



Paw Prints

The Monthly PTSA Newsletter of Washington Middle School

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

MAY 2008

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On the Home Stretch

Wow! It is the last quarter already. Our eighth graders are in the last leg before high school, our sixth graders have learned all the middle school ropes, and our seventh graders are hungry to be top dogs once more. New students for next year have all been welcomed with chocolate sauce and sprinkles by your PTSA at the *Ice Cream Social* last week. Just a few weeks away is the third and final **General PTSA meeting for this year on May 28th at 7pm in the lunch room**. This will be a busy meeting with votes on next year's PTSA budget and next year's PTSA board as well as an important and informative internet safety presentation by Seattle Police Detective **Garry Jackson**. Please be aware that this presentation is meant for parents and the Police Department considers it inappropriate for children.

With the final meeting rushing towards us, your board is working hard to find volunteers to lead the PTSA and all its committees next year. We've made a good start but, as always, we need your help. We always lose a few of our gems with promotion and this year is no exception. Below is the list of vacancies at press time. Please, please, please consider applying your leadership skill and energy to your PTSA board and/or one of the PTSA committees. These endeavors enable Washington to provide a middle school experience and level of opportunity that stretch and support every student every day, and it's a great way for you to be a part of this active school community.

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Pacific Northwest France

Le Panier, Cafe Campagne, Crepe de France et Sur la Table! These, among other exotic French places, are places the 2nd year, 8th grade French classes will visit on their annual French field trip and French Scavenger Hunt to Seattle's own Pike Place Market on Friday, May 30th. We will be one teacher and 55 students, so I will need 5-6 parent volunteers to help accompany, supervise and chaperone students throughout the day. If you are willing, able and speak a smattering of French (or not), please contact me (dasimmons@seattleschools.org). We will take the public bus together and kids can eat, shop and speak French all day long. Plus they will have a graded assignment when we're all done! Formidable!

Monsieur Simmons

Report From the Control Tower

A friend recently made the observation that running Washington Middle School is a lot like running an aircraft carrier with planes landing in four different directions. I laughed, but couldn't exactly tell him he was all that far from the truth. While our ideal is to have the planes landing and taking off in the same direction, there are times when planes just keep showing up, hitting the deck, grabbing a wire, and rolling to the hanger deck.

This week would be one of those weeks where there were more planes in the air than one would hope for. WASL kicked off yesterday. The day before, the Superintendent stopped by to get feedback from staff on how the school year is going. Monday, the *Seeds of Compassion* event took a couple hundred of our students down to hear the **Dalai Lama** or participate in the presentation. Add in a minor break-in over the weekend, a semi-trailer getting stuck in the main exit during the AM drop-off, the water going out for two hours on Tuesday, hiring teams trying to review applicants for our counseling and math positions, and yes, just a bit more excitement due to all the changes in schedules this week, and it all adds up to a flight deck where you definitely have to keep your eyes and ears open and focused.

It is times like this that really drive home the quality of the staff working at Washington. Without the leadership, support, and flexibility of all our teachers and support staff, keeping "the planes" in the air would be next to impossible. When we need assistance, they are always willing to step up. When we say, "Sorry, the toilets won't flush until the water pressure comes back on (honest)," they don't even bat an eye. **The week of May 5th is Teacher Appreciation Week**. Please join me in thanking all of our teachers and the support staff working at Washington Middle School. What a crew!

Another reason we are able to keep so many of our "planes" on track, is the work our crew does long after the final bell has sounded. Our HOST program, headed by **Ms. Tolson** and **Mr. Cage**, is staffed primarily by WMS staff. Not only are they putting in a full week with the students, but many of them continue on for another two or three hours of after-school activities. *Project EXCEL* just finished up another successful run. This after-school program started a year ago, and is designed as a way to teach WASL attack skills to a target group of students. This year's classes finished up last week, just in time to "Whoop the WASL." Again, this was a program staffed entirely by WMS

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Every Kid Needs a Paper Route

The *Beacon Hill News/South District Journal* seeks news carriers. Girls and boys, ages 9 and up, are invited to apply. In addition to providing your son or daughter with the opportunity to earn \$\$ (\$20–\$60 per month depending on route size), a newspaper route teaches lifelong skills including handling money, interpersonal and sales skills, commitment and follow-through. The *Beacon Hill News/South District Journal* is published every Wednesday, and papers are delivered directly to the carrier's home. For more information or to request an application, please contact **Jim** (461-1337, ppccirc@nwlink.com) or **Miya** (461-1320, circulation@nwlink.com) at Circulation, Pacific Publishing Company.

From Your PTSA, continued from page 1

PTSA Board openings for 2008–09

Co-President—serves with experienced co-prez **Harriet Bakken**
VP At-Large—runs membership drive and administers opportunity grants

6th Grade VP's (two)—lead the *New Student Ice Cream Social*

7th Grade VP's (two)—lead the *Bite of Washington*

Co-Treasurer—serves with experienced co-treasurer **Jenni Wilson**

Additional Committee Chair Openings for 2008–09

Spring Fling Auction Co-Chairs (two)—lead our largest fundraiser to another success (this year's chairs will advise you!) **Spring Fling Auction Procurement Chair**—lead tracking and confirmation of procurement for the auction.

PawPrints Editor—keep our monthly communication crown jewel publishing next year (current Editor will advise you!)

Beautification/Grounds Chair—keep WMS looking good next year

We need your help to fill the roster before June!

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering for any of these important PTSA positions, please contact Nominating Committee Chair **Stephanie Bower** (stbower@comcast.net) or Committee Member **Susan Huntley** (sjhuntley@seattleschools.org) ASAP. You can also contact any board member for more information about any of these positions.

Your PTSA supports the school in so many ways...from welcome packets the first day of school to 8th grade promotion at the end of the year and so many things large and small in between. Your support and participation is what makes this effort a success for the school and for the benefit of all our WMS students. So please, now is the time to step up and lend a hand for next year! We make this work by working together.

Thanks for your continued support, enthusiasm and participation in the Washington Middle School community.

Your PTSA Co-President, *John Eickelberg*
father of 7th grade *Brendan*

Report From the Control Tower, continued from page 1

staff looking to find ways to help our students be more successful. Also ending its third quarter run was the *Brown Bag Study Club*. An 8th grade intervention that is showing up in other grades too, the lunch program is staffed by 8th grade staff and the HOST team during the 8th grade lunch. Students sign up to spend their lunch working on missing work or getting assistance on current assignments. 8th grade staff and support team members make themselves available to assist the students, often times giving up their entire lunch break, in an effort to help students get back on track or better yet, get ahead.

We are also able to keep things running so well this year, because of all the excellent volunteer help we've received from the hundreds of parent and student volunteers who make up our tutoring corps, our parent volunteer groups, and our PTSA. I know that the tutoring program was detailed out in last month's *Paw Prints*, but again I have to say thank you to all our tutors, and to **Ms. Huntley**, our Tutor Coordinator, who spends an enormous amount of time and personal energy trying to match tutors to students, coordinate schedules, and assist in the building in any other ways needed. I also want to say a special thank you to the parents who consistently volunteer to participate on field trips, help out in the classrooms, assist in the office, or help with any of the many "we need some assistance" requests that get sent out on the PTSA email. **Lisa Coughlin** has done a wonderful job keeping the volunteers heading our way, and we are very appreciative of all her work and the support of the PTSA.

Finally, *Saturday School* is continuing another successful run this year, offering academic time and support to students who make the Saturday morning commitment. **Mrs. Jones**, **Ms. Tolson**, and the crew of teachers who open the building almost half of the Saturdays Washington is in session, not only provide a quiet, supportive, and supervised location for students to get their work done, but they also provide breakfast snacks and a hot lunch.

We applaud all of the volunteers and staff who make these programs successful, and we also recognize the students who make the commitment to using this extra time and support. They, be it on their own or with some parental "encouragement," are signing up for and making the effort to get to these additional support times. They are acting as we would want any of our young adults to act, taking responsibility for more and more of their educational success, in ways that can only make all of us proud.

Yes, we are very much like a busy aircraft carrier, with lots of "planes" in the air at any one time. But the flight deck crew, the landing officers, the fire teams, cooks, supply officers, and all the other staff that keep our ship running do their job to the highest level. If you have been part of the team that has helped even one of our students fly just a bit higher or reach a level of success that they have not experienced before, thank you! It is only with your help that we can do the work that we do.

Jon Halfaker, Principal



WMS Music News



We need your help!! Will you be returning to Washington Middle School next year? Please consider volunteering for Friends of Washington Music. We are looking for new board members, trip planners, bake sale and merchandise coordinators, concert program designers, and much more. Please let **Laurie de Koch** (719-3726, ldekoch@clearwire.net) know if you would like to help. It's a great way to get involved.

Upcoming Music Events

Thursday, May 1 WMS Spring Concert I. 7pm in the WMS Gym. The following groups will perform: Beginning Strings, Beginning Instruments, Beginning Orchestra, Beginning Band, Beginning Jazz, Junior Orchestra, Junior Band, Junior Jazz I & II. Please have your student at school at 6 pm in their formal performance wear (Tux shirt, tie & cummerbund, black pants/skirt, shoes, socks). We will hold a bake sale, so come hungry! Vietnamese sandwiches, pizza, baked goods and beverages will be sold.

Saturday, May 3 Northwest Jazz Festival in Gresham, Oregon for Senior Jazz Band.

Tuesday, May 7 Mandatory Anaheim Trip meeting. 7pm in the WMS cafeteria. All parents, students and chaperones *must* attend this mandatory pre-trip meeting.

May 8-10 Choir trip to Portland CANCELLED.

May 15-18 Anaheim Senior Music Trip. Senior Orchestra, Senior Band and Senior Jazz Band will participate in this trip.

May 23 Folklife. Seattle Center. Senior Jazz Band and Voices Choir will participate.

Thursday, May 29 WMS Spring Concert II. 7pm in the WMS gym. The following groups will perform: Senior Orchestra, Senior Concert Band, Senior Jazz Band, Voices Choir and the after school Drum Line class. Please have your student at school at 6 pm in their formal performance wear (tux shirt, tie & cummerbund, black pants/skirt, shoes, socks) We will be holding a bake sale at the event, so come hungry! Vietnamese sandwiches, pizza, baked goods and beverages will be sold.

Thursday, June 5, WMS Music Awards Night. 7pm in the WMS gym. All music classes are encouraged to come to this celebratory event. Every music class is introduced and their accomplishments described by the music teachers. Six students from each class will also be awarded most improved, most dedicated and most inspirational by their teachers and fellow students.

Monday, June 16 8th Grade Promotion. 7:30pm in the WMS gym. All non-8th grade Senior Concert Band and Junior Concert Band Students will perform for the ceremony. Due to limited space, non-8th grade parents are not able to watch.

Attend a Friends of Washington Music Meeting

All parents are encouraged to attend our next FOWM board meeting on **Tuesday, May 6 at 7pm** in Room 8 (band).

Coyote Central

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206.323.7276 info@coyotecentral.org

Comcast Cares Day at WMS

Hopefully this issue of *Paw Prints* has reached your door before May 3rd. If so, it's not too late to join other WMS family and community members, along with an army of volunteers from *Comcast* and *City Year* as we give Washington a true spring cleaning.

We need painters, landscapers, artists, and craftsmen to work on at least four major projects simultaneously kicking off at 8am on Saturday, May 3rd. We will be looking to re-do the mural that lines the western side of the 20th street exit; repaint all of the halls of Washington; upgrade signs on the north side of the building; and will be attacking the landscaping on the north and north-east sides of the building. From the sounds of it, *KIRO* will be doing a live broadcast from the worksite and *KUBE* may also be broadcasting the event. Representatives from our local and national government may stop by, too. Best of all, this is only a one day commitment. By 2pm, we hope to have the wraps on the entire project. Talk about an extreme makeover! Won't you join us? Registration will start at 7:30am. Students who want to participate must be accompanied by their individual parent/guardian, due to the liability release that has to be signed. Food and drink and most of the tools are provided, but you can always bring your favorite roller or shovel. We hope to see you there!



Mr. Halfaker



Paw Prints

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Washington Middle School PTSA

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PTSA Co-Presidents

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Position Vacant

Pawprints Editor

Elizabeth Sanders, 324-0222
elizabethsanders@yahoo.com

Pawprints Mailing Coordinator

Jeff Storz

**FINAL Pawprints Deadline
MAY 15TH, 2008**

8th Grade End of Year Activities

June 13 9:15am–1:30pm Argosy Cruise

\$37 cost includes roundtrip transportation to pier and lunch on board. More information to follow.

June 16 8:00am Breakfast & Rehearsal 7:30pm Promotion



Please remember that each student only receives two admit tickets to Promotion.

If you're interested in helping out with one of the many volunteer jobs for these events such as decorations, program/memory book, invitations and tickets, certificates, set up/clean up, food and drinks, flower arrangements, and gifts to students (whew!), contact PTSA 8th grade VP's **Kerry Van der Veen** (kerryvdv@comcast.net, 721-7942) or **Stephanie Bower** (stbower@comcast.net) ASAP.

The tradition is for 6th/7th grade parents/guardians to help out and serve food and drinks at the evening ceremony so that 8th grade parents/guardians can watch their student, so we need help from everyone!!! Thanks!

*Mrs. Cooper
8th Grade Team Leader*

Academic Saturday School

Academic Saturday School for May is scheduled for **May 3rd, May 10th and May 31st**. It is not too late to sign up for this wonderful, free program. We provide a light breakfast snack and lunch. This is open to all Washington Middle School students regardless if you are an A or E student. Please come prepared to stay the whole three hours 9am–noon, those students arriving after 9:30 will be sent home. Students should come prepared with their homework, assignments, planners etc.

Ms. Tolson, Saturday School Coordinator

Volunteer Appreciation May 21

Parent volunteers are invited to stop by the Counseling Office in the morning for refreshments and socializing.

May Calendar

- May 7 Friends of Wash. Music (FOWM) Board Mtg, 7pm
- May 14 PTSA Board Meeting, 7pm
- May 21 Volunteer Appreciation, Counseling Office
- May 21 EARLY RELEASE, 12:15pm
- May 26 NO SCHOOL—Memorial Day
- May 28 PTSA General Meeting, 7pm