

Sequoyah Signal

The Sequoyah Elementary School PTA Newsletter

May 7, 2008

Volume 1, Issue 8



**Sequoyah
Elementary School**

*"Home of the
Stallions"*

17301 Bowie Mill Road
Derwood, MD 20855
(301) 840-5335

[www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/
schools/sequoyahes/](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/sequoyahes/)

Inside This Issue

Monthly Message	1
Parents' Checklist	1
Take Note: School Schedule	2
Save the Date	2
Readers' Corner	2
Box Tops Update	2
Modell's	2
Book Fair Wrap-Up	2
Monthly Message (Continued)	3
GL Scrips	4
Spring Carnival	4
Sequoyah Running Club	4
Teacher Appreciation Week	4

Dr. Bobbi Jasper, Principal

Ms. Christine Woodcock, Asst Principal

Mr. David Dennison, PTA President

Ms. Amy Stevens, Signal Editor

Monthly Message

From our Principal, Assistant Principal, and PTA President

Dear Sequoyah Parents and Guardians:

Thinking About 2008-2009. There are only one and a half months left to the 2007-2008 school year. The Sequoyah staff is starting the process of preparing for next school year. If you have not completed the "Parent Information Checklist", please fill it out and send it in as soon as possible.

Developing class lists is always a bit of a challenge at Sequoyah because of our shifting enrollment and uncertainty about how many teachers we will need in the fall. Summer is a busy time for enrollments at Sequoyah; many new students move into our service area each year, and many times we have to rearrange classes and form new ones to accommodate our population.

Beginning in late May, staff will be discussing tentative class groupings. These groups are subject to reorganization during the summer and even after the teachers return in August because of unexpected changes in the number of students.

We take a great deal of time and care in setting up our class groupings. The teachers currently working with the students sit down with me, and we discuss each student. Our goals are to create

classes in which a child's learning style is compatible with that of the teacher's teaching style; classes that are balanced in terms of race and sex; classes that have dependent workers and independent workers, leaders and followers. We also look carefully at children who work well together and who motivate each other; we try to separate children who do not work well together or who have a negative effect on each other. The aim is to create heterogeneous homeroom classes in which children and teachers can be happy and productive.

While the vast majority of parents do not submit requests, sometimes we get requests to place a child with a specific teacher. It is impossible to state for certain which teachers will be teaching which grades until the enrollment becomes somewhat final in August; as a result, requests for a specific teacher will not be accepted because we cannot state for certain if teachers may need to change grade levels

Our first priority is to place students in appropriate class groupings according to the criteria stated above, so we do not accept requests for specific teachers.

Continued on page 3

Parents' Checklist

- ◆ Inform the school if your child has allergies or asthma!
- ◆ Don't forget the sunscreen.
- ◆ Buy discounted Spring Carnival tickets at www.sequoyahcarnival.eventbrite.com. Invite friends & family too!
- ◆ Order gift cards for stores and restaurants you use frequently! Stock up for the summer months!
- ◆ Shop at Modell's for your summer clothes, shoes, and sports equipment. Don't forget your coupons!
- ◆ Order from Market Day - only two more deliveries this school year!
- ◆ Attend the last PTA meeting June 3rd. Babysitting is provided at no cost.

Take Note: School Schedule

School Holidays - No school

Monday, May 26 (Memorial Day)

Save the Date

Kindergarten Orientation: May 21st 8:30-11:30am and 1:30-3:30pm, and May 22nd 8:30-11:30am. If you know a family with incoming kindergarteners, please make sure they know about Orientation!

Market Day: Register and place an order online at www.MarketDay.com, or submit a paper order form prior to the due dates. Contact Ivette Sherman at (301) 330-5151 or IdShopper@comcast.net for information.

- Order forms due Wednesday 5/14
- Internet orders due noon Thursday 5/15
- Pickup Wednesday 5/21, 7pm-8pm, APR

Readers' Corner

As we get to the end of another successful school year, it's time to think about summer reading. It is important to encourage your child to read throughout the summer in order to maintain their hard earned skills.

Watch for a summer reading packet similar to the one we sent out last spring. This packet is full of ideas and book suggestions. The types of books on the reading lists are previews of what will be expected for the next school year.

Box Tops Update

Sequoyah earned more than \$700 dollars from the Box Tops program this year! Keep filling up collection sheets through the summer because there will be a big collection in September. Feel free to print out collection sheets from the Box Tops website, but please make sure that there are 25 Box Tops per sheet.

Parents are encouraged to do their online shopping by

Modell's



Back by popular demand...our Modell's Team Weeks Shopping Event will begin Friday, May 16th. Watch for your 10% off coupon in the May 14th PTA Weekly Folder. Save on everything you need for summer and Modell's will donate 5% of your purchase to support our school.

Please contact Danielle Rice for more information: Danielle.M.Rice@comcast.net or (240) 683-0437.

Other Dates

Thursday and Friday, May 22-23: Field Days

Thursday, June 12: *Last Day of School for Students*

Friday, June 13: Professional Day for teachers and staff

Fun Run: Sunday, June 1 at 11:30am. Join us for the run and then stay for the Spring Carnival!

Spring Carnival: Sunday, June 1, 12:00-4:00pm. All are welcome!

PTA Meeting: Tuesday, June 3 is the final PTA meeting before school ends. Please come out and celebrate this year's successes, express gratitude for the hard work and great ideas our outgoing officers and committee chairs have given us, and build the foundation for an equally successful 2008-2009 school year.

As always, babysitting is provided free of charge so that you can attend the PTA meeting.

For grades 3, 4, and 5, completion of these packets will be graded as one of the first work study skill grades of the year, so it's important to complete the packet and bring it to the teacher in the fall.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Beth Deigan

301 840 5335

Elizabeth.M.Deigan@mcpsmd.org

visiting the Box Tops Marketplace and shopping through the links for their favorite stores. Sequoyah earns percentages of the purchases! It is the quickest way to increase our school's earnings.

Thanks for your support!

Andrea Cameron

Box Tops Chair

Book Fair Wrap-Up

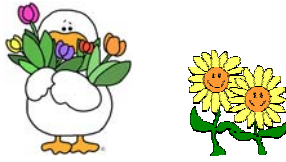
Many thanks to all who helped out at the Book Fair in April. Over \$1600 was raised for the school, and in addition we were able to donate books to the Media Center, the Stallion Store and other school programs.

The Book Fair could not exist without the help of so many volunteers and especially the Media Center staff and the Art Teachers who graciously worked with the kids to make the "Family Road Trip" cars that you saw line the halls. Many thanks to everyone who came to help - your time is greatly appreciated.

Look for the fair again in October!

Monthly Message (Continued)

Spring is in full bloom! The trees are green, the flowers are blooming, and the pollen is in the air.



If your child has asthma or allergies and you have not yet informed the school, please do so.

Students enjoy the daily exercise they receive during outdoor recess. The school needs to know if there may be health related issues as a result of being outdoors.

Thank you to the many members of the PTA. Please remember to put the June 3rd PTA meeting on your calendar. This is always a good time to catch up on what's happening at Sequoyah and what's coming up. There are still opportunities to contribute to the PTA this year. Check out the PTA link on the Sequoyah website for ideas and suggestions.



Below is the latest response by Chief Operating Officer Larry Bowers concerning next year's proposed budget. In light of the possible budget cuts, the Sequoyah staff and PTA will continue to foster a program based on the goals of continued student achievement and academic excellence.

Questions and answers about the budget

On March 17, 2008, County Executive Isiah Leggett proposed his FY 2009 operating budget. It includes \$51 million less than the Board of Education's budget request. The MCPS Bulletin spoke to Chief Operating Officer Larry Bowers about this development.

If the \$51 million in cuts are approved, what will be the impact on MCPS?

LB: Cuts of that magnitude could result in significant layoffs, larger classes and the elimination of some of our successful reform efforts. We could lose 800 positions, including more than 400 teachers. We would not be able to expand upon key initiatives such as the middle school magnet consortium, middle school reform to additional schools, special education improvements, elementary assistant principals to more schools, increase of school counselors and parent community coordinators, and support for ESOL students with interrupted education. And, class sizes will increase in all schools.

Could MCPS have submitted a smaller budget request?

LB: MCPS asked for the smallest percent budget increase in 10 years because of the difficult economic situation. The

school system has already saved \$20 million through the freeze we implemented in November and through cuts we've already made to fund next year's budget. This budget reflects significant community input and was developed collaboratively with the employee associations and MCCPTA. Every effort was made to keep the request reasonable, to continue to honor contracts made with our employees, and to build upon the comprehensive reform we've implemented to improve student achievement. It's worth noting that since 2001, MCPS has saved \$75 million in the base budget.

Could the employee contracts be reopened as a result of the cuts?

LB: The superintendent is committed to the labor agreements we entered into and recognizes that the reputation of MCPS has been built upon the shoulders of its outstanding workforce. If we are to continue to attract and retain high-quality employees, then we need to pay competitive wages. Currently, one in four of our employees lives outside Montgomery County, with many commuting more than an hour each way because they cannot afford the high cost of housing. A 5 percent wage increase doesn't even keep pace with the rising prices that are squeezing us all—gas, groceries, rent and utilities. In January, the federal government estimated the cost of living increase to be 4.9 percent this year when those things are factored in. Energy costs alone are up nearly 33 percent. The county executive's budget indicates his support for funding the labor agreements of all county agencies.

What happens now?

LB: The budget is now in the hands of the County Council. The Council will begin holding hearings in April and submit its budget May 22. We believe that the budget shortfall is solvable, and we will be working closely with the County Council to make sure that severe reductions are not made that roll back the great progress we've seen in raising performance and narrowing the achievement gap.

Dr. Bobbi Jasper, Principal
Christine Woodcock, Assistant Principal
David Dennison, PTA President

Sequoyah is a community of learners who are dedicated to the support and development of productive citizens. We will foster lifelong learners in a respectful environment that is conducive to positive change, collaboration, communication and acceptance.

GL Scrips

Gift Cards aren't just for gifts



GL Scrips Spring Fundraiser has just begun, offering gift cards from over 300 retailers, restaurants, grocery stores and gas stations. **Is there a home project you're working on...**order a Home Depot or Lowes gift card to use towards your in-store purchase. **Planning to travel this summer...**order gift cards from American Airlines to use towards your tickets, or Disney gift cards to budget souvenir spending in the parks. **Headed to the**

beach...order a Tanger Outlets gift card to use at any store in the center. With the purchase of GL Scrip gift cards, you can order gift cards that you can use at your favorite Safeway or Giant grocery store, retail stores you shop in, restaurants you enjoy, and gas stations around the area. They are spent like cash and for every gift card purchased from GL Scrip the SES PTA receives a contribution. And they make great gifts.

All orders must be received by May 14th. Delivery is May 21st. Contact Danielle Rice for more information: Danielle.M.Rice@comcast.net or (240) 683-0437.

But what do May flowers bring?

Sequoyah's Spring Carnival!!

That's right...Sequoyah's PTA will host the 1st Annual SES Spring Carnival Sunday June 1st from 12pm to 4pm. Bring your family, friends, and neighbors to Sequoyah for a great day of games, fun, and food. There will be moon bounces, an obstacle course, Midway games, and more!

Order your tickets today at

www.SequoyahCarnival.Eventbrite.com

Sequoyah Running Club!

As your PTA works hard to put together our first (hopefully annual!) Spring Carnival and **Fun Run**, Sequoyah students, staff, teachers and parents are invited to also work hard training for the Run! With Mr. Martin's help, we are offering a FREE 4-week running club on Mondays and Wednesdays now through May 28th! All participants will meet outside the gymnasium door at 3:30 for safe, age-appropriate, fun activities for warming-up, stretching, running and strengthening.

Everyone should be dressed in clothing appropriate for physical activity, wear sneakers, and bring water! Each session will run for 1 hour, and students must be picked up promptly at 4:30.

The Fun Run will take place at 11:30am on Sunday, June 1st on school grounds. There will be different distance courses marked and all finishers will receive a ticket for a Carnival game! The Carnival begins at 12:00 noon.

Please join us for our fun, outdoor exercise and running club! Please email markemilymatusek@erols.com or call Emily Matusek at 301/987-5412, or talk to Mr. Martin!

Teacher Appreciation Week

Sequoyah Students:

Thank you to those who showed up Monday morning and lined the red carpet to welcome our teachers. The teachers loved being "stars" for the morning. Thank you

to all the parents who brought the students and stayed to help!

Remember to write a note to your teacher and bring it to them Thursday morning. A Thank You can mean so much!