

GATOR GRAM



William B. Gibbs, Jr Elementary School
12615 Royal Crown Drive, Germantown, MD

October 2009 Volume 1, Issue 2

President's Message

By Sue Amick

We are off to a great start. The attendance at Back to School night was phenomenal if not a little overwhelming. We are a new school and we will have some bumps in the road but we will make adjustments where needed.

The first Gibbs Fun Run was well attended and FUN! It was a beautiful day and it was wonderful to see so many families out walking and running together. Karen Ward and everyone who assisted her did a great job pulling together an event that has never been done before.

We have some fun events planned for October. The Fall Harvest Festival will be on October 30th. The committee is working hard to plan a fabulous event. That same day the Scholastic Book Fair opens. The Book Fair will be held in the Dual Purpose Room which is between the Music and Art rooms.

Please let me know if I can help with any issues or concerns you or your children have at Gibbs ES. I am here to help.

The PTA NEWSLETTER IS GOING GREEN!!!

In an effort to save lots of paper, time and money, the PTA will no longer distribute paper copies of the newsletter unless you request one. Beginning January, the newsletter will be distributed electronically through the Gibbs listserve. If you prefer a paper copy be sent home to you, you **MUST** request it by **no later than December 4, 2009**. Anyone who requests a paper copy will receive the newsletter in that form every month, unless otherwise noted. We want to make every effort to distribute our newsletter to ALL families, yet in a more environmentally and fiscally responsible way. Please contact Sandra Nail, newsletter editor, to request paper copies: sannobrien@hotmail.com.

a HUGE thank you...

Jessica Medeiros
Kristen Burke
Ilana Sushner
Kristen Hostler
Chris Youstra
Erin Del Balzo
David McCord
Stephanie Souder

I would like to thank the above staff members for helping at Back to School Night (BTSN). The PTA agreed to provide childcare during BTSN. We arranged for 6 middle and high school students to come watch the children. Not all 6 showed up and an overwhelming number of children came to take advantage of the childcare. It didn't take us long to realize we were in trouble. These staff members changed their plans for the evening to help us out. This means they missed the opportunity to be introduced to the parents and spend time in the classrooms. Without their help, the APR would have been in total chaos.

While we don't expect a crowd that size for general PTA meetings, we are trying some new things. I have blue aprons for the middle or high school students to wear while they are watching the children so everyone can quickly identify those in charge. We will have sign in sheets for parents when they drop their children off. We will ask parents to notify me if they plan on bringing their children so we have an idea of how many secondary students we need. We will also ask the parents to have their children bring some activity and we will have paper and crayons and some cards or other activities available.

I appreciate everyone's patience, understanding and flexibility at Back to School Night. **Thank you!**

Destination Book Fair

By Anita Burgdorf



Dust off your passports and get ready for a family adventure, "Destination Book Fair". The book fair will kick off **Friday, October 30th** with the Family Harvest Festival and close Friday, November 6th at noon. The fair will be open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Look for more information to come home via backpacks in the coming weeks. Keep an eye out for the exciting activities planned.

As always, we need your support to make this event a success. Some have you have already expressed interest in sharing some of your time to work the book fair. If you are interested in sharing your time please contact Karen Ward at wardkk@msn.com. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Staff Appreciation

By Niki Hadadd

We need your help! To show parent and student appreciation for our wonderful Gibbs ES staff, there will be several lunches and special activities held throughout the 2009-2010 school year along with Staff Appreciation Week events. To show your support we are asking for a \$5.00 donation towards these luncheons and events. Our staff works hard throughout the year and this is our way of saying "**Thank You**".

We would like to collect the money now so the funds received can be equally distributed for each of the events. Please contact Lee Marshall, 301-916-4577, the.marshalls4@verizon.net, or Nikki Haddad, 301-528-4135, nikkijayh@aol.com with any questions. Please fill out the attached form and return with donation in an envelope marked "PTA Staff Appreciation". Thanks for your help!

We're On the Web!!

The Gibbs PTA website, www.gibbsespta.org is up and running! Check out the site for upcoming events, forms, previous Gator Grams, and information from our committee members. The site is still a work in progress but definitely contains up to date information. Suggestions are always welcome, send an email to webmaster@gibbsespta.org.

Fall Harvest Party

By Christie Chan & Renee Harshey



Join us for the first Family Fun Night at Gibbs E.S.! Bring the entire family out on **Friday, Oct 30th** for a wonderful night full of many exciting activities for you to enjoy with your little ones. Some of the activities include: the popular "Mummy Wrap", face painting, tattoos, crafts, games, prizes and snacks. Plus, any child that comes dressed in a costume will win a special prize!

Families may begin the evening by purchasing dinner (pizza, snacks and a drink) from 6:30-7:00pm in the cafeteria. The costume party and activities will take place from 7:00-8:30 pm in the All Purpose Room and gym. The cost will be \$2 per person with a maximum cost of \$8 per family if you purchase tickets before Friday, October 16th. (The cost will go up to \$3 per person with a \$12 maximum per family if you purchase tickets at the door.) Please look out for the flyer which will be sent home on Monday, October 5th and be sure to send it back by Friday, October 16th.

We look forward to a great night with many of our wonderful Gibbs' Families!

Global Children's Center

Global Children's Center provides an exciting before-and after-school learning experience to keep every child motivated and focused in a fun and stimulating environment. Some of our program features include:

- * Homework Help!
- * Fitness Activities in the gym, and outside.
- * Educational and creative clubs and centers.
- * A comfortable and a safe environment.
- * Open communication between teachers and parents.
- * Giving back to community.
- * Open on most school closings and early release days.
- * Convenient hours.

Please visit our website or contact us for more details: www.globalchildrenscenter.com Phone 301.972.5982/301.972.5882

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

October

30th Fall Harvest Festival
(6:30–8:30 p.m.)

30th Scholastic Book Fair (Fall)
(until November 6th)

November

2nd Professional Day (no school)

11th Early Release
Parent Conferences
Report Cards Distributed

12th Early Release
Parent Conferences

18th Spirit Night – Roy Rogers

23rd Grandparents Tea

25th Early Release

26th No School

27th No School

MCCPTA Report

By Paul Kalomiris

Established in 1944, the Montgomery County Council of Parent Teacher Associations (MCCPTA) supports the children at William B. Gibbs, Jr. Elementary School and schools throughout the county. MCCPTA serves 189 local PTAs and their more than 50,000 parents, teachers and residents. The association serves as a link among the local, state and national PTA organizations. MCCPTA also:

- trains local PTA officers and committee chairs;
- offers workshops for local PTAs on topics they request, such as parent involvement, advocacy and team-building; and
- maintains a library of materials for use by PTA members.

An MCCPTA Delegates Assembly is held monthly during the school year, at which time issues such as school construction funding, gifted and talented programs, and the county schools operating budget are debated. Resolutions supporting a position on behalf of MCCPTA are considered at these assemblies. If passed, resolutions lead to policy positions taken by MCCPTA that may be supported by letters to the county school administration, testimony before the county Board of Education and lobbying visits to the state legislature in Annapolis.

At the most recent Delegates Assembly, held Sept. 22, a motion was approved to recommend that the Montgomery County Council adopt spending affordability guidelines that provide flexibility to accelerate capital improvement projects at county schools should economic conditions improve. Delegates also reviewed draft resolutions, which will be voted upon at the October meeting, about priorities for the county school operating budget and capital improvement plan.

Committees comprised of MCCPTA delegates work with clusters, local PTAs, Montgomery County Public School staff, and local, state and national sources to provide current information and make recommendations to the assembly regarding advocacy positions they may wish to adopt. Each public school in the county is allowed three voting delegates to MCCPTA — the PTA president and two appointed delegates. In the case of Gibbs ES, Sue Amick is our president, I am an appointed delegate and the third spot is vacant. Anyone interested in serving as our third delegate may contact Sue Amick (sueamick@hotmail.com) or me (paulk1971@yahoo.com).

Gibbs Grocery Bags – Go Green

By Jennifer Sengbusch

Gibbs Gator reusable grocery bags have arrived! Gibbs Elementary was built as a “green” school. One easy way to be “green” at home is to discontinue using plastic grocery bags and trade them in for reusable grocery bags. Please help support your PTA by purchasing these high quality bags and help the environment at the same time! Use the bags at Giant Food and Whole Foods Market and save 5¢ each time they are used. Order forms can be obtained by visiting our PTA website www.gibbsespta.org or by contacting Jen Sengbusch at jsengbusch@verizon.net. The bags cost \$3.75 each, 3 for \$10.50, and 6 for \$20.

Thank you, Thank you, THANK YOU!!



Garden Beautiful



By Jennifer Sengbush

After school on Thursday October 1, Dana Walker and the girls from Brownie Troop 4268 were ready with gloves on to keep our school beautiful! They worked tirelessly with constant enthusiasm pulling thorny thistles, deep rooted dandelions, clover and stubborn crab grass from what seemed like miles of mulch beds. They learned how to dead head day lillies and pruned dead branches from our shrubs. While searching for weeds they picked up all the trash on school grounds. Thank you Dana Walker, Kinsey Walker, Amelia Nail, Brianna Ingram, Ashely Kim, Katherine Cox, Rachel Dzuiba, and Amulya Puttaraju for all your hard work!

Chik-Fil-A...Oh What a Night!

By Karen Ward

The lines were out the door at Chik-Fil-A on Spirit Night. Gibbs students and their families came in droves for hours. The Manager and staff couldn't keep up with us. They couldn't believe a school could have that much spirit, but we did!!!! A new record for Chik-Fil-A Spirit Nights. Yeah GIBBS GATORS!!!! We had total sales of \$2,251 for the evening which grossed Gibbs PTA a whopping \$450 for the night for the PTA. Mr. Huston's class had the most participation and will receive a coupon for a free kid's meal. A big thank you to the Chik-Fil-A cow for greeting our students at dismissal and to the whole staff at Chik-Fil-A. A HUGE THANK YOU to all Gibbs Elementary families who came out to support our school!!!!

Gator Bracelets

The PTA has for sale Gibbs Gator **orange** and **blue** bracelets for \$1.00 each. We will be selling these bracelets at all our PTA events. Show your school spirit and buy one or two.

Flu Vaccinations

By Karen Ward

Flu mist vaccinations were given to about 220 students on September 30th. Thank you to Mrs. Kemp and her nurses for taking care of all the students. A big thank you to our parent volunteers who came out to help with the students – Charlene Midolo, India Whitehead, Lourdes Ponce and Vanitha Ramiah.

Counselor Corner

I have now had one month to get to know your wonderful children and our fantastic students. It has been a pleasure getting to know all of the stakeholders of William B. Gibbs Jr. Elementary: the staff, the parents, and most of all the students. We have just gotten started and we already have many successes to celebrate. First, thanks to your support we were able to raise \$503 to fund our first classroom CHOMP celebrations. We have already had three classrooms reach their CHOMP challenge, which is 1,000 points worth of individual and group incentives being given for following the three R's of Gibbs Elementary. The other classes are also making quick progress, and by the next edition of the Gibbs Gram, I predict all of our classes will have achieved their CHOMP Challenge. Please take time to ask your child about their class progress and congratulate them on all their hard work and dedication to be respectful, responsible, and ready to go!

A goal of the Gibbs Elementary School Counseling Program is to develop and promote positive character traits in the young minds that call Gibbs home. This past September the students and I began the year learning about and discussing courtesy and how to be polite. We discussed the common words we use to express our good manners and practiced using them. Simple words like hello, please and thank you, excuse me, and I'm sorry help create a happier and positive environment. During the month of October we will focus our character education program on being responsible. Throughout the month we will be working to highlight the responsible students at Gibbs Elementary through our PBIS system, morning announcements capturing responsible moments displayed by our students, and pictures posted around the school of the students following our behavior expectations.

October 26-30th we will be celebrating Red Ribbon Week. Celebrate A Drug Free Life will be a time to speak to the students about living a life free from tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. Guidance lessons will lead students through a discussion of healthy and unhealthy choices that we face in life. The students will examine the damaging effects that products like cigarettes and beer can have on our physical and mental health. We will be celebrating Red Ribbon Week by giving everyone in school a red ribbon to wear through the week, sack races at recess where we Jump Away From Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco, Red Ribbon Week outdoor chalk messages, morning announcements, Red Ribbon Week posters and decorations, and Red Ribbon Week suckers handed out during our Halloween celebrations. We encourage you to have a dialogue with your child about the healthy life choices available and the dangers of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.

"During the month of October we will focus our character education program on being responsible."

Fun Run Success

By Karen Ward

On October 3, over 300 Gibbs students and their families, 100 Cedar Grove students and their families, as well as community residents and others came out for the 1st Annual 5k Fun Run/Walk fundraiser. The weather was sunny and warm for the 3.1 mile course. Everyone started off with a fun but tough exercise warm-up with one of our Gibbs' mothers, Marianna Keynon, (Thank you very much!!!) At precisely 8:30 am, all runners and walkers started their pace following the Weatherbug truck driven by one of our Gibbs' fathers, John Tisaranni (Thanks, John!). "Red" Robin and his crew cheered and greeted each participant with a "hi-5" at the Red Robin water stations. The first runner finished the course in 18 minutes followed by all the other runners. Walkers, well they took a little longer, but everyone crossed the finish line having a fun and wonderful time.

Each participant received goodie bags filled with items donated by our sponsors on the following page. They also had snacks donated by Utz and Roberts American Gourmet and water donated by Pepsi, Home Depot and Safeway, as well as smoothies donated by Smoothie King. A special thank you goes to Red Robin and their volunteers for donating water stations and all their time and extra goodie giveaways. Don't forget to stop by Red Robin and use your free coupons. We thank all of our sponsors for supporting Gibbs Elementary PTA. We couldn't have done it without all of you.

Congratulations to John Benjamin (1st place mens), Mari Hornyak (1st place womens), Scott Obendorfer and Madelyn Leslie (1st place students). Each will receive a gift card from one of our sponsors.

The fundraising event made \$4,300 for the Gibbs PTA. We thank all of our participants and sponsors for supporting our PTA. We can't wait for next year's run/walk.

If anyone has any comments or suggestions that they would like to make on this event, please do not hesitate to let me know.

A BIG Gator THANK YOU to the following:

- ❖ Cedar Grove PTA for joining forces with the Gibbs PTA and making this event a huge success!!!
- ❖ Mr. Benco for volunteering his time to set up the 1k for the students (they had a blast!), thank you to Mr. Furry for supplying us with his fun running music and a big thank you to Mrs. Bosnic, our Fun Run clown for joining us at this fun event!!!
- ❖ Brownie Troop 4268 for hosting a water station for the 1k participants on the field and cleaning the field after the event – Dana Walker and Sandy Nail, Troop Leaders and Kinsey Walker, Amelia Nail, Katherine Cost, Brianna Ingram, Amulya Puttaraju, Ashley Kim, Rachel Dzuiba, Kristina Bach, Jenna Herbert, Samantha Pomerantz and Maddison Dejewski.
- ❖ Brownie Troop 1592 for making all the sponsor signs – Alison Tisaranni, Troop Leader and Ashley Tisaranni, Hannah Crosby, Olivia Luzquinos, Sarah Buckley, Sophie Jorgensen, Jamie Fritz, Maddie Halem and Madelyn Leslie.
- ❖ The parent volunteers who stood on the street corners to guide the participants and cheer them on - Ramesh Raghavan, Lessie Lampkins, Kobie Buttrey, Cathy Ghosh, Anita Burgdorf, Dave Steinbeck, Jeanne Shawahin, Suzie Leslie, Amy Kalomiris, Sandi Hines and Jessica Nuffer.
- ❖ The middle and high school students who volunteered their time to help with this event. Thank you to Cord Sengbusch for designing the Fun Run websites for both schools!!
- ❖ Our Fun Run Committee. We couldn't have done this without all your dedicated help – Jen Sengbusch, Anita Burgdorf, Nikki Haddad, Lee Marshall, Sue Andres, Gayle Maurantonio, Kathryn Hoffpaur and Lisa August.

THANK YOU to our SPONSORS

Cedar Grove and Gibbs Elementary PTAs would like to thank the below listed businesses that kindly donated items for our 5k Fun Run/Walk. We thank you for your support!!!!

AAA Warman Home Care
Adventist Healthcare
AT&T Wireless
Agrodolce
Bloom
Bob Evans Restaurant
Cardany Realty
Chevy Chase Bank
Choice Hotels
Clarksburg Animal Hospital
Clarksburg Sports Assn
Dave & Busters
Extended Stay America Hotel
Family Dental Associates (William August, D.D.S.)
Fireworks Art Cafe
Gene's Johns & Rentals Inc.
Giant Food
Healthtrax
Home Depot
Milestone Sunoco/Love My Car Wash
Modell's
Montgomery County Recycling Center
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Nora's Pizza
Pepsi
Pizza 500
Red Door
Red Robin
Remax
Roberts American Gourmet
Romp n Roll
Roy Rogers
Safeway
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