



TOGETHER, BUILDING ON EXCELLENCE

THE PYLE PHYLE

The Pyle Phyle is the joint newsletter of the Pyle PTSA and the school administration

March 2009

Principally Speaking

Charles Dickens once wrote, "It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade." A fitting description for the weather this time of year. March is a time of transition in both season and school year. Upon completion of MSA testing we will quickly close out the third quarter of the school year and enter a much needed Spring Break, April 6 through 13. The school year seems to move at a much faster pace when we return from Spring Break and there is certainly a new energy in the building when warm weather arrives.

Many times when my schedule is busy I find myself looking forward and forget to celebrate the day. March has already given us much to celebrate. Our students continue to do great things in the classroom. I am extremely impressed with the positive learning environment and caring climate that the students have created this year. The Talent Show was spectacular and a great time for everyone who attended. The first ever Cultural Awareness lunch was a huge success. Our Pyle Education Foundation (PEF) fundraising socials proved again to be an opportunity for adults in our school community to build relationships and raise money to enhance our students' learning experiences. It was nice to see so many incoming parents/guardians attend the events this year!

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The Spanish Culture Lunch was a terrific start to a new Pyle tradition!

PTSA President's Letter

Dear Parents, Staff and Friends of Pyle,

Thanks to all of you who came to the Facebook discussion at the PTSA meeting this month. It made for a lively conversation! Given the interest in the topic, we are trying to arrange a follow-up parent networking event to discuss our experiences on the website. Please keep an eye out for a PyleNet announcement concerning this upcoming parent networking event.

At the conclusion of the March PTSA meeting, I mentioned that we are in the process of amending the Pyle PTSA Bylaws. The Executive Board has approved the proposed amendments. The bylaws and proposed amendments are available for review on the Pyle website, www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/pylems/. The vote to approve these bylaws will take place at the next general PTSA meeting on the April 21, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

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Stay in the Know!

Visit the Pyle Web site: <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/pylems/> several times a week to view the latest school news. Pages for parents, students and teachers provide access to information, data, forms, and e-mail addresses as well as links to important Web sites.



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PYLE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The Pyle Education Foundation is pleased to report that hundreds of parents and dozens of teachers turned out in support of the PEF at our six cocktail parties on February 21 and March 7. These parties are an important way to reach current Pyle parents in an informal setting and to welcome fifth grade parents while continuing to build our community and fund critical projects. We are especially grateful to the hosts for opening their homes to the wider Pyle community and to the co-hosts who helped sponsor and promote these events. Those hosts and co-hosts include:

Claudia & Richard Ades

Lora & David Bevir

Giselle Bleecker & Phil Rosenberg

Connie Cantrell & Steve Goldman

Ann & David Castagnetti

Astrid Boon & Tom Costello

Ali & Joe Cudby

Elaine & Rodger Currie

Deb & Rick Duffy

Martha & Mario Finelli

Lauren Gross & Hal Segal

Hilary & Robert Hoopes

Mette & Lars Jessen

Lisa Lacasse & Bruce Lesley

Susan Mathews & Ken Smurzynski

Eve & David Mills

Bonnie & Fred Phelan

Kim & Ken Rehmann

Kate & Jim Slawta

Laurie & Dave Thomas

The Pyle Education Foundation is seeking nominations for its 2009-2010 board of directors, which is composed of current Pyle parents from each of the feeder elementary schools. The PEF is the 501(c)(3) tax-exempt fundraising foundation for the Pyle Middle School community. We raise funds, build community, identify needed programs, and support continuing education. Working with Pyle staff, student,

and parent leadership, we solicit donations and assess and evaluate the transformative potential of our combined resources to fund unmet facility, equipment, and program needs. If you are interested in serving or would like to nominate someone, please contact Kim Rehmann at kbbkr@comcast.net.

The PEF is also evaluating potential projects to fund next year. If you would like to propose a project for funding consideration by the PEF, please contact Connie Cantrell at chcantrell@comcast.net. Examples of past projects may be found on our website, www.pyleeducationfoundation.org.

Mark your Calendar for Spring Fever:

April 2 & 3: Hoops for Heart

April 2 7 3: College Spirit Day

April 6 – 13 SPRING BREAK

PIZZA FOR PYLE!

Save the dates for Ledos Pizza Nights:

Monday and Tuesday, May 4 and 5
to benefit the Pyle Education Foundation

Principally Speaking



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If you haven't heard, Ms. Goodstein, sixth grade teacher and team leader, has been named a Marian Greenblatt teacher of the year. She is also a finalist for Montgomery County Public Schools teacher of the year. Ms. Goodstein is a remarkable teacher and certainly deserving of the recognition. We are extremely thankful to have such a strong staff of dedicated professionals. There are just not enough awards and accolades to recognize all of the great things that our teachers do. I am glad to

say that many of our families take time to personally thank staff members for their work and it is truly appreciated!

The weather will continue to change and time will not slow down, but I am proud to say that core values that we espouse remain constant and are reflected in the focused efforts of our Pyle family.

As we are turning in the final stretch for our 2008 -2009 school year, we must continue to strive for excellence. Knowing our Pyle family of staff, students and parents, I expect nothing but the best!

*Respectfully,
Mike Zarchin
Principal*

MUSIC DEPARTMENT CONGRATULATIONS!

CONGRATULATIONS to the following students on 6 weeks of hard work & rehearsals and a spectacular performance on February 25 with the MONTGOMERY COUNTY HONORS CHORUS:

THANK YOU MR. LIDDLE, Pyle Chorus Teacher, for the time and effort you spent above & beyond your busy workdays to help both the Honors Chorus and All-State Chorus members practice and prepare for their participation in these wonderful experiences!!!

SHARE A GOOD WEB SITE

Is there a web site that your Pyle student finds enthralling – wait, we're talking educational, here, such as science, art, current events, music, or even math. The launch of the Culture Lunches highlights how vibrant our international community is at Pyle. The International and Newcomers Committee recommends this web site: <http://kiosko.net/> This site features newspapers from around the world, a fascinating way to go beyond the local headlines.

If you have a suggestion for a Pyle worthy web site that you would like to share, send a note to pylephyle@gmail.com.

Co-Presidents' Message

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The Pyle Nominating Committee is hard at work soliciting volunteers to serve on the Executive Board of the PTSA in the coming year. Open positions include: President, Executive Vice President, VP for Volunteers, VP for Programs, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary/PyleNet Moderator, 2 MCCPTA Representatives, and 2 Whitman Cluster Representatives. Please consider volunteering your time to serve on this important board. If you are interested, please contact David Elfin, the Chair of the Nominating Committee, at elfind@verizon.net .

If you are not able to contribute to Pyle as part of the executive board,

you might also consider heading up one of the many PTSA committees. We are in need of volunteers to serve on such critical committees as the Pyle Directory and Pyle Phyle , among others.

Increased involvement of parents and families often is cited as one of the most important ways to improve our schools. Pyle is a wonderful school for our children--with your participation, we can make it even better!

Have a wonderful and relaxing Springbreak holiday!

*Sincerely,
Kathy Knox
PTSA President 2008-09*

PYLE PRESENTS: DARCY'S CINEMATIC LIFE

Pyle's Spring Drama Production is titled Darcy's Cinematic Life by Christa Crewdson. This new production was just published this year and Pyle is proud to be one of the first schools to preview it. This show features over 40 actors and additional technical crews. Darcy's Cinematic Life is a show about teenage life. The production is directed by Kathy Cox, Pyle's Drama Teacher, and student assistants.

"Darcy struggles with issues that most teenagers deal with on a day-to-day basis. What makes her unique, however, is that she experiences the events in her life as short movies -- or "daydreams," as her teacher calls them. Often these movies grow out of her desire to fit in and be accepted. But during a class trip to a museum -- complete with a romance, an evil nemesis, and a nerd fashion show -- Darcy is able to find her way with the help of both her intelligence and her unwillingness to change who she is just to fit in." (from Playscripts.com)

In addition to the main stage production, Pyle will also feature 2 pre-shows that have been Student Directed by Whitman Junior Tori Sharbaugh and Pyle 7th grader Tessa Berry.

Dates: Wednesday April 29, Thursday, April 30 and Friday May 1, 2009.

Time: 7:00 pm. (Shows should end by 9:00 pm).

Where: Pyle Middle School Dining Room

Cost: General Admission Tickets are \$8.00



Darcy-Darcy: The Alternating Leads of "Darcy's Cinematic Life" invite you to share in the fun, April 29 & 30 or May 1 for the Pyle Spring Drama Production.

PROJECTS FOR PYLE!

The Pyle Education Foundation funds projects that enhance the greater Pyle community. The Foundation focuses on projects for facilities, equipment and/or programs that have a multi-year impact. In looking to prioritize future fundraising goals, the Board of the Foundation is seeking suggestions for transformative projects for the 2009-2010 school year and beyond. Any administrator, teacher, parent or student with suggestions should contact Mette Jessen at jessenusa@msn.com. We would love to hear from you before April 4, 2009.

SEEKING PARENTS FOR 2009-2010 PTSA BOARD

The Pyle PTSA Nominating Committee is currently seeking individuals willing to serve for at least one year on the PTSA Board. As a Board Member you will be working with a team of parents committed to enhancing the educational experiences and quality of life for Pyle students.

It is also a great way to stay on top of what is happening in your child's school and to influence programs and outreach to families in the Pyle community.

The following slots are open in the 2009-2010 school year:

President
 Executive Vice President
 Vice President for Programs
 Vice President for Volunteers
 Treasurer
 Recording Secretary
 PyleNet Coordinator & Production
 MCCPTA Representatives (Two)

If you are interested in serving or have questions about a position, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee: David Elfin elfind@verizon.net, Kim Brams kimbrams@aol.com, Marina Davis marinadavis@yahoo.com, Sharon Fine sharon@sharonfinegallery.com, Laura Roulier rjckr@comcast.net or Ann Wright Ann-Wright@reid.senate.gov

CULTURE LUNCH HIGHLIGHTS SPAIN

February included a rare treat for a number of Pyle students, launched with this announcement:

"The SPIRIT group has created a new monthly event called Culture Lunches. This is an opportunity to learn about other cultures and taste food from other cultures. Sign up in the guidance office. The first culture lunch will be this Thursday, February 19th."

The inaugural Culture Lunch focused on Spain, hosted by Carlos Callejón (father of sixth grader Carlos Callejón, and a US resident for only two months!) and Miren Fernandez (Chair of the International and Newcomers Committee). They shared terrific information about Spain with more than 100 Pyle students.

The Spanish Culture Lunch was a big success! General information about Spain was followed by the languages of Spain, the importance of

the Ñ letter (España, año, ...), the history and typical habits. Videos provided a virtual tour of Spanish places including ancient castles and beautiful cities. Students also enjoyed lively music, including old favorites like "La Macarena". Famous Spaniards such as Placido Domingo, Severiano Ballesteros, Nadal, Gasol, Penelope Cruz, Almodovar, the Spanish soccer & basketball teams, and many more were highlighted. The art and architecture of Spain was presented in books, illustrating Velazquez, Gaudí, and many more!

The hosts taught the students how to make a classic Spanish fan and the students joined in. The classroom was decorated with colorful Spanish flags - official and not official.

A favorite element, of course, was food! The group served typical Spanish meals: tortillas de patata, a Five Spanish Omelet prepared by Mr Callejón, black and green olive oils, chorizo (a

favorite kind of Spanish sausage), Manchego cheese, and Spanish bread. The sessions had so much content contained in only 30 minutes for each lunch period session!

The organizers enjoyed the chance to share their culture, and would like to thank the Pyle people who participated. It was a pleasure to be there, trying to show in a half hour what is Spain. We appreciate the interest of all the Pyle people (the Principal, Counselors, Teachers, all the staff,...and of course the Students - much more than a hundred were there!!!!).

Thank you to Mr. Callejón and Ms Fernandez for a great beginning to a new Pyle tradition: Culture Lunch!

HELP THE ARTS AT WHITMAN

Walt Whitman High School's Annual Festival of the Arts is May 14 and 15.

Will you support us with a donation?

Every year, one of the biggest fundraisers at this event is the Silent Auction.

Parents, area businesses, neighbors and other friends of Whitman donate a variety of items and services.

Silent Auction proceeds support The Festival which showcases the school's amazing visual arts and music programs. It brings together professional artists, arts community supporters, students and their families in a celebration of talent and future promise.

Here are examples of what we are looking for:

- Music Lessons
- One-on-One Sport Lessons
- Tutoring
- Restaurants Gift Certificates
- Cookie or Cake of the Month
- Scarves, Sweaters, Handmade Crafts
- Movie/show tickets
- Golf Outing
- Time shares
- SAT tutoring

Would you please support the Festival of the Arts with a donation? We guarantee your donation will go to the highest bidder.

For a donation sheet, please email:

Patricia Lake: pmlake@comcast.net or

Elise Mahaffie: elisemahaffie@mac.com

PYLE PHYLE PRIVACY

As a newsletter for the PTSA and Pyle staff and administration, the Pyle Phyle has many reasons to publish names and contact information for Pyle families and staff. To be sure the privacy of our community is protected, directory information will no longer be published in the on-line versions of the Pyle Phyle. As updates occur, they will continue to be included only in the hard copies of the Pyle Phyle that are mailed to individual families.

Adults who manage activities for Pyle can suppress their contact information (typically email addresses) from the on-line Pyle Phyle if they send a request to the Pyle Phyle editor before the deadline noted for each issue. If you submit an item to be included in the Pyle Phyle, please let the editor know if you would like to keep your contact info off of the Pyle web site.

As always, we will never publish a photo of a student that is identified by name. If student names are included in the body of the newsletter, they will not be linked to a photograph to protect the privacy of our students.



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Team Round-up

SIXTH GRADE REPORT

Have you checked your child's binder recently? The sixth grade teachers have been noticing many binders that are falling apart. Please check your child's binder. If the rings are not closing securely, the cover falling off, or the front pocket ripping, please replace the binder at your earliest convenience. In addition, please check the front pocket of the binder regularly to ensure that it gets emptied every evening. Finally, please be sure that your child has all necessary supplies. Pencils and paper seem to be in high demand these days.

MSA testing will begin in March. Please try to ensure that your child is in school on testing days. If not, your child will miss class to make up these tests. And remember, a hearty breakfast and plenty of rest will help your child perform at his/her optimal level on these tests!

Please check in with your child to be sure that he/she is working on his/her science student service learning project. As this is a long, long, long term project, your child may need some help staying on top of things. Each child must log in 10 hours of community service before the May due date. All students need these hours to graduate 6th grade.

Save the date!! On the evening of June 4th all sixth grade students will be sharing their projects with parents and other community members. All students should attend, if possible, and we invite all parents and siblings as well.

The sixth teachers would like to thank all of the parents who helped out with our field trip to the Newseum. The trip was a huge success, due, in a large part, to our wonderful parents. Next up, Six Flags on May 8th followed by outdoor ed!

Have a terrific start to spring!

OMEGA NEWS

MSA time is here. This year's assessments are ongoing between March 16th and March 31st. Our students are working incredibly hard on the Maryland State Assessments. Although it may seem that standardized testing will be complete in March, it is not exactly true. The Science MSA is tentatively scheduled for the last week of April. Students taking high school level courses this year will take the corresponding HSA in May as well.

Mr. Wesley is pleased to report that the Omegas have sent ten National History Day projects to the Montgomery County competition. He believes that this is the largest number of projects we have ever sent to the competition. The county judging will take place on March 21st at Richard Montgomery High School.

Don't forget to use Edline to monitor your student's progress on assignments and remain informed of the upcoming homework, projects, quizzes, and tests.

As a reminder, if your child is absent for one or two days please make sure that he or she keeps current with homework. Students may check Edline or call a homework buddy to stay up-to-date. If your child is absent for three or more days, call the office to ask to have your child's teachers compile missed work for pick-up.

Hoops for Heart has been scheduled for the last two days before spring break, April 2nd and 3rd.

Whether you travel or stay in the area, have a very safe and restful spring break!

*Thank you.
Bob Wallis*

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

The sixth grade science curriculum is on the move – literally. The Forces and Motion unit is in full “swing” (as in “pendulum”) and will end in May with an exciting field trip to the Six Flags amusement park to study the application of Newton's Laws of Motion.

Structure and Function of the human body is the focus for 7th grade science students in March and April. This fascinating unit includes how muscles work, how food is digested, and the structure and function of the circulatory system. Geology is the final unit for 8th grade students and will begin this month. It includes the study of the structure of our dynamic earth, plate tectonics, the rock cycle, earthquakes and volcanoes.

The two-day Science MSA will be given late April or early May and covers all content in middle school. A brief review of science content is planned to help students prepare for this comprehensive state exam.

Mark Your Calendar:

March 27	End of 3rd Quarter
March 30	NO SCHOOL Teacher Work Day
April 1	Seventh and Eighth Grade Orchestra Festival
April 2	Hoops for Heart Fundraiser: All Day
April 2	College Spirit Day
April 2	Eighth Grade Band Festival
April 2	Chorus to MCPS Choral Festival
April 3	Hoops for Heart Fundraiser: All Day
April 3	College Spirit Day
April 3	Newcomers and International Committee Spring Party
April 6 – 13	Spring Break, back to school Tuesday April 14
April 14	PTSA Meeting: 7:30 pm
April 16	Guidance Advisory Committee Meeting 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm
April 16	Report Cards Distributed
April 23	Take Your Child to Work Day
April 24	SGA Spring Dance 3 – 5 pm
April 25-26	Music Trip to New York City – all day
April 29, 30, May 1	“Darcy’s Cinematic Life” 7 pm
May 6	Queen Elizabeth Visits Pyle
May 7	Bill’s Buddies Assemblies: 7th Grade
May 8	Physics Field Trip: Sixth Grade
May 16	Band and Choral Spring Trip
May 18 - 29	Sixth Grade Outdoor Ed: rotation by team

Meeting the Challenge

Pyle Students GO, GO, GO!
April 23: Go to Work!
April 25: Go to New York!
May 8: Go to Six Flags!

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