



Paw Prints

The Monthly PTSA Newsletter of Washington Middle School

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

NOVEMBER 2007

Make a Donation

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Be a Part of Your Child's Middle School Experience—It's Easy and Fun!

With fall undeniably here and the winter holidays just around the corner, you may be feeling as though you couldn't possibly add another commitment to your already packed schedule. You work full time, take classes, and you have a life. But you're also a parent, and you're looking for a way to be a bigger part of your child's life. One way to accomplish this is to volunteer at WMS. Because the middle school years can be a tumultuous time for any family, it is more important than ever to stay involved in tangible ways. Family participation in school activities shows your child that you are interested in what they are doing both in the classroom and outside of school. It lets them know that you believe they are worthy of your time and energy.

When you volunteer at a PTSA sponsored event you help support your child in many ways. The money raised at these various events contributes to the classroom budget of every teacher at WMS. It funds *Saturday School* and *Experts in Residence*. It pays for substitutes so teachers can take their students on field trips. When you volunteer, you are helping to raise money for the books, magazines, and newspapers students use daily.

But we're not just about work. In addition to fund raising, PTSA-sponsored events provide opportunities for families to have a little fun and make some new friends, so consider joining. It's easy and anyone can become a member. Membership forms are available in the office. If you choose to become a part of the PTSA you will have the opportunity to be involved in large or small ways at WMS, meet other parents, and you will be able to vote at the General Meetings.

While we'd like every WMS family to join, you don't have to be a member of the PTSA to help at an event. Contact our volunteer coordinator, **Lisa Coughlin** (Lisac@cycla.com) to let us know how you'd like to contribute and you can see what we're all about. Right now we are looking for people to help with the *Spring Auction*, the *Annual Fund*, *Junior Husky Happenings* and many other things, too. Be a part of the PTSA. Your kids are worth it.


I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all who have already volunteered this year. We have had many wonderful people to help us with *Day-One*, *Picture Day*, *The Bite*, *JHH*, *Paw Prints*, the upcoming *Spring Auction* and more. We could never accomplish so much, so well, without your help.

The PTSA Board meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7:00pm in room 103. These meetings are always open, and

I encourage anyone who is interested to attend. We'd love to hear from you. Really.

Please feel free to contact me (jbsmalley@mac.com) or Co-President **John Eickleberg**, father of 7th grade **Brendan**, (eibhlis@msn.com) with any questions, ideas, or concerns.

*Jackie Smalley, mother of 6th grade Tristan
PTSA Co-President*



**2007-2008
Entertainment
Books Now On Sale**

The 2007-2008 *Entertainment Books* have arrived! This year's book is loaded with savings for local stores, restaurants, entertainment sites, and travel opportunities. The savings from using one or two of the coupons alone will cover the price of just one book.

Purchase your 2007-2008 *Entertainment Books* by stopping by the Main Office between 7am and 4pm. Books are only \$20 this year, with all profits going to the WMS Associated Student Body Fund.

Data, Data, Data...

The months of September and October have come and gone. For many, this is a time to begin finishing up final projects around the house, get prepared for winter, and possibly check off the last one or two personal goals set back in January. For some, it's a time of winding down and reflection. But not here at Washington Middle School. The past two months have been anything but "winding down."

Since the first weeks of September, the staff has undertaken a whirlwind of data collection, goal setting, and progress checks. As a learning community, we rely on this data to inform our decisions about curriculum, instruction, building climate, and other matters that impact the learning of our students and the teaching of our staff. It's one thing to have an opinion about how students are doing, but without data, that opinion is only

(continued on page 2)

Data, Data, Data, *continued from page 1*

an opinion. As **W. Edwards Deming** once said, “Data elevates the probability that you’ll make the right decision.”

As a building, we get all types of data to examine and utilize. Our WASL data from last spring starts popping up in late August. This year’s results tell us we are on the right track, with Reading and Writing scores moving above 80% passing and Math moving into the mid-70% passing rate. Our climate surveys indicate we are making an impact on the lives of our students, but that we also have work to do in creating a positive and safe learning environment for all of our students. The staff survey provides me with direct evidence of areas that I need to concentrate on as the instructional leader of the building. All great data to work with, but is it enough? No. Not only do we need this yearly data to develop instructional goals, we also need much more timely and relevant data to develop the growth in learning in our students.

So what types of data are we collecting? In reading, we’ve captured two types of data. All of our students grades 6–8 were assessed using a new partnership with *School Turnaround*, a New York based assessment firm. We also assessed many of our entering 6th grade students using the *Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)* program. These scores help us identify students who may need tutoring support, additional class time, after school time, or other supports. It also helps us identify strategies we might use in our instruction to help all students in a classroom or subject better develop their reading “attack skills.”

In math, we are assessing all of our 8th grade students to capture base-line data as we enter our work with the *Microsoft Math Initiative*. Additionally, our district’s *Edusoft* assessments provide us with “real-time” data linked to our math curriculum. In science, the focus has been on instructional data. Our continued participation in the University of Washington’s *Observing for Evidence of Learning (OEL)* project provides the science team a chance to capture data on each other as they teach in the classroom. In one of the October sessions, one staff member “unpacked” one of his lesson plans, allowing the rest of the team to better understand the objectives of the lesson, the outcomes that students should know and demonstrate, and the data that would be collected to drive further lesson planning. The team then moved into the classroom to observe the lesson being taught before heading back to debrief as a team what had been observed in the lesson. This level of data and evidence collection is a key step as we further develop our professional learning communities. In Art, Music, Technology, World Language, Health and PE, the collection of data continues. While not seen as “core” classes, the data found in these classrooms is just as valuable and important to the development of instructional goals and monitoring students’ growth and progress.

The final piece of data collected during the first two months centers on writing. Many of our Language Arts classrooms

are using the *Writer’s Workshop* method for developing our students’ writing abilities. Data from the first unit now papers a large portion of the walls outside the lunchroom and rooms 1–3. Student “publishing parties” were not only a celebration of the effort and accomplishment of the first unit on personal narrative, but they produced hard data that now shapes the instruction and “mini-lessons” the teachers are delivering in unit two.

While some may see fall as a time to begin pondering the year that was, at Washington we see it as a time to set the course for the year ahead.

Jon Halfaker, Principal

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. Deadline is the 15th of each month. Feel free to call me at 324-0222 with questions and/or ideas.

Elizabeth Sanders, Editor

The WMS Auction needs you!

Whether you have two hours a week to help, or just two hours on the night of the event, the Washington Middle School auction needs you. Volunteers make the auction happen.

Whatever your talent, the auction has a role for you. Volunteers create table decorations, help prepare the food and greet people at the door. Parents, guardians and supporters gather items for the auction by donating themselves or asking others to do so. Do you know how to record and edit sound and photos? We need your help with producing a slide show.

Each year, the WMS auction raises money to help teachers pay for classroom supplies and help fund the *Saturday School* where students can get extra help with their homework. Auction proceeds enable the PTSA to give grants to departments such as music, art, science and reading.

The auction will take place **Saturday, March 15, 2008**, and the PTSA and *Friends of Washington Music (FOWM)* are gathering fabulous items for the auction and planning a wonderful evening of music and a gourmet dinner prepared by **Thierry Rautureau** of *Rover’s* and **John Platt** of *St. Cloud’s*.

We hope to raise \$100,000 this year, and we need your help procuring items, organizing and helping with aspects of auction such as the live auction, silent auction, set up, decorations and working the day of the event.

To find out how you can help, contact auction co-chairs **Su Chase** (722-1103) or **Elizabeth Lowry** (725-0288) at WMSauction2008@hotmail.com.

Girls' Soccer

JV

November 3 9:15 vs. Whitman
at Memorial Stadium

Varsity

November 3 vs. Aki Kurose at
Rainier Beach

November 5 or 6 quarterfinals 3:00 or 4:30 at Memorial
Stadium

November 8 semi-finals 3:00 or 4:30 at Memorial
Stadium

November 13 3:00 3rd/4th place match at Memorial
Stadium

November 13 4:30 Championship Match at Memorial
Stadium



Can You Handel a Holiday Sing-Along?

On Friday, December 14th, 2007, the Garfield Symphony Orchestra presents its annual *Messiah Sing-Along* at Seattle First Baptist Church, 1111 Harvard Ave., on Capitol Hill at Seneca and Harvard.

At this most-enjoyable event, **Marcus Tsutakawa** leads a few beloved solos and several choruses, all as group sings. Tickets at the door, \$10, (\$5, students). Scores will be available for sale or rent. Refreshments for sale at intermission. This *Messiah* performance is a fundraiser for cultural exchange with Japan, including travel and scholarships. Questions? Contact **Monica Rush** (547-9953, monicar@microsoft.com).

• Legislative Report • Legislative Report • Legislative Report •

Election Day is November 6th—Don't forget to vote!

Washington State PTA Legislative Assembly

Your Legislative Chair and **Jayn Foy** represented Washington Middle School at the State PTA's Legislative Assembly on October 5–6 in SeaTac.

The purpose of the Assembly is to prioritize issues of importance to the PTA, which will then direct their lobbying efforts. Prior to the Assembly, issues are submitted for review, and briefing papers, fact sheets, and persuasion pieces are written. While at the Assembly, delegates attend up to four issue educational sessions on Friday, plus two Friday night caucus sessions to organize the proponents for the debate on each issue. I was asked to produce all the papers on the Highly Capable issue, as well as lead the issue education session.

On Saturday, each of the issues was debated; the debate involved three speakers in favor, and often a similar number opposed. Delegates then voted, resulting in the following ranking of priorities:

Top Five Priority Issues 2007–2008

1. K–12 Education Funding
2. Math and Science Education
3. Quality Teaching
4. Student Support Services (school librarians, nurses, counselors)
5. Special Education Funding

Support Issues (selected issues relevant to WMS)

Highly Capable Programs, World Languages and International, School Traffic Safety, Comprehensive School Behavioral Systems (anti-bullying), Assessments for English Language Learners, Social Studies Education

The entire list and vote counts can be seen at: <http://wastatepta.org/leg/VotingResultsLegAssembly07.pdf>

Some Common Sense Amendments

Your Legislative Chair successfully moved and added the following amendments to the State PTA platform:

- Long Term Platform—the term “medically accurate” was inserted before the phrase “comprehensive sexual health education.”

- Math & Science Education Issue Statement—the term “scientific method” was added to a list that included “algorithms, computational skills...”

Highly Capable Support moved from #9 to #7 in priority this year. Support for AP & International Baccalaureate programs also rated very high.

Release of Student Information to the Military—A plank to the PTA platform was added limiting military access to high school students,

and encouraging the state Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to help schools improve parent education on how the military may contact children. This was the third year we have tried for this language in the platform, and we were finally successful! The Garfield High and Washington Middle School PTSA representatives collaborated on this issue. The plank aligned WA State PTA with National PTA to endorse the federal “Student Privacy Protection Act” that amends the No Child Left Behind Act to block the release of names (and contact information) of students to the military unless they or their parents have actively given permission (opt in). It also recommends statewide direction and uniformity as to how release of student permission forms should inform parents.

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

VOTE YES
on
EHJR 4204
Simple Majority
for Schools

WMS PTSA Annual Fund

Welcome to Washington Middle School! You are a critical part of our diverse community of dedicated families and staff and *we need your help!*

The WMS *Annual Fund* provides funding to the school's teachers and programs, above the minimal amount provided by the Seattle School District. The PTSA organizes this fund drive because the school district does not give the school nearly enough to meet its students' needs.

Consider:

- The district gives WMS's Science Department only \$400 per year for supplies, less than 40 cents per student. Minimal lab supplies cost at least seven times that amount.
- Our Music Department gets just \$400 for all supplies. Sheet music alone costs over \$4,000 a year.
- The Social Studies Department shares a total budget of \$400 per year.
- The Technology Department also receives just \$400 per year, not enough to provide any specialized software for student learning.

Why do we have an Annual Fund?

We don't ask our students to participate in fund raising such as car washes, gift wrap, holiday, or pizza sales. Instead, as our children focus on learning, the adult WMS community joins together to raise money to support them

How are the funds spent?

Typically, the teachers use these funds for supplies, special programs, field trips, or equipment. Each department and teacher receives money to supplement their department's budget. There is a simple application process that the teachers use to request additional funds. A group of interested PTSA parents decides which requests to fund.

What is this year's goal?

In 2007–08 the PTSA *Annual Fund* goal is \$80,000, and to inspire every family in the school to give.

How can YOU help?

Make a donation to the WMS *Annual Fund*, as much as you feel you can. No amount is too small (or too big!). Help us reach our goal of 100% participation by *ALL* of the school's families. We accept checks, credit cards, stock donations and PayPal. Ask your employer for matching funds.

For more information email us at meg.watson@comcast.net. Thanks for your support!

*Kathy Feldman, Audrey Sheffield and Meg Watson
Annual Fund Committee Chairs*

University of Washington Transition School

On December 12, 2007 there will be an informational meeting regarding the *Transition School* at 7pm in room A 102 in the Physics/Astronomy Building on the University campus.

The *Transition School* is an accelerated program offered at the University of Washington Robinson Center for students 14 years of age and younger. Parents, students, and teachers are invited to attend.

For additional information, contact the Robinson Center (<http://depts.washington.edu/cscyl/programs/wsyl/i>, 543-4160).

When you Shop at Amazon.com, 4–8% of Your Eligible Purchases Can Go Directly to Our PTSA

Please visit www.seattleschools.org/schools/washingtonms and click on the *Amazon* button. When you get to *Amazon*, save to your favorites list as "AMAZON WMS." Always shop via your WMS link or by going through the WMS web site and WMS will receive the benefit.

Be sure to tell your family members and friends anywhere in the world that they can support your school just by using the above link to access the *Amazon.com* site. How easy is that??

AND DID YOU KNOW? WMS receives \$15 for every cell phone with service contract purchased through AMAZON WMS. So think of AMAZON WMS for all your shopping needs, and be sure to tell your friends and relatives to do the same. Every purchase helps!





Upcoming Events

November 3 (Saturday) first junior and senior orchestra concert, Roosevelt High School.

December 6 (Thursday) Holiday Jazz Fundraiser for Senior Jazz Band and Senior Band, possibly others, at 7pm. Rainier Beach High School Performing Arts Center. Concert attire includes black pants/skirt, black shoes, white tux shirt, tie and cummerbund. Please have your student at the venue by 6pm for warm-up. Come hungry and eat dinner while supporting our music program! Our bake sale will offer pizza, Vietnamese sandwiches, baked goods and drinks.

December 17 (Mon) Winter Recital for Beginning Strings and Beginning Orchestra students at 7pm in the orchestra room. Be on the lookout for more information and parent volunteer opportunities.

December 18 (Tue) Winter Concert at 7pm in the WMS Gym. This concert will include students from Beginning Band, Junior Band, Junior Orchestra, Senior Band, Senior Orchestra, Senior Jazz Band and Choir. Concert attire includes black pants/skirt, black shoes, white tux shirt, tie and cummerbund. Please have your student at school by 6pm for warm-up. Come hungry and eat dinner while supporting our music program! Our bake sale will offer pizza, Vietnamese sandwiches, baked goods and drinks. Bring extra money for the many fabulous merchandise items that will be on sale (see below).

January 31 (Thu) Bellevue Jazz Festival, Senior Jazz Band, Bellevue Community College.

February 14 (Th) WMS Jazz Night Fundraiser. 7pm at Lincoln High School Auditorium Senior Jazz band and possibly Junior Jazz Band, Beginning Jazz Band.

Spring Auction—*Calling all WMS auction table captains!*

A successful auction on March 15, 2008 needs lots of committed folks to attend. How do we get great attendance? We get great Table Captains! Table Captains do not purchase the whole table. They merely agree to call 6 other folks (table can seat a maximum of 10 if you want to be cozy!) and invite them to join their table. Each guest pays his or her own way. We know it's early, but nailing this down early really helps the auction committee focus on planning a beautiful auction with lots of great items to buy in both silent and live auctions, along with a wonderful meal to eat to the accompaniment of our famed WMS Jazz Musicians and WMS Strings Ensemble. It will be a great evening of fun that will benefit every student at WMS.

The first 15 Table Captains to sign up by October 31 will be entered into an exclusive raffle for a cool prize yet to be determined, but assured to be NICE! So please contact **Nancy**

Smith (923-0973, nancoissmith1@comcast.net) and say, "You can count on me!" by October 31. It's the easiest way to contribute to the auction, but it's a very important one.

FOWM does our school auction proud by donating the fabulously popular *Dessert-a-Month*, *Bouquet-a-Month*, and *CD-a-Month* auction items. Last year we donated two of each because they were in such high demand. If you make a fierce lemon meringue pie or have an expert eye for a gorgeous flower arrangement or a quirky taste in music you'd like to share, we want to know! This is the chance to share your talents and give just once for a gift that gives all year. If you can donate just one dessert, one bouquet, or one CD during the year (not starting until April '07), please call **Nancy Smith** (923-0973, nancoissmith1@comcast.net).

Merchandise for the Holidays

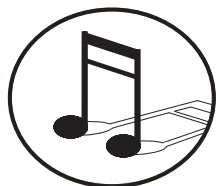
If you don't already own a **WMS Music Sweatshirt**, now is your chance to order one. The form should be coming home with your student, but just in case you don't find it, the order form can be accessed through the WMS website at:

www.seattleschools.org/schools/washingtonms/

Color illustrations can be viewed on the website as well. The deadline for ordering has been extended to Monday, October 22nd. Please return the order form together with your payment to your student's music teacher. If paying by check, please make the check payable to "*FOWM*."

The **2006-07 Spring Concert CD** will be available for purchase at our December concerts. If you pre-ordered either CD, we will get these to you before the holidays.

Worried about how you are going to concentrate on listening to your child's fabulous music while sitting on the world's most uncomfortable bleachers? We've found a solution! With our new **Washington Music Seat Cushions**, you'll enjoy the concert in comfort and support *FOWM* while you're at it. Seat cushions will be available at the Winter Concert for \$10.



Washington Middle School

m u s i c



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). 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 our next two *FOWM* board meetings on Wednesdays, November 7th and December 5 at 7pm in the band room (room 8). Your participation can help make this a great year!



Paw Prints

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**Washington Middle School PTSA
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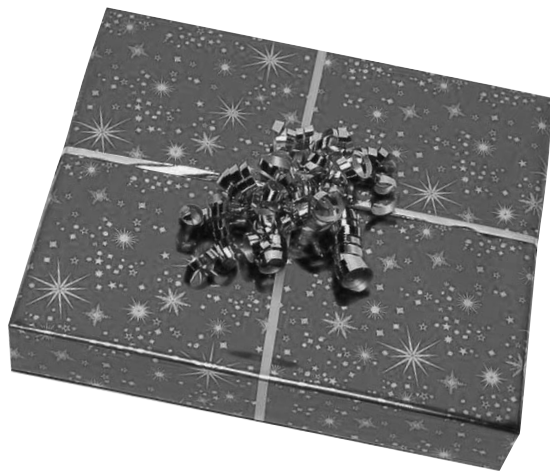
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**Next Pawprints Deadline
DECEMBER 15TH, 2007**



In the Spirit of Giving

'Tis the time of the year to join the Washington Middle School community to help make sure that all of our WMS students and families have a joyous holiday season.

The holidays are quickly approaching and your assistance is needed. Because of the growing needs of our community, the holiday giving program begins before Thanksgiving and continues through the New Year. You can help by donating gift cards or cash. Clean, gently used cold weather items can also be donated. Donations of any amount are greatly appreciated.

November Calendar

- Nov 7 *Friends of Wash. Music (FOWM)* Board Mtg, 7pm
- Nov 12 NO SCHOOL—Veterans' Day
- Nov 14 PTSA Board Meeting, 7pm
- Nov 21 EARLY RELEASE, 1:15pm
- Nov 22-23 NO SCHOOL—Thanksgiving Holiday

We would like to receive donations by December 14th. Someone will be available to take your donations at the *Winter Concert* if you haven't had a chance to send in your contribution before then. On behalf of the Student Intervention Team, thank you!

Deborah Isgur, Counselor (252-2614)

Please tear off and return with your donation to the Main Office by December 14, 2007. Checks should be made payable to *WMS PTSA/Holiday Giving*.

Donated by _____
Is it okay if we include your name on a list of donors to be published in *Paw Prints*? Yes No