

Diamond Gems

September 2009 – PTA Newsletter Diamond Elementary School, 4 Marquis Dr., Gaithersburg, MD

“Excellence Through Effort”

PTA News

Message from the PTA President – Abbe Arnold (jasabbe2@comcast.net):

To the Diamond Community:

Welcome to the 2009/10 school year at Diamond Elementary. My name is Abbe Arnold and I am the PTA president. I'm proud to serve on the PTA with Carole Valis (Vice President of Fundraising), Joyce Lynch (Vice President of Community), Yong Lee (Treasurer), and Jenifer Golder (Secretary).

I'd like to recognize our outgoing elected members, Brian Ruberti and Carmen Castro –Conroy, for their dedicated service to the PTA. They made significant contributions to our children's learning environment and did a great job managing the PTA activities.

The PTA distributes a monthly newsletter titled "Diamond Gems". This newsletter is intended to inform you of PTA events and the school schedule. In addition to our newsletter, you will also find useful information at the Diamond Elementary Yahoo Group.

This year we would like to increase PTA membership even more than last year, and the number of volunteers for our committees. We need your help to ensure another successful year.

If you have any questions, you may e-mail me jasabbe2@comcast.net. I look forward to another great year at Diamond Elementary!

- Abbe Arnold, President

Catch The Wave Join The PTA!



Hello, Finn!

In the 2008/2009 school year, the PTA completed Diamond's first-ever mascot book, *Hello Finn!* The PTA is very excited about having this treasured keepsake available for the Diamond community to purchase. The storyline is about "Finn," our beloved mascot, visiting Diamond Elementary – a day in the life of Finn! During his visit, Finn observes classrooms, experiences specials, eats lunch and plays at recess. If you would like to purchase *Hello Finn!*, enclosed in this September issue is an order form or go to Diamond's website (www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/diamondes/) and click on "PTA" and print a form. The cost of the book is \$15.

Also, for your information, Mascot Books (the company that Diamond partnered with for this project) has over 150 college and professional sports team books available. Since Diamond has a partnership with Mascot Books, Diamond families will receive a 20% discount for each of these books purchased on-line by using the promotion code -- diamond. In addition, for each college or professional team book purchased, Mascot Books will give Diamond \$5 per book! Check out www.mascotbooks.com or go to Diamond's website and click on the link.

Special PTA Notice...



Thanks to all of the volunteers who have committed themselves to continue to support Diamond's PTA in the 2009/2010 school year. The PTA is honored to be able to work with such an amazing group of parents.

However, the PTA is still in need of filling some very important positions for the 2009/2010 school-year. Please take a moment to consider volunteering. Remember that in order for some of these programs to continue at Diamond, the below listed positions will need to be filled. As you will see, we listed International Night Chair and Co-chair open. The PTA would love to host one this year.

OPEN

Committee Chairperson & Co-Chair Positions

Book Fair Chair & Co-Chair
Staff Appreciation Co-Chair
International Night Chair & Co-Chair (**NEW** this year!)

If you would like to volunteer for one of the above-listed positions, please contact Abbe Arnold at jasabbe2@comcast.net.

Thank you for your consideration and thank you, once again, to this year's already committed volunteers!

Back to School Picnic

The Diamond ES Back-To-School Picnic will be held on **Friday, September 11th from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.** The picnic is a great opportunity to meet our teachers and staff, as well as other families in the Diamond ES community. Sub sandwiches, drinks, paper products, and utensils will be provided by the PTA. Last names starting with A-L are asked to bring a dessert to share and last names starting with M-Z are asked to bring a side dish to share. Children must be accompanied by an adult. \$15 per family for 2-4 people attending and \$20 per family for 5 or more people attending.

Registration forms are due back September 4th, along with payment. Please join us for an evening of family fun. Help is always needed and appreciated. If you are interested in helping with this year's picnic, please contact Allyson Levine at 301-977-4157 or allysonlevine@comcast.net.





Join us for the 1st Annual Diamond PTA...

HALLOWEEN COSTUME SALE



- Who: Parents and children
- What: Browse through our great selection of gently used Halloween costumes and dress-up items priced as low as \$5
- When: Friday, September 11th from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm (during the Back to School Picnic)
- Where: On the blacktop under the tents
- Why: Save money on your child's costume for this year while raising money for the Diamond ES PTA



Diamond_Elementary_School PTA Yahoo Group

The PTA utilizes an Internet- based listserv (via Yahoo! Groups) to keep parents apprised of Diamond Elementary School and PTA - sponsored events and information. The group is restricted to current parents, guardians and staff members. You must be a member of the Yahoo Group to view or post messages to the group, view files, PTA calendar and more.



To join, send an e-mail to:

diamond_elementary_school-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Your e-mail must include the following information in the body of your e-mail message:

Your name

Your student's name

Your student's teacher's name or your staff position

This information is required in order to identify you as a current member of the Diamond Elementary School community.

We recommend that new enrollees (such as incoming Kindergarteners and relocated families) join the PTA first, before submitting a membership request to the PTA's Yahoo Group.

If you have questions, please contact:
Beth Kennington, Yahoo Group Moderator
301-216-2181 | bkenn@starpower.net

PTA Membership

It's time for the Diamond Elementary annual Parent Teacher Association (PTA) membership drive, and we're hoping to make this year the most successful ever!

Membership options for this year have changed to provide better funding opportunities for school programs. As in the past, there is still a base level of giving which entitles Diamond parents to a PTA membership and all its benefits. However, each year parents ask how they can offer additional support while making sure that their funds will directly benefit Diamond Elementary students and programs. With this in mind, several membership categories have been created that not only maintain the PTA membership and benefits, but also allow parents to make an additional donation at the time they sign up for the PTA. One hundred percent of the funds received above and beyond the typical PTA dues will be used to meet the needs of Diamond Elementary and its students.

Whichever level you choose, your PTA membership will entitle you to a free Diamond Directory and will also provide cardholder benefits such as free online parenting resources and e-newsletters, promotional discounts at stores such as BarnesandNoble.com and T-Mobile, member rates on PTA magazine subscriptions, and more. But the most important benefit is for your child, as your membership dues and donations go directly towards providing enriching programs and activities for Diamond students.

We encourage all families to join the PTA and, if possible, take on a volunteer role with one or more programs. It is a wonderful way to get involved with your child's education and help make Diamond Elementary the best school it can be. PTA membership forms have been sent home in your child's backpack. Please take a moment to review this year's PTA programs, and we hope you decide to join this important organization.

If you have any questions you may contact
Sarah Lang Sarahklang@gmail.com or
Kim McWilliams Mcwilliams_kimberly@yahoo.com

*"When PTA gets involved, all children benefit.
When you get involved in PTA, the child who benefits most is yours."*
www.pta.org

Foreign Language at Diamond

Would your child like to learn a foreign language? Or maybe they studied Spanish last year and want to learn more. We are fortunate to be offering FLES (Foreign Language in elementary Schools) again this year. Classes meet either before or after school and all students in grades K through 5 may participate.

Spanish, French and Chinese classes are available as enrollment allows. Last year we had a great number of students take Spanish, but unfortunately did not meet the minimum counts required for French or Chinese. We're hoping to offer all three languages this year.

Watch for the registration form sent home in your child's backpack the first week of school. Fill out the form and promptly return it to your child's classroom teacher. If your child wants to enroll in a Spanish class, please include the payment of \$215. However, if your child is interested in taking French or Chinese, please do not send payment until we know if we can offer those classes.

School starts late this year and the **registration deadline is early--September 11**--so please watch for the registration form and respond right away.

Charlotte Oslund & Amy Pomrunk, FLES Co-coordinators
DiamondFLES@hotmail.com

Diamond ES Back To School Nights

This year Diamond ES will be having two different Back-To-School Nights depending on the grade in which your child or children are in.

Please see the schedule below:

Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd Grades

Wednesday, September 23rd at 7 pm

3rd, 4th and 5th Grades

Thursday, September 24th at 7 pm

Back To School Night is an opportunity for our principal, Mrs. Carol Lange, to discuss our goals for the year. The Diamond ES teachers and staff will discuss classroom objectives and curriculum. Please join us.

Restaurant Night
Tuesday Sept. 15 from 5-9pm



12211 Darnestown Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
Phone: (301) 330-8214

Diamond ES will receive 25% of the intake...
Please say our Password: "Diamond" when
placing your order.
Dine-in or take-out available.

SPIRIT FRIDAYS

Sponsored by
Diamond's S.G.A.

September 4th is Sunglasses Day!
Wear your favorite shades to show it's cool to be
back at school!

September 11th is Diamond Wear Day!
Wear blue and gold, our school colors!

September 18th is Class Color Day!
Vote on your class color and show your school
spirit!

September 25th is Red, White, and Blue Day!
Get into the spirit of democracy because S.G.A.
elections are next week!

Teacher Highlight



The month of September we are highlighting
Dr. Ocheze Joseph, Assistant Principal

What is your name? Dr. Ocheze Joseph

What grade do you teach? I am the Assistant Principal

Have you ever taught another grade? I have taught grades K-6 as well as college.

Where were you born? I was born in Washington, D.C.

What was the name of your Elementary School? I attended Harrison Elementary
School in Washington, D.C.

When you were in elementary school, what was your favorite subject? My
favorite subject in elementary school was reading.

What is your favorite color? My favorite color is silver.

What is your favorite sport to watch or to play? I enjoy watching football.

What is your favorite childhood book? My favorite childhood book was Peter's
Chair.

What is your favorite book? Choosing Civility

What is your favorite hobby? I enjoy shopping and event planning.

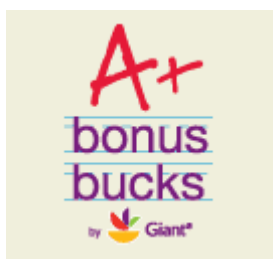
Do you have a pet? No pets.

What is your favorite food? I love steak!

What is your favorite board game? I don't play board games too often but I love
to play Uno.

What is your favorite restaurant? Cheesecake Factory

What is your favorite movie? The Color Purple



It's time to renew your store cards...

It's time to renew your **Giant** and **Target** cards to designate Diamond as your school of preference so that every time you shop, Diamond will receive "free" money. It's simple and will only take a few minutes of your time. **Important note: Yearly renewal is necessary!**

Last school year, Diamond received a total of \$2,660.00. Let's see if we can increase that amount this year to \$3,000. Encourage your family, friends and neighbors to do the same. You can renew your card at the store or on-line. Here's the information...

Giant A+ Bonus Bucks

Diamond's ID: 00806

Website: giantfood.com/aplus

Target-Take Charge of Education

Diamond's ID: 58122

Website: target.com/tcoe

Please contact Lisa Ryan at ljl5@yahoo.com or Carole Valis at valiscb@yahoo.com with any questions.

Make a Difference at Diamond!

We've launched our 2009-2010 Box Tops for Education fundraising campaign. Thanks to you last year we earned over \$700, and this year we've set a goal of earning \$850 through Box Tops!

The Box Tops for Education program offers an easy way to **earn cash for our school** through everyday activities. School budgets are tighter than ever, and Diamond is asking for the support of its families and friends.

Helping our school is so easy! For more information on how you can help our school earn cash through Box Tops for Education, visit www.boxtops4education.com online or contact our Box Tops for Education Coordinator, Kathy Coakley, at coakleyaa@aol.com.

And as always, **keep clipping those Box Tops**, and drop them in the big pink collection box by the front office. Each Box Top earns ten cents for Diamond, and they add up fast!

Thank you for your support!

Kathy Coakley

Upcoming Events:

September

- 7 No School – Labor Day
- 11 Back to School Picnic, 6 pm
Halloween Costume Sale
- 15 Restaurant Night, California Tortilla 5-9 pm
- 23 Back to School Night, K – 2, 7:00 pm
- 24 Back to School Night, 3 – 5, 7:00 pm
- 28 No School – Yom Kippur



Podcasting @ Diamond E.S.

What is a podcast you may ask? It is “a digital recording of a radio broadcast or similar program, made available on the Internet for downloading to a personal audio player” (New Oxford American Dictionary). Diamond Elementary has its first podcast up and running on the school’s website! It can be accessed from the Media Center link on the home page or from the Media Center web page

[<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/diamondes/mediapodcast.htm>]

This will be an ongoing periodic series of randomly chosen groups of students sharing reviews of good books they have read. Hopefully, this will get students excited about increasing their levels of independent reading. Thanks to Mrs. Lass and Ms. White (media specialist) for coordinating this effort.

2009 - 2010 ELECTED EXECUTIVE BOARD

Abbe Arnold, President

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Joyce Lynch, VP Community

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Carole Valis, VP Fundraising

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Yong Lee, Treasurer

yongleerim@yahoo.com

Jennifer Golder, Secretary

jeng1970@aol.com

EDITOR'S NOTE

If you have something to include in the *Diamond Gems*, please contact Rhea Bowen (240-632-8829); email rheabowen@yahoo.com. All submissions are **due by the 20th** of the month.



Diamond Elementary School
4 Marquis Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Absences: Please call the office, 301-840-7177, to report student absences.

The Diamond Elementary School website is a great source of information. Check it out at:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/diamondes/>