb 7 WMS School Tours 8–10am
- Feb 13 PTSA Board Meeting 7pm
- Feb 14 WMS School Tours 8–10am
- Feb 18 NO SCHOOL—President’s Day
- Feb 19–22 NO SCHOOL—Mid-Winter Break