



Paw Prints

The Monthly PTSA Newsletter of Washington Middle School

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

JUNE 2008

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Let's Call It a Year

Well folks, it's the last *Paw Prints* of the year and the last one for me as your leader. I would like to leave you with a clear snapshot of all your PTSA has done to brighten the future and enrich the present for all WMS students.

We started the year on a great footing with our new *Day One* committee, including calmly filling 1200 packets with useful information and forms for getting your vital data back to both the school and the PTSA at the right time for school administrators. The team also hosted parents for a coffee hour on *Day One*, providing a venue for meeting other parents, learning more about the school, and volunteering. We also deployed a new and improved email list with hundreds of new families getting connected. A scant two weeks later, the *Bite of Washington* provided delicious food, community information and the ever popular *Class Olympics*.

PTSA volunteers were there for *Picture Day* and assisted on every field trip. They reminded the WMS staff how much they're needed and loved with *Staff Appreciation* events throughout the year; published *Paw Prints* every month and *Junior Husky Happenings* every week; sponsored *Parent/Teacher Conferences*; gave hundreds of prospective new parents tours; welcomed all new students and their families with an *Ice Cream Social*; participated on the *Building Leadership Team*; rallied 150+ volunteers to join *Comcast* in sprucing up the campus; held a hugely successful *Auction* and ran an impressive *Annual Fund* campaign, both of which exceeded their goals.

Over 500 parents and teachers joined the PTSA in the fall and combined their efforts and their contributions to provide: more materials for science and art; writer's workshop materials for Language Arts; supplies for every classroom; equipment for our sports teams; substitutes for field trips; *Saturday School* all year long; and much, much more.

This Herculean effort persists right to the end, when the PTSA sponsors the *Eighth Grade Promotion* ceremony in two weeks and ties a bow around the financial books by June 30th. With many thousands of hours of work, and hundreds of thousands of dollars in contributions, your PTSA has done a huge amount of good in every corner of our Middle School.

I want to give hearty thanks to every participant in these challenges (parents, guardians, friends relatives, teachers and staff) for their perseverance and support. I also need to express my even deeper gratitude to the many folks that took a leadership
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The Year in Review

The sun is finally shining! It only took until the middle of May for us to get above 50°, so celebrating the return of summer just now may be a bit premature. Grab that SPF 45 and enjoy it while you can!

My opening article back in September focused on "getting the flywheel spinning." Before the final bell sounds let me thank some of the people who have helped keep that "flywheel" spinning all year long. Our PTSA's leadership has done a fantastic job once again supporting our students and families, finding opportunities for parents to become involved with school events, and as always, lending a hand whenever it was needed. I especially want to thank **John Eickelberg** for his two years of dedicated service as PTSA President. His organization and brainstorming have been nothing less than spectacular. I also want to thank **Harriett Bakken**, who, having served in a variety of roles over the past two years, is now moving into the role of President. I am confident that this transition will be nothing but smooth. The auction and annual fund were a smashing success thanks to **Elizabeth Lowery, Su Chase, Meg Watson, and Kathy Feldman**. Thank you to Harriet and **Jenni Wilson**, who keep the PTSA books clean and in order, despite my best efforts to throw them off. To **Jayn Foy** and her army of volunteers who take care of our staff so well, all we can say is "THANK YOU!" Jayn has given her time, energy, and much, much more during her time at Washington. We wish you well as a Garfield parent, but if it doesn't work out, know our door is always open! **Elizabeth Sanders** has set the bar very high as editor of *Paw Prints*, and continues to show patience with

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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.

**June 16 8:00am Breakfast & Rehearsal
7:30pm Promotion in the Gym**

Tickets will be mailed home in early June. Please remember that each student only receives two tickets, and **all attendees (adult or child) need a ticket.**

The Year in Review, *continued from page 1*

my moving deadline for publication. 30 additional members of the WMS community served in a variety of roles during this past year. Thank you all for your service and commitment to our community.

Also keeping the “flywheel” spinning were the wonderful members of our instructional and administrative team. Through their hard work and dedication, our students have excelled in mathematics; their writing has grown in volume and skill; the books they are picking up to read have grown more and more complex; they are gaining the confidence to speak in second and third languages; they achieve championships in math, science, art, music, and athletics; and they continue to grow as citizens of this changing world.

Four members of our instructional team are leaving us this year. **Sue Radel** has been part of our Main Office team for the past four years. In addition to handling the main phones and editing the *Daily Bulletin* with ease, Sue has solved nearly every after-school transportation dilemma that one can imagine. Sue is retiring to Minnesota at the end of June. **Mark Fielding**, a member of our Special Education team, departed towards the end of March, choosing to take full advantage of his 65th birthday. By now, he is into the mountains of Nepal, fulfilling his dreams of backpacking and climbing to his heart’s content. Retiring after the last bell in June is **Deborah Isgur**. Ms. Isgur has been a cornerstone of the WMS counseling department since the early 1980’s. Her knowledge of counseling resources, the many stages of middle school development, and just the right words to say to a parent who has reached that point of ultimate middle school frustration has helped thousands of our students and their families. While no plans have been announced on her part, I’m certain that she and her husband, former WMS science teacher **Robert Isgur**, will be heading out on the road to see what ever they want to see. Also departing WMS at the end of this school year is **Robert Knatt**. Mr. Knatt, the head of our WMS Band and Jazz Band program, has decided that after 30-plus years of tapping into the creativity of the middle school musician, it’s time to step back. As with Ms. Isgur, Mr. Fielding, and Ms. Radel, the scope of his impact on students, on the Seattle Public Schools music program, and on the jazz community of the Northwest cannot be measured. To all four of these instructional leaders, we offer nothing but best wishes as they move into their new adventures in life.

I also want to recognize the efforts of the food service team, our custodial team, the HOST crew, the Main Office staff, and of course our student wellness and counseling team, which all play a significant role, oftentimes behind the scenes, in making sure the building is a safe, clean, and organized place for students to do their best learning. The “wheel” would not spin without the work of this dedicated crew.

Finally, the “fly wheel” has been spinning so strongly this year due to all of you, the parents, guardians, volunteers, tutors, and community members who impact our students and our building every day. Your decision to stay connected to our

students, to the school, and to the vision of public education is beyond value. If you participated in one event or all of the events this year; if you volunteered for picture day or every day; if you spent time in one classroom, tutored one student, went on one field trip or you just stopped by to see if you could be of any assistance, thank you.

The final few days of June are now here. As we finish the academic year, staff is also preparing for the extreme makeover that will take place this summer. By the time our 6th and 7th grade students return, new lockers, new floors, and new window treatments (yes, those are the original shades still hanging in many of the classrooms) should all be in place to greet their arrival. The building will be closed to all beginning June 21st. On Monday, June 23rd, we will open an off-site office at the Stanford Center. Our phone number will remain the same, but our office will be located in room 2692. If you do plan to visit us during our “summer camping adventure,” you will need to check in at the main desk for access to the upper floors of the Stanford Center. If all goes as planned, we will return to WMS in the middle of August.

To our departing 8th grade students, we wish you great success. You have been a wonderful group of students, full of compassion for each other and for our school. As the first class of students I have had the pleasure to work with for three years as principal, I could not have asked for a finer group. I can only hope that I have helped you grow as young adults as much as you have helped me grow as a principal. Thank you.

Enjoy the summer!

Jon Halfaker, Principal

Comcast Cares Day a Big Success!

Thank you to *Comcast, City Year, the SPS Self-Help Team*, and especially to the students, parents, and staff that helped paint and landscape WMS on May 3rd. Within a little over three hours, the entire building had two coats of fresh paint in the halls. By the end of the day, the entire grounds of WMS had been cleaned, beauty-barked, weeded, and trimmed. From what we know, over 250 volunteers took part in the event, including many from WMS. Thank you!

From Your PTSA, *continued from page 1*

role in these activities as *Committee Chairs and Board Members*. Without their extra personal sacrifices, we would have much less good news today—many thanks to all of them.

So, as the call of the vacation season has us setting down school burdens, I’ll remind you that *we need you next year*, even more. Please contact any board member to volunteer and please rally your friends to join you. The PTSA is you, and it’s successful addition to your child’s middle school life depends on you. Thanks for your participation and have a GREAT SUMMER!

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



WMS Music News



Congratulations to our talented musicians for their hard work and accomplishments! Best wishes to our graduating 8th graders. May your next four years be filled with music! Many, many thanks to the countless volunteers who made this year a success! We could not have done it without you.

Upcoming Music Events

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. A farewell to **Mr. Knatt** will be held afterward with cake.

Monday, June 16 WMS 8th Grade Promotion. 7pm in the WMS gym. All sixth and seventh grade musicians in Senior Band and **selected** sixth and seventh grade musicians in Junior Band will be playing for the commencement ceremony. **Mr. Knatt** will notify Jr. Band participants. Students should be at school in their performance attire (black bottoms, tux shirt, tie & cummerbund) by 6pm to warm up.

Attend a Friends of Washington Music Meeting

All parents are invited to attend our last **FOWM board meeting of the year on Wednesday, June 4 at 7pm** in the band room (room 8).

Celebrating a Musical Legacy A Farewell to Robert Knatt



Mr. Knatt is retiring at the end of this school year. Join us to celebrate **Mr. Knatt's 3-plus** decades of contributions to our community with an evening of music, remembrances, and gentle humor at his expense.

Saturday, June 7, 2008

7pm (doors open at 5)

Town Hall, 1119 8th Avenue, Seattle

FREE, with donations requested to offset expenses. Place reservations at www.BrownPaperTickets.com/event/35040. Louisiana-style food will be available for purchase. Music will be provided by WMS current and alumni jazz musicians, directed by Clarence Acox.

8th Grade STARS April-May

Katharina Pream
Taylor Johnson
Michelle Bautista
Zuri Ching
Kristina Block
Clay Joyce
Diana Li
David Lang
Sam Fentahun

Jennifer Chen
Jack Sharpe
Colin Butler
Helen Tang
Brandon Aviado
Marin Gow
Paige Garratt
Nick Franko
Corby Johnson



Solana Rollolazo
Maverick Bautista
Nancy Huang
Ben McCarthy
Tamzin Atkins

New Staff Joining WMS in 2008

While the hiring process is still churning along, we have a few names to announce before we head off to summer. **Rebecca Cohen** and **Amy Hallett** are both veterans of WMS, and will rejoin the Language Arts/Social Studies teams in part-time roles. Both of them have been off this past year, and they are both very excited to return to WMS. Welcome back Ms. Cohen and Ms. Hallett. New to WMS, but not new to Seattle Schools, **Wendy Miller** joins our Math team. Wendy joins us after a long run with Meany Middle School and the District's STAR program. Welcome Ms. Miller! And finally, **Kelly Clingan** joins the WMS Music team, as she assumes the role of Band Director. Kelly is not new to WMS, having been a member of Mr. Knatt's Jazz program in the early 1990s. She was also part of the Roosevelt Jazz program, a member of the University of Washington Band, and most recently taught music in California. Welcome back Ms. Clingan. Thank you to all the staff and parents who were part of the hiring teams this spring. The staff you have helped select will only enhance the instruction our students receive.

SPL Summer Programs

Visit www.spl.org to learn about great events Live! This Summer coming to a Seattle Public Library branch near you. Anime, art classes, video games, website workshops, and more will be available at libraries all over Seattle.

Summer Reading

Summer reading should be fun reading. Check out the American Library Association's *Quick Picks* list to find recommended pleasure reading for teens: www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists/quickpicks. This page also includes links to more lists like *Great Graphic Novels for Teens* and *Outstanding Books for the College Bound*.

One anticipated book this summer is *Breaking Dawn*, latest in the *Twilight* series by Stephenie Meyer. While the *Twilight* books have been checked out a lot, the most popular series at Washington Middle School this year was Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* quartet (*Uglies*, *Pretties*, *Specials*, and *Extras*). These futuristic thrillers make great summer reading too.

Laurie Amster-Burton, Librarian and ET



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Bringing Home Gold for WMS

Congratulations to the WMS **Boys' Soccer** and **Girls' Volleyball** Teams, who both won Metro Championships!



WMS Girls' Soccer

It's not too early to get ready for fall soccer. Turn-outs are tentatively scheduled for the week of September 8, 2008. Young ladies must have current physicals and school district athletic paperwork completed before turning out. Practices are 2-3 days a week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday) with games on Saturdays. The season runs through early November.

Questions? **Amy Miller** (ammiller1@seattleschools.org)

Girls' and Boys' Fall Youth Soccer

Online registration opens May 2, 2008 at www.mblsoccer.org. Come to an informational Open House at Mt. Baker Community Center on May 6th from 6-9pm. Registration help is available at the Columbia City Library on May 14, 20 & 29 from 6-8pm. Club phone: 725-2286. *Coaches for all ages needed!*

June Calendar

- June 4 *Friends of Washington Music (FOWM)* Board Meeting, 7pm
- June 11 PTSA Board Meeting, 7pm
- June 13 8th Grade Cruise, 9:15am-1:30pm
- June 16 8th GRADE PROMOTION
8am Breakfast & Rehearsal
7:30pm Ceremony
- June 17 LAST STUDENT DAY, 2pm Early Dismissal

Academic Saturday School

The last *Academic Saturday School* is June 7th, and you can still attend even if this is your first time. Applications are available in the main office and in the counseling office. The hours are 9am-12noon, and we provide a light breakfast and lunch. Bus tokens are available to those who qualify.

Please join me and the rest of the *Academic Saturday School* staff and students a BIG THANKS to the PTSA for securing the funds to make this opportunity available to all Washington Middle School students.

Ms. Tolson, Saturday School Coordinator