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A NEWSLETTER PRESENTED BY

# goldenrod

THE PTA OF THE ROLAND PARK ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL

Issue 3 October 19, 2011

## Message from the Principal

Happy Fall to our school students and parents! Get ready for a busy time of year with numerous activities involving our students.

At Roland Park, our students excel in many areas from academics to sports to the arts. Last week, our girls soccer team defeated Fallstaff Elementary/Middle and the boys and girls basketball teams celebrated their first wins. Many students and parents were present to help cheer our teams on to success. Thank you to our coaches.

On Friday, the entire school participated in the First Lady Michelle Obama's initiative to exercise by joining together for jumping jacks! Our students began at 10:00am and jumped for anywhere from 2 to 5 minutes - which is harder than it sounds! How many can you do? It was a fun, energetic workout. Each week we look for creative activities for our children to stay fit.

We will continue to ensure a safe and secure building for our school. All visitors must sign the visitor's log in the main office upon entry and receive the official visitors pass. The office staff is happy to assist in the delivery of lunches and assignments.

Please join us **Monday, October 31 at 1:10pm** for our annual Halloween Parade for students in kindergarten, first and second grades. We will line up on the back playground and parade through the campus, down Roland Avenue for a block and then return to school.

Enjoy your week.

-Carolyn H. Cole

## Message from the PTA President

Mark your calendars now for next **Wednesday, October 26 at 6:30pm** for the first PTA General Meeting of the year. We are looking forward to hearing from BCPS Chief Operating Officer, Keith Scroggins, along with community leaders from BUILD and leaders of the Baltimore Education Coalition to learn about the Baltimore City School facility needs, and learn how can help not only our school but others. We will also cover a few other topics - attending the meeting is a great way to meet other parents and find out more about what is happening at our school. We would especially like a strong turnout to hear our guests - everyone has heard what amazing parent support RPEMS enjoys.

We are looking forward to continuing the progress that has been made at our school with the HVAC system, step repair and our pending new roof, scheduled for summer 2012.

We look forward to seeing you at the general PTA meeting!

Cheers,

-JoAnne Huey  
PTA Executive President

## RPEMS parents engage elected officials and leaders

Members of our RPEMS community have been very busy meeting with elected officials and public leaders to advocate for our schools. PTA President JoAnne Huey and parent Amy Myers met with Delegate Sandy Rosenberg at his district office on September 21. Amy also met with Senator Lisa Gladden on October 11. For both meetings we were joined by partners from the Baltimore Education Coalition (RPEMS is a member) and Transform Baltimore (our PTA is a member), the citywide campaign to renovate and modernize our schools. Our objectives were to thank Del. Rosenberg and Senator Gladden for their support of our advocacy last year to protect state funding for City Schools, as well as to share with them that while we achieved flat funding last year, we at RPEMS - and at schools throughout our city - are experiencing deep budget cuts.

On October 10, Karen DeCamp partic-

ipated in a meeting with the Baltimore Education Coalition, leaders from Baltimore City Schools and the Delegates and Senators representing Baltimore City in the State legislature. The purpose of this meeting was to show the City Delegation that the BEC and City Schools have created a strong partnership to advocate for City Schools and to call on our elected officials to support City Schools with their votes in Annapolis. On October 11, Elizabeth Saylor attended the City Schools Board Meeting. She was joined by other members of Transform Baltimore who presented an update to the Board of Commissioners about the postcard campaign we ran at 52 schools across the city during Back to School Night. RPEMS teachers and parents completed almost 250 postcards and citywide, more than 2,000 cards were completed. We are calling on the Mayor to keep her commitment to identify new

## CALENDAR

### Thursday & Friday, October 20-21

School Closed for Professional Development

### Wednesday, October 26

PTA General Board Meeting  
6:30pm

### Friday, October 28

Middle School Family Fun Night  
Music, food and fun!

### Tuesday, November 8

No School - Election Day

### Friday, November 18

Evening With the Arts  
6:30-11:00pm

## PTA Membership

Thanks to all the parents and teachers who have joined the PTA. We count on the support of our community to help the PTA reach our goals of improving our children's school experience by supporting teacher requests, extracurricular activities and special events. We have more than 250 members at this point, but we want **all parents** and teachers to join. With more than 1,300 students and 100 teachers, we could make a stronger impact with everyone on board. It's only \$10, and you can pay online through Classroom Parent or leave a check in the PTA Mailbox made out to RPEMS PTA, to the attention of Deanna Kelly. Thank you!

sources of revenue for school facilities. We are calling on the Board of Commissioners to actively support the Transform Baltimore campaign.

It is very important that our elected representatives hear from parents and teachers about how our schools are strapped. If you would like to join us in meeting with key elected officials on the state of our schools, please contact Elizabeth Reichelt at [ereichelt@comcast.net](mailto:ereichelt@comcast.net) or visit the Baltimore Education Coalition's website [becforourkids.org](http://becforourkids.org). For ways to be involved in Transform Baltimore and updates on the facilities campaign, visit [transformbaltimore.org](http://transformbaltimore.org). Please feel free to talk to any member of the RPEMS Advocacy Team or the PTA to share your concerns. Thanks very much for all that you do to make our school community strong.

-Elizabeth Reichelt

VISIT [WWW.ROLANDPARKPUBLIC.ORG](http://WWW.ROLANDPARKPUBLIC.ORG) FOR UPDATES, INFORMATION, PHONE NUMBERS.

## Green Corner

### RPEMS Vegetable Gardens Nominated for City Greening Award

If you haven't noticed the bountiful vegetable gardens overflowing with green behind the school, the Parks & People Foundation has! The organization, which promotes environmental programs in the City of Baltimore, has nominated RPEMS for a Community Garden Greening Award. The winner of the award, for a garden project that builds green, open space in the City, will be announced at the foundation's annual Community Greening Celebration.

The RPEMS vegetable gardens were created last March by a group of students, teachers and parents working together. The Parks & People Foundation provided a \$1,000 Neighborhood Greening grant that was slated to pay for topsoil and lumber. But donations of soil from fourth grade teacher Mrs. Wood and lumber from RPEMS grandparent Gary Metzler allowed the school to buy more seeds, compost, mulch, and fence mending supplies. The Middle School Environmental Club leader Ms. Kimberly Mooney, along with Mrs. Wood and many parents, elementary and middle school students spent a day in mid-March building, digging, moving dirt and planting to create the beautiful gardens.

"We took a totally unused space and turned it into a place where kids can interact with the environment outdoors and see where their food comes from," said RPEMS mom Ramsey Mihavetz, who runs the elementary Environmental Club. "It's an outdoor classroom, and we hope teachers will take advantage of this great space."

The six raised beds were planted with carrots, kale, Swiss chard, collards, lettuce, peas, radishes, beets, spinach and herbs including rosemary, thyme and parsley that were grown

from seed by the Environmental Club. RPEMS parent Jenny Kaurinki, designed the garden so the produce would ripen before school ended in June. Environmental Clubs and a few middle and elementary classes came out and harvested the produce. "Most of the food was washed and prepared on site. We made some awesome salads and radish sandwiches that the kids devoured. It was so fun to watch their enthusiasm for fresh healthy food that they had helped grow," said Ms. Mihavetz. Kids also brought food home with recipe ideas included. Ms. Kaurinki was able to harvest and donate several pounds of Swiss chard to the Cares Food Pantry this summer.

"It was lush and super-successful," said Ms. Mihavetz. "I hope our lucky streak continues because everything we put in went so well."

The vegetable garden continues to grow. Last week, four new benches made of split logs from trees that fell down during Hurricane Irene were installed in the garden. Mr. Metzler created the benches, which seat 25 or more kids.

If you haven't visited the vegetable gardens, in the fenced area next to the cafeteria, please take a moment to walk behind the school and marvel at the greenery that is overflowing the beds. Those plants are sweet potatoes, planted in June by first graders. Ms. Mihavetz said the same students will be invited to harvest the sweet potatoes in mid-November and make them into sweet potato fries and other sweet potato treats.

-Jane Walsh-Huth

## Message From the Library

We would like to thank the wonderful volunteers who responded to our call for assistance. Their support has allowed us to keep the library open during scheduled class times, and before and after school. In addition, they have shelved hundreds of books; catalogued books; inventoried videos and designed the best bulletin board the library has ever seen, thanks to Trish Pilla. If you are interested in helping in the library, please e-mail PTA Volunteer Coordinator Christine Fischel at [cmdauenhauer@verizon.net](mailto:cmdauenhauer@verizon.net).

**Gung Ho for Genres** started in October with mystery and horror. Students who read horror and mystery books and fill out "ghosts" are eligible to win prizes. November's theme will be "Reading Out of Our Time," celebrating the genres of historical fiction, science fiction and a brand new genre that has become increasingly popular in the past five years. Stay tuned to find out what it is!

In September, over 60 students attended the first meeting of the **Middle School Book Critics Circle** and over 40 students attended the first meeting of the **Elementary School Book Critics Circle** (grades 4 and 5). The next meeting of the Middle School Book Critics Circle will be Wednesday, October 19 at 3:05; the Elementary Book Critics Circle will meet on October 26 at 2:45. Students who belong to the Book Critics Circle read and review advanced reader copies of books and help to decide which books will be purchased by the library.

## Classroom Parent

We are making progress with having the majority of our families listed in the on-line school directory, Classroom Parent. With the more and more teachers and parent volunteers relying on e-mail to send messages about school events, and less and less money available for paper, you may miss out if you are not receiving e-mails from Classroom Parent. If you have questions about your listing, or if you would like to learn more, please e-mail Deanna Kelly at [dkelly@distcomp.com](mailto:dkelly@distcomp.com).

The Birthday Book program has put 33 new books in our library so far. Many thanks to the families of Charlotte Marshall; Andrew & Liam Flynn; Miles and Henry Fancher; Regan and Ryan Kelly; Amelia and Grace Gamper; Anna and Julia Myers; Isabel, Conor and Griffin Angel; Alex and Julia Long; Peter and Sammy Cure; Chielota Uma; Elizabeth McCardell Kennedy; Michael and Katrina Marinelli; Tess Porter; Abigail Bates; Lydia Hawley-Brillante; Maya Filipovitz; Elek and Max Yuhas; Joseph, Alex and Cecelia Reichelt; Simone Summers; Rebecca and Sam Mulcahy; Katie Gjerde; Emre Yavalar; Wyatt McAvoy; Peter, Cole and Zachary Kannam; Anabel Horowitz; Ava Kulinski; Lone Brooks Dalton; Cassidy Schell; Michael Xia; Owen and Mason Van Dyke; and Juni and Ruby Polansky.

Thanks to the families of Oona Jusem, Lola Stevenson, Pauline Wakudumo, Katarina Krstic, Sarah Martin, Jordan Knox, Justin Belzner, Grace Black, and Max Riback who donated books to the library. Thanks also to the anonymous donors who left bags and boxes of books in the library when I was teaching classes. Many of the books that we can't use go to Moravia Park Elementary Middle School. A former RPEMS parent is the librarian there and our former librarian, Ms. Kirschman, is volunteering there. Books also go to classrooms, Viva House and the Baltimore Reads Book Bank.

-Ann Kennedy  
Librarian

## Techlab Photo Brings Color to RPEMS

Mr. Croson took some amazing pictures of our school last fall at peak foliage. With the current budget cuts, we would only afford to print B&W copies on photocopy paper. Fortunately, Techlab Photo at Belvedere Square agreed to print beautiful 8x12 color copies for free! The

photos are mounted, thanks to 7th grade parent Craig Williams, and are hanging in the hallway to the right of the main office. Please stop by to see the beautiful pictures. Remember, when you have a photography/imaging need, please support Techlab Photo in Belvedere Square to show our gratitude. They offer outstanding quality and service and are a local business. If you choose to take your business there, be sure to let them know you are part of the RPEMS community.

## Coat Drive

The coat drive continues, please bring gently used, clean coats to the collection box in the Main Office. We are so happy to be able to share our bounty with those in need. Coats will be distributed to students in our school through our school social worker, and the majority will be shared with families with children attending Armistead Gardens Elementary School in East Baltimore. Any size coats are welcome, along with winter boots and accessories. Thank you!

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