

GATOR GRAM



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

November 2009 Volume 1, Issue 3

President's Message

By Sue Amick

As usual, time is flying. It's already November and everything seems to be progressing nicely. The Fall Harvest Festival was a great success with over 500 people attending. Thank you to Renee Harshey and Christie Chan for organizing this event. I believe this is the first time either one of them chaired an event of this size and they did a wonderful job.

Hopefully, everyone had a chance to visit the book fair this past week. It's a nice way to increase your children's library. We will have another book fair in the Spring.

November 11th and 12th are early release days for the students so parents can meet with teachers for conferences. If you haven't scheduled yours, please do so. It is important that we know how our children are doing so far this year so we can work with the teacher to make any adjustments to help our children succeed. We are our children's advocates and we can't do that well if we are uninformed.

Please let me know if there are any school issues or concerns that the PTA can help get resolved.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

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

December

4th BINGO

24th Winter Break begins

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.

Destination Book Fair

By Anita Burgdorf



Destination Book fair was a success! Thank you to all of our families who shopped with their children or sent money for the children to shop on their own; the success of this book fair is due to your generous purchases. The total sales were over \$7600.00 and the One For Books contributions were over \$100.00. Our school will receive \$1900.00 profit and nearly \$400.00 of Scholastic Dollars that can be used to purchase resource materials or books to increase our school library and classroom libraries. The profit is part of the PTA budget which is used to support fieldtrips, cultural arts activities and many other educational activities within the school.

I would like to thank all of the wonderful parent volunteers who gave their time to support the book fair. Without them this fair would not be possible. I also want to give a special "Thank You!" shout out to Karen Ward. Since I work full time, Karen graciously agreed to run the day to day operations of the book fair.

Our next book fair will be held April 12 – 19, 2010. Please mark your calendars and keep an eye out for more information as the date approaches.

Autumn Decorations

By Jennifer Sengbusch



A BIG Gator thank you to Yearling Farm in Frederick, MD for the straw bales and to Red Wiggler Community Farm in Clarksburg, MD for the corn stalks. Their donations have made the entrance to our school look fantastic this Fall!

Red Wiggler Community Farm (a recognized 501c3 non-profit) operates a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program in Montgomery County MD that increases the food supply for the community and local food banks. It creates meaningful jobs for adults with developmental disabilities so they can succeed at work. Vegetables grown on the farm are USDA organic and range from salad greens to beets to tomatoes and they even grow fields of beautiful flowers and herbs! Please visit their website to learn more about the exceptional programs that they have to offer: www.redwiggler.org.

Fall Harvest Party

By Christie Chan & Renee Harshey

On the evening of Friday, October 30th, laughter could be heard coming from Gibbs Elementary. There were pirates, princesses, super heroes and many other exciting characters in the crowd. What a great way to kick off our first "Family Fun Night" this year. The Fall Harvest Festival was a huge success!

Many of our Gibbs families came dressed in costume and enjoyed an evening of crafts, games, face painting, and other fun activities. The popular mummy wrap station was quite a hit!!

A big thanks to all of the parent and middle school volunteers who came to help us out that night. We could not have done it without you! We would also like to thank our corporate sponsors this year including Target, Weis, Safeway and Giant. A special thanks to Butler's Orchard which donated apples and gave us pumpkins at a reduced price. We would also like to thank the staff members who assisted us: Mrs. Bosnic and Ms. Hughes (for their help on the Mummy Wrap station), Mr. Myers (for setting up the tables) and Ms. Maguire (for her help with the food).

Last, but not least, a special thank you to our wonderful committee this year: Renee Harshey, Christie Chan, Marianna Kenyon, Karen Ward, Charlene Midolo, India Whitehead, Megan Treby, Trish Felrice, Jeanne Shawahin, Kim Cox and Connie Chaske who spent a lot of time planning and coordinating this wonderful event.

We hope to see you all again at our next Family Fun Night—BINGO on Friday, December 4th. Stay tuned for more details for this and other fun events.

Picture Day

By Karen Ward

Picture Day was a huge success!!! Thanks to all of our parent volunteers who came out to help – Ashleigh Johnson, Lisa Carson, Anika Joshi, Tania Allinger, Ursula Heberlein and Michelle Faison.

Counselor Corner

By David McCord

This month our character trait focus will be cooperation. During Guidance class we will be discussing how we can work together towards a common goal, how to win and lose in life without gloating, and why and how we can contribute for the benefit of our school, community, country, and world. Another role I have at Gibbs Elementary is being one of the Student Government Associations (SGA) sponsors. Through this partnership between the SGA, the Gibbs Elementary Counseling Program, and the Global Children's Center we will be teaching our students through actions how we can cooperate to help those that are less fortunate. These partnerships will benefit fundraisers such as toys for children for winter holidays, coats for winter, and a canned food drive for local food banks. Keep your eyes peeled for more information coming soon on these programs.

Another focus of Guidance Class this month will be about personal safety and internet safety. Students will learn the basics of things they can do to keep themselves safe in their community and on the internet. Outcomes for this lesson will be: students will have an understanding of what is a stranger and how they should react to one, safety tips for walking home or playing in the neighborhood, knowing their families' home address and important phone numbers, and how to stay safe when on the internet.

As a school counselor, I want to be in touch with, and address the needs of our students. If you have questions, concerns, or ideas about topics that are addressed during guidance class, please feel free to contact me.

Clothes Needed



The Health Room needs clothes, especially pants/slacks, sizes 6-12 to the Health Room. The clothing can be new or gently used. Contact [Cheryl G Kemp@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Cheryl_G_Kemp@mcpsmd.org) with any questions.

Staff Appreciation

By Nikki Haddad

October's Staff Appreciation Event was a staff mailbox stuffer. On Friday, October 23, each and every member of the fabulous Gibbs Staff received a "Big Hand" of applause for the great job they are doing. Not an actual hand, of course, but a plastic glove filled with fresh popped popcorn and a candy corn fingernail in each finger. A "big hand" also to the following committee members for helping to make and deliver the hands: Valerie Crosby, Gayle Maurantonio, Karen Ward, Lee Marshall, Sue Andres, and Nikki Haddad. We received a lot of positive feedback from the staff and they enjoyed their little treat.

On November 12th, the staff appreciation committee will be sponsoring a Soup and Sandwich luncheon for the Gibbs staff. Parent teacher conferences make for some long days for the teachers and staff and we would like to show our appreciation for the long days they are putting in by providing warm soups, yummy sandwiches and fresh salads for them to enjoy. Committee funds will pay for an assortment of finger sandwiches, rolls, butter and lemonade. For those of you who enjoy cooking for our staff please check out our blog site at <http://gibbsstaffappreciation.wordpress.com/> to see what is available for you to contribute. Please use the comments section to let us know what you will be bringing so you can see what's been spoken for and what is still needed. Or, you can contact either Lee Marshall at theMarshalls4@verizon.net or NikkiHaddad NikkiJayH@aol.com to offer to help. Please plan to deliver your goodies to the staff lunchroom by 12:30 p.m. on the day of the luncheon. If you need to make arrangements to drop off the items the night before or the morning of the luncheon, please contact either Nikki or Lee to make arrangements. Thanks in advance to everyone who is supporting this committee as we work all year long to show our wonderful staff how much we appreciate the work they do with our children.

A big thanks to Lee Marshall who designed the blog spot for this committee. It's fabulous and helps us get the word out as to the important work this committee is doing. As we intend to sponsor some type of project every month throughout the school year, please check back often to see what we are doing with the funds so many of you so generously contributed at the beginning of the school year. We look forward to an exciting year ahead of "appreciating" our wonderful staff.

SHOW YOUR GATOR SPIRIT!!!

Spirit Night at Roy Rogers!

By Jennifer Sengbusch

Howdie Partners! Round up your friends and family and head on over to Roy Rogers on Wednesday, **November 18th from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.** for our 2nd spirit night of the year. Stop by for dinner or a late evening snack and Roy Rogers will donate **25%** of your purchases to our school. Please be sure to mention "Gibbs Elementary Spirit Night" so your purchases will count.

Dine-in, carry-out, AND drive-thru will count!!!

So come and stop by Roy Rogers for good company and good food.

Roy Rogers (Behind Bed Bath and Beyond)
12907 Wisteria Drive
Germantown, MD

See you there! YEEEE HAAA!



BINGO Night

By Karen Ward

Bingo Family Fun Night is fast approaching – **Friday, December 4th** in our All Purpose Room. Doors will open at 6:30 pm and the games will begin at 7:00 pm. Send in your forms soon as there will be a cutoff date due to limited seating.

The cost is \$3.00 per set of Bingo cards. We will also be selling food – hot dogs, nachos, snacks, candy and drinks. Why not make it a dinner night for your family!

Why not buy a \$1.00 raffle to win a Red Door facial, Agrodolce gift card and others....

If you buy 5 raffle tickets, you automatically win a Gators reusable bag. Information will be coming home soon.

Bumper Magnets...

Coming to a Car Near You!

By Jennifer Sengbusch

We are now taking pre-orders for Gibbs Gator bumper magnets! Buy one for each car in your family for only \$5 each. Order forms must be turned in no later than **Nov 25th**. Order forms can be printed from our website <http://www.gibbsespta.org/>

PTA Student Directory

By Rani Schlenoff

We are moving as fast as we can to provide you with the Gibbs school directory, which is one of the benefits of membership in our PTA. We anticipate this to be a few more weeks in order to assure accuracy with the information contained. This year, in an effort to maintain the high level of "going green" that has already been established, we are offering the Gibbs PTA School Directory in CD format or as a hard copy. The CD format allows you to save the information to more than one computer or portable device and print out only the information that you need as often as you would like.

Please email rani@schlenoff.com with the subject – Gibbs Directory Choice no later than November 13th if you would like to receive one hardcopy of the directory rather than the directory in CD format. Please include your full name, your child's name, grade and teacher's name.

*GLOBAL
CHILDREN'S
CENTER
CORNER*

*"WHERE CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH
PLAY"*

We are now enrolling for our Before and After care program @ William B. Gibbs Elementary School.

Our program features:

- Special Clubs and Activities
- Toys for Tots & Coat Collection**

Global Children's Center is collecting old coats kids/adults and toys for tots in partnership with Bergman's Cleaners and U.S. Marines Toys for Tots program. **Please drop off items in marked green tub in the multi- purpose room.** Any and all contributions are welcome.



NAACP Corner

Are you a parent or guardian of an African American student looking for a network to address educational issues that impact your child's education? The NAACP Parent's Council is the answer. The mission of the Council is to provide a forum through which interested citizens may offer assistance, guidance and support to minority parents and students of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to pursue the highest quality education possible through encouragement, information sharing, training, positive motivation, critical evaluation and advocacy.

Please join me at the PTA meeting the first Tuesday of each month, or at NAACP Parent Council meeting the second Saturday of each month. Come out and learn how you can help your son or daughter be a more successful student. For additional information contact India Whitehead by email at india12800@gmail.com

Native American Heritage Month

The Month of November is Native American Heritage Month. This month we would like to celebrate the contributions of Native American's and their history. There are many events going on this month to celebrate this month. At the Smithsonian there are storybook reading, Mayan Weaving, and different programs. One program being held on the 14th of November is entitled From Deer to Dance. There is a wonderful museum in D.C. called the American Indian Museum. It is a wonderful place to visit and learn more about our friends that are Native Americans.

Students, I would like for you to **research and find out what Native American would have lived in our area of Maryland in the 1600's.** Ask mom or dad to help you and email me your response!!