

The Goldenrod

A NEWSLETTER PRESENTED BY

THE PTA OF THE ROLAND PARK ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL

Issue 1 September 21, 2011

Message from the Principal

Welcome back to school! I offer a special welcome to all of our new Roland Park students and families, we are glad you are here. Our students are off to a positive beginning to the school year and seem to have adjusted well to the daily routines.

It is a thrill to see such engaged and active parents! Sixth Grade Orientation was standing room only and both Back-to-School Nights were very well attended, it was great seeing so many of you. I hope you had the opportunity to learn about the curriculum, academic expectations, and to meet your child's teacher or team of teachers. Thank you for modeling for your students how important school is by your presence at our events. Please continue to reinforce our school principles: Respectful, Responsible, and Ready!

During the school year, feel free to schedule an appointment to discuss your child's progress when needed. Please note we have added evening parent/teacher conferences on October 6 from 5-7:30pm. At RPEMS, we seek to meet and exceed the rigorous academic standards established by our state by creating an environment focused on instruction and learning.

In addition to the outstanding academic offerings there are many extra curricular activities offered for students this year through the generosity of our teacher and parent club leaders and support of our PTA and RP Public Annual Fund. We are thrilled about the number and variety of clubs and sports we are able to provide and thank the club leaders for sharing their time and talent.

-Carolyn H. Cole

Message from the PTA President

It's hard to believe three weeks have gone by since the first day of school! It has been a pleasure seeing old friends and meeting some of the new RPEMS families. First, I want to thank parent **Karen Homann** for her many years as our Goldenrod Editor. She has been absolutely amazing, and it was a very difficult decision for her to step down as editor. On behalf of the Goldenrod Team and the RPEMS community, thank you Karen! At the same time, we are grateful for **Christine Fischel's** willingness to step in and take over the reins. **Sonia Faggin Thompson** and **Heather Bradbury** are the graphic designers, and **Emily Halligan** handles the printing and paper copy distribution. We have an amazing team of volunteers!

As you will continually be hearing more from our PTA, it's important that I let you know who your PTA Executive Board is and also forward our contact information should you have any questions or concerns in the coming year:

Executive President – JoAnne Huey, hueyjoanne@yahoo.com

Executive Vice President – Dan Hellerbach, dhellerbach@bcps.k12.md.us

Elementary School President – Sharon Webb, swebb@gbtechcouncil.org

Middle School President – Melina Turtle, melinaturtle@gmail.com

Treasurer – Karen Taylor, ktaylor834@verizon.net

Corresponding Secretary – Deanna Kelly, dkelly@distcomp.com

Recording Secretary – Karimah Williams, k.a.williams27@gmail.com

We benefit from a very active and involved parent group, and due to this high level of engagement, many parents have questions regarding our activities and our relationship with other groups and committees. The best way to learn more is to stay informed and the best way to do that is to join our school directory, ClassroomParent. This is the forum for receiving timely emails updating you on RPEMS and PTA activities and events.

There is also an area to join the PTA on ClassroomParent. Although National PTA dues have increased this year we are keeping our dues the same at \$10 per member. These dues are very important to our success, as all funds are used to support our students, including field trips, agenda books, facility repairs, and classroom supplies. Please contact Deanna Kelly at dkelly@distcomp.com if you have any questions about PTA membership or ClassroomParent. That's it for now. I am very excited to work with all of you this school year!

Cheers!

-JoAnne Huey

PTA Executive President

CALENDAR

Free Middle School Movie Night
September 23, 6:30pm Doors Open,
7:00pm Showtime

*Film TBD, keep an eye out for the
ClassroomParent email!*

Progress Reports Issued

October 3

National Walk to School Day

October 5

*Did you know that you can click the
"neighbors" tab in Classroom Parent and
see a list of all the RPEMS families within
a set distance of your home? Perfect for
arranging carpool, or in this case,
to gather a walking group!*

Parent-Teacher Conferences

October 6, 5-7:30pm

**PTA General Meeting with
the Baltimore Educational Coalition**

October 13, 6:30pm,

mark your calendars now!

**School Closed for Professional
Development**

October 20-21

Classroom Parent/Yahoo Group

ClassRoom Parent, our school's online directory, is a great resource for parents and teachers. Teachers can easily e-mail their class, create subgroups and post volunteer and donation opportunities. Parents can contact other parents, and teachers and parents can work together to plan parties or field trips. If you are not sure whether your family is in the directory and receiving school e-mails, please email dkelly@distcomp.com. As we are a Green School, and the budget for paper is minimal, e-mail communication is more important than ever. Please make sure you're not missing out on important announcements! You can access ClassRoom Parent at: <http://rpems.classroomparent.com>. The Yahoo group is a parent-run forum for exchange of information and opinion, and is not monitored by RPEMS staff members. ClassRoom Parent is used for one-way announcements from the school, teachers and PTA, and the Yahoo Group listserv is for parent-to parent group conversation.

-Deanna Kelly,

PTA Corresponding Secretary

Bake Sale

Thanks to the Marinelli family - Bobby, Jane, Michael and Katrina, for again organizing our Election Day bake sale. More than \$500 was raised to benefit after school activities. Thanks to all who volunteered and baked!

VISIT WWW.ROLANDPARKPUBLIC.ORG FOR UPDATES, INFORMATION, PHONE NUMBERS.

After School Clubs

Middle school students have an exciting choice of after-school clubs. Offerings include Mr. Croson's guitar club, the new Roland Park Glee Club, Computer Club, Lego Robotics, Homework Club (more popular with parents than students) Strategy Games Club, Video Production Club, Dance Club and more. We appreciate the generosity of the teachers and parents who share their time with our children.

The Elementary School Clubs are being coordinated by two dynamic new kindergarten

parents, Amy Shelton and Katherine Hancock Porter. Fall semester clubs have been planned, look for sign-ups soon. There are always more children who want to be in elementary clubs than there are openings, so if you are interested in coordinating an after-school club, please contact Amy at ashelton@jhu.edu. Elementary school clubs run on a semester basis, so you can always plan ahead for leading a January club. Again, we appreciate the generosity of Amy, Katherine, and all the volunteer club leaders.

Roland Park Glee Club

The Roland Park PTA is happy to announce a brand new vocal music opportunity! Glee Club will meet after school on Mondays and Wednesdays and is open to all middle school students. Ms. Rebecca Ludwig, formerly the band director and choral director at Curtis Bay Elementary/Middle School, will be our new director. The club meets 3:05 - 4:30pm in Room #004, which is downstairs right next to the cafeteria.

Save the Date - Evening with the Arts (EWTA)

The PTA fall fundraiser is Friday, November 18, from 7-11pm at the school. This is an adult only evening celebrating the arts, both performing and visual. Delicious food and beverage are served, and it's a great opportunity to get together with other parents. If you would like to join the team, e-mail our event chair, Trish Garcia Pilla, at tgpilla@gmail.com. It's a great way to meet more parents and contribute to the arts at our school.

Mr. Hellerbach and Mr. D'Ambrosio

The RPEMS community congratulates Mr. D'Ambrosio on his position as principal of Francis Scott Key E/M School. We are excited that the new interim 6th grade administrator is our own Mr. Hellerbach, who has been teaching 6th grade at RPEMS for 10 years and sent his three children to our school. Mr. Hellerbach would like us to keep in mind this year that "the best road to success is a partnership between the school, teachers, and parents." Congratulations to Mr. Hellerbach!

Mr. Croson, 7th Grade Administrator

It is my wish that at the end of this school year, your child will have had a lot of positive social opportunities and extracurricular experiences and will have taken part in the great art, music and athletic programs here at Roland Park. Finally, by the end of this year, it is my hope that your student will have built a portfolio of great academic grades and fantastic test scores that represents solid, authentic learning.

Ms. Brooks, 8th Grade Administrator

Our 8th grade students are busy attending high school open houses and shadow days. Some have been at RPEMS since kindergarten, others joined us in middle school, and now they are preparing for their future!

Art News

Membership applications for Middle School National Junior ART Honor Society are available in the guidance office to seventh and eighth graders, and are due before Friday, September 30. Ms. Tandon, Ms. Lopez-Sparaco and Ms. Grizzard, our art teachers, would appreciate any donations of gift cards to art supply shops, as art supplies were one of the areas cut by the budget shortfall this year.

Kindergarten

This fall, 94 new kindergarten students came through our doors to start their academic careers at RPEMS. Joining the new students are two new kindergarten teachers, Mrs. Benhart and Ms. Pellarin. Both Mrs. Benhart and Ms. Pellarin are familiar faces in the elementary school, Mrs. Benhart's son, Hayden, is in second grade, and Mrs. Benhart was a long-term sub for both Mrs. Duggan and Ms. Bock last year when they were on maternity leave. Ms. Pellarin student taught for Ms. Schaefer last year. Both Mrs. Benhart and Ms. Pellarin are excited to have their own classrooms at RPEMS, and are already well loved by their students.

Fundraising at RPEMS

There are many opportunities for donating to our school and students. Sometimes it's as easy as picking up an extra box of tissues or pencils and giving it to your child's teacher. The school is in the midst of a fundraiser, packets went home after the assembly last week. The money raised from this fundraiser is used by the school for field trips, supplies and other needs.

Joining the PTA and supporting PTA fundraisers such as our "Evening with the Arts" help the PTA fund programs and activities that the school can not. Examples include plants for our gardens, paint and supplies to spruce up classrooms, agenda books, gym equipment, specific teacher requests and more. Some projects are out of the scope of the PTA, such as capital improvements. This is where the Roland Park Public Annual Fund steps up. Since they are administered by the Baltimore Community Foundation, they have more flexibility in how the money they receive is spent on our school. However, they work in full partnership with our PTA and school administration in determining priorities and needs for RPEMS.

In this time of lean budgets for all, we hope you can find a way to support all of our fundraising efforts; the school fundraising packets, joining the PTA and attending the EWTA, and considering a donation to the Roland Park Public Annual Fund. No efforts are duplicated, and the school, PTA and RPPAF work closely to ensure that the money is used to best impact all of our students.

Roland Park Public Annual Fund, an education and enrichment initiative

The RPPAF mission is to support academic and enrichment opportunities at RPEMS and to continually improve the quality of education for all students. Currently, they support and fund the Write Place, an in-school writing center and program for all grades.

The initiative is led by parents, but funds are administered by the Baltimore Community Foundation. More information can be obtained by e-mailing rolandparkpublicannualfund@gmail.com.

Message from the Library

Did you know our school library has more than 20,000 books for our students? As I tell each class on their first library day, the reason that we are able to fill our library with the books they want and need is because of the incredible support of our school community. Your past generosity has built this library. This year, we need to ask you for something that is even more precious than your money. We need to ask you to contribute some of your time.

In August, our incredibly skilled and knowledgeable library assistant, Shannon Katona, decided to leave her position. We will all miss her, and we hope to be able to fill her very big shoes; however, until we do, we need volunteers who can assist us in keeping the library accessible to students before, during and after the school day. If you have two hours a week to spare, please look for requests coming through Classroom Parent, and consider signing up for a two-hour shift. You can also stop by or call me at 410-396-6591. The volunteers who have already helped out this year are great. I appreciate everyone sharing their time, and I'm really enjoying having them here. I love seeing people take ownership of their library. Thank you so much!

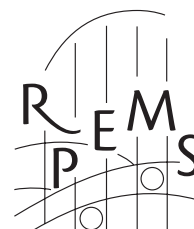
Despite the departure of Ms. Katona, our library programs will continue. Gung Ho for Genres starts in October with mystery and horror. This month, we're asking students to recommend great books they read over the summer. We'll kick-off our Birthday Book program when the first progress reports are distributed. Our Barnes and Noble Book Fair will be held on December 9; our Scholastic Book Fair will be held March 21 through March 30. The Black-Eyed Susan program will begin in December.

The Middle School Book Critics Circle and the Elementary School Book Critics Circle (grades 4 and 5) are meeting this month. Students who belong to the Book Critics Circle read and review advanced reader copies of books and assist in deciding which books will be purchased by the library.

Many of our best books have been donated by Roland Park families and friends. Thanks to Victor DeHavenon, Hadley Saba, Ava Taylor, Henry Bushnell, Simone Summers, Dilon Merson, the Cargnel family, Juniper King (who donated the new Skulduggery Pleasant book that is not yet available in the US), Phaedra Cardwell & Ms. Bock, the Riback family and Eamon Black who donated books at the end of last year and the beginning of this one.

I hope to see you soon, please schedule a time to volunteer, or just stop in to say hello!

-Ann Kennedy, School Librarian



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A Newsletter presented by
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Middle School PTA
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