RITCHIE PARK ES

PTA NEW­SLET­TER

2011-2012 RPES PTA Officers

**Rachel Hicks, President**

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**Vacant, President-Elect**

**Sharri Freedman, Fundraising VP**   
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**Karla Berggren, Programs VP**

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**Angie Dixson, Secretary**

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**Steve Schuck, Treasurer**

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PTA Board of Directors *also includes the following members:*

**Jennifer Young, Delegate to MoCo Council of PTAs and Past President**

young.jennifer@gmail.com

301-309-8764

**Richard Hart, Delegate to MoCo Council of PTAs**

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**Marquette Heaven, Membership Chair**

marquetteheaven@aol.com

301-294-6540

**Randi Freundlich, Communications Chair**

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301-424-0663

**Catherine McCoskey, Teacher Representative**

Catherine\_L\_McCoskey@mcpsmd.org

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**Catherine Long, Principal**

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**Mary Ellen Dixon, Asst. Principal**

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WWW.MONTGOMERYSCHOOLSMD.ORG/SCHOOLS/RITCHIEPARKES/PAR­ENTS

### **September 9, 2011**

# Join the PTA

With the beginning of another school year, now is the time to join the PTA.  We encourage all of our fami­lies and staff to join the PTA, regardless of whether or not you can make all of our monthly meetings or attend the events that we have planned. Joining the PTA is an easy way to give back to the RPES community, be active at our school, and help fund our popular events like Pizza Bingo, Music and Dance Night, and In­ternational Night, to name a few.  Your mem­bership dues go directly to enhance the educational experience of your children.  How great is that?  Ritchie Park is a great school, and with your support of the PTA, we can make it even better. Membership is $15 per person and a form can be down­loaded at the PTA webpage (see top of page). If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Marquette Heaven (see sidebar).

# School Directory Information Needed

This year we are using a web-based system for parents to verify their list­ings in RPES’s 2011-2012 Directory.  If your email address was in last year’s di­rec­tory, you should have re­ceived an email on how to verify your family informa­tion.  If you have not received such an email, please contact Jennifer Young (see side­bar). For those families new to RPES or did not have an email address in last year's directory, please provide the information requested in the Directory Form distributed in the PTA’s Panther Packet. Complete your form or verify your data by 9/23; otherwise, the directory will not contain your family contact informa­tion.

# MARK YOUR CA­LEN­DARS

**Restaurant night at Mamma Lucia** (Fallsgrove location) is Thurs. 9/22 from 4:30-10 p.m. You can dine-in or carryout, all you need to do is say that you are with RPES. Eight percent of the restaurant’s TOTAL nightly revenues will go towards our school. For more information, check out www.mammaluciarestaurants.com or contact Suzanne Smith, srrn74@hotmail.com.

# FUNDRAISING FORUM

**PTA Fall Fundraiser in Full Swing! Wrap is Back!** This year the PTA is sponsoring the sale of wrapping paper and other gift items through ***Innisbrook***.  Sales packets went home on 9/2, so you are probably busy buying and selling to family and friends by now!  Help the PTA raise money for fun school events and vital re­sources at Ritchie Park! Prizes will be awarded to all students who return order pay­ments.  In addi­tion, there will be rewards for the highest participating class­rooms and for any student raising more than $25, $50, $75, or $100. Sales end Mon. 9/19, so check out the beautiful products and sell, sell, sell***.*** Place orders on­line and return checks payable to “RPES PTA” to school.Orders will be availa­ble for pick-up at school on the parent-teacher conference days on Nov. 10&11. Out-of-town family and friends can order and pay online, and items will be deli­vered directly to them. ***Wrap it up!***  Con­tact Julie Baron, juliebaron@verizon.net and Lisa Bosse, lisabosse@yahoo.com, with questions.

**ELMO Direct Donation Campaign,** "Put an Elmo in Every Class Room," kicked off on Sept. 1, during Back to School Night. Hopefully, many of you were able to see an ELMO in action and realize how instrumental they are for both our teachers and our children. Look in your Panther Packet for the ELMO flyer and Donation Form. Or, you can download the form on the PTA webpage (see top of page 1). Please consider making a donation today!

We have also been successful with our employer matching fund.  Last spring a RPES family donated $700 and Bank of America matched those funds for a total dona­tion of $1,400! Also last year, Erin Lobato and Linda Montgomery were able to secure almost $2,000 as a corporate donation from Capital One Bank.  If you are interested in securing addi­tional corpo­rate donations, know of businesses that have do­nation programs, or are just interested in joining the Fund-raising Com­mittee please contact Sharri Freedman (see side­bar).

# WAYS TO VOLUNTEER

**Volunteer Orientation** will be held on Tues. 10/4 at 7 p.m., followed by the October PTA meeting at 7:30 p.m. Please come for this brief summary of important information you need to know to volun­teer in the school. Orientation is re­quired for all volunteers in the school - even if you’ve taken the training in the past. Child-care for toilet trained children over three will be provided starting at 7 p.m. Please RSVP to the office for child-care with the number and ages of your children. Drop-ins will be accepted if space is available. If you can­not at­tend, please contact Rachel Hicks (see si­debar). Ritchie Park values volunteer help!

**Room Parents Needed!**   Please consider being a Room Parent this year. Room Parents organize the three class parties - Hal­loween, Valentine’s Day and End of the Year for their child's homeroom (PM homeroom for older grades) and coordi­nate the class gifts for teachers in December and June. Contact Erin Lobato, [erin\_lobato@hotmail.com](mailto:erin_lobato@hotmail.com) or your Grade Repre­senta­tive, if you are interested.

**Party Money Donations!** The PTA is requesting each child contribute towards the costs of the three class parties. This money will enable our wonderful Room Parents to purchase food, drinks, crafts and other party essentials. This is a com­pletely voluntary donation and although any amount is appre­ciated, we suggest $15 per child.  Please send the money to school in a sealed envelope marked PARTY MONEY with your child’s name and GRADE clearly marked on the front. Cash is preferred but checks pay­able to RPES PTA are also accepted. THANK YOU!

# ADVOCACY CORNER: Parents Have a Voice

Ritchie Park is part of the Richard Mont­gomery Cluster, and we are fortunate to have a RPES parent as a RM Clus­ter Coordinator:  Cheryl Moss Herman, [hermanfour@msn.com](mailto:hermanfour@msn.com). Cluster Coordinators hold leadership positions in the MoCo Council of PTAs (MCCPTA), a non-profit composed of all the PTAs in Montgomery County. MCCPTA advocates for a variety of issues that affect our children before MCPS, the Board of Education, and the County Council, as well as, at the state and national levels. You can find out more about its mission at www.mccpta.com. Your RPES Delegates to MCCPTA are Jennifer Young and Richard Hart.  Ritchie Park’s PTA President Rachel Hicks also has a vote in the MCCPTA Delegate As­sem­bly.

You **do** have a voice, and we encourage you to use it loud and clear on the many issues that will be affecting your children this year. Parents in the County complained that the math curriculum was pushing their children too fast, that they weren’t learning the basics. Now we have a new math curriculum that will delve into subjects deeper. Last year, par­ents in our cluster turned out in droves to protest the over-enrollment in our elementary schools, including Ritchie Park, which meant portables for our classrooms and fewer resources for staff.  MCPS conducted studies for build­ing addi­tions at three of the four elementary schools and at Julius West MS and the construction of a new elementary school.  Your Delegates will keep you informed about issues of importance to our school, cluster, and County, and will be ask­ing for in­put and feedback regarding proposed actions.  We will not be heard if we don’t use our voices as parents.  Use it!

# UPCOMING EVENTS

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| **Sept. 19** | Last Day for Innisbrook orders |
| **Sept. 22, 4:30-10 p.m.** | Mamma Lucia Restaurant Night |
| **Sept. 23** | Last Day to submit Directory Information |

# A BIG THANK YOU TO…

* Edit Gvirtzman for leading and everyone who helped make Sneak Peek PTA Celebration a success.
* Maritz Ortega (mother to Jessica Weiss) for taking on the role of 5th Grade Representative. Please contact Maritz, miaugirl@comcast.net, with any interest in helping with class parties or joining the 5th grade email list.
* Karen Watson, Staff Appreciation Chair, for providing lunch during Teacher Service Week and dinner to RPES staff before Back to School Night.