

RIDGEVIEW MIDDLE  
SCHOOL



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# The Key

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE RIDGEVIEW MIDDLE  
SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER STUDENT ASSOCIATION

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## From the Desk of the Principal, Dr. Levine

As I write this article we are nearly at the end of marking period 2 and students are taking semester one exams. In addition to the county semester exams for algebra, honors geometry, and Spanish, county wide exams and local school end of quarter exams are being given in a variety of other subjects. The school operates on a block schedule during exam week in January and again in June so that Ridgeview students, especially those in the credit bearing classes, have the same time frame as their high school counterparts to complete these high stakes assessments. Marking period 2 ends on the January 22 and marking period 3 begins on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

During first semester all students took the MAP R, an on line diagnostic reading test that yields a wealth of data for teachers to support and extend students' literacy skills. A second implementation will take place at the end of January. In mid February we will have a Maryland School

Assessment (MSA) practice test session in math and reading. This testing simulation gives students a chance to experience a shortened version of the assessments that are coming up in early March (March 8 - 18.) Since the Maryland State indicators are imbedded in the MCPS curriculum for each of the core academic subjects, how well a student is doing in each of his/her courses is a good predictor of success on the MSAs. This is another important reason to help your student access re-teaching and re-assessments, get lunch or after school help, attend Ridgeview Academy, and come to school on time every day.

While the first semester has been full of activity we look forward to an even busier second semester. In a few weeks we hold the **Heritage Café on February 19<sup>th</sup>**. This is Ridgeview's annual school and community wide celebration of African American Heritage Month. Last year's event overflowed the gym and was a true community celebration. The evening

will include student performances from the band, Step Team, and others, a wonderful speaker, delicious food, and other treats. The theme, *Live the Dream*, will also feature community service through the organization *Swab a Cheek, Save a Life*. We hope to see you all there.

Auditions are also underway for the cast of the spring musical *The Wiz*. Meetings for the crew will be held in early February. We encourage all students to take part in the play, whether cast or crew. Students always have a great time, make friends, learn new skills, and have the pride of being part of a production. It's always a highlight of the school year.

We are also moving into the articulation and registration season for the 2011 school year. Current 8<sup>th</sup> graders, the rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders of 2011, have already returned registration cards and course selections to the high school. We will shortly welcome incoming 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents at our evening articulation meeting and will

*(Continued on page 2)*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

School News & Upcoming Events 2

PTSA President & Committee News 3

Committee News, School News and Upcoming Events 4-9

Key Dates Calendar & PTSA Officers 10

## Committee News, School News and Upcoming Events...

### From the Desk of the Principal, Dr. LeVine (continued)

visit each feeder school with the registration cards in the next couple of weeks. Current 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade families will also receive registration materials in early February. The course offering booklet will be posted on the Ridgeview home page.

We have had some exciting news regarding the Ridgeview facility improvement project. Last week James Keenan, PTSA Quad Cluster Coordinator, and I were invited to the Board of Education meeting. We were called to the Board table with the architect for our project, who described its scope and outcomes,

and the head of the MCPS Division of Construction, who recommended approval. Both Mr. Keenan and I were also invited to say a few words. After some discussion and questions the Board voted unanimously to approve construction. Later in the week we also learned that the County Council approved the entire MCPS Capital Improvement Budget. It appears that we're on our way! This success is truly a product of school and community effort and perseverance, the willingness of our school community to collaborate and work with the school system, and the efforts and

endless hours of so many individuals. We are very pleased.

### Booth Promotions Boost Registrations

A special thank you goes to RMS parent, Carol Keenan, and her daughter, Cate Keenan for helping with the booth promotions at Harris Teeter. Also, we want to thank Sydney Cunniff for her assistance in the Giant registrations, Celia Fairbanks for help in obtaining eScrip sign ups, and Kyle Pett for his help in making all of the promotional signs and promoting eScrip registrations at Safeway. For-

tunately, with the help of these volunteers RMS now has 182 Giant registrants, and Safeway's eScrip support list indicates 155 families have designated RMS to be their school of choice. To date, there are 121 families registered with Harris Teeter. Since we have at least 100 Harris Teeter registrants, we now qualify for certain events, such as the "Teacher of Excellence" Spring con-

test. Thank you to everyone who has already registered. It's not too late to ask friends, relatives, and neighbors to do the same. RMS staff may register too.

If there are any questions, or if registration help is needed, please contact Karen Chen at 301-963-6399 or Linda Pett at 301-990-1756.

### A MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE

A normal vision screening is 20/20 or 20/30 in both eyes. Any vision screening above those number (20/40, 20/50, 20/70, 20/100) indicates a vision problem and needs to be evaluated by a Physician/Eye Specialist.

A normal hearing screening is 20/1000

20/2000 20/4000. Any numbers higher than 20 indicates a hearing problem and needs to be evaluated by a Physician/Audiologist.

Since hearing and vision problems can interfere with a child's ability to learn in school, please make an ap-

pointment with the appropriate Specialist if you received a letter indicating that your child did not pass the vision or hearing screening. Please notify the School Nurse with the results of the evaluation at 301-840-4780. Karen Studley, R.N.

## Committee News, School News and Upcoming Events...

### From the PTSA President - Holly Parker

I hope that everyone enjoyed our snow days and winter break. The end of the second quarter always brings busy schedules and lots of studying.

We are publishing one Key newsletter for the months of January and February. This issue contains important information about upcoming school events that the PTSA is excited to be a part of planning. Look for information about the Heritage Café, which will be held in honor of Black History Month in February. This year we are launching the first

year of the Ridgeview 3 on 3-basketball tournament. We hope that this will grow to an event that the staff and students look forward to each year.

Volunteer needs for PTSA and at school continue throughout the year and our school continues to be a leader in the county in the number of hours parents give to the school. Just a reminder that the committee chair list for PTSA is listed on the front page of the school directory. If you are interested in an area, give that chairperson a call and offer to

help.

Please make sure that you read Jim Keenan's article for an update on the construction plan for Ridgeview that was approved by the Montgomery County School Board last week. Many thanks go to Jim Keenan and Paul Morrison who have worked diligently on behalf of Ridgeview for several years to lead the effort to get these much-needed updates for our school.

Holly Parker

### DRAMA DEPARTMENT LOOKING FOR YOU TO CLEAN OUT YOUR CLOSETS

The drama department is in need of supplies for this year's musical -- *The Beauty and the Beast*. We are in need of costumes and supplies to make costumes. You'd be surprised to see what our costume committee can do with your old "stuff." So look in your closets for:

Adult sized Halloween costumes (anything can be re-crafted)

Bridesmaid dresses

Party dresses

Men's and women's suits

Tuxedos

Vintage clothing and accessories

Scarves/boas/hats/gloves (not winter type)

Now that you've cleaned your closet, go look in your cabinets and storage bins for:

Any fabric

Upholstery fabric

Trims and notions – lace, ribbon, etc.

Please bring the items to the office. Donated items cannot be returned. Thank you in advance for your help!

If you are interested in working with the costume committee, contact Lisa Torvik at (301)216-0232 or [torvikfam@verizon.net](mailto:torvikfam@verizon.net).

### PTSA MEMBERSHIP

Last chance to join the RMS PTSA and receive a directory!!!

Application form is available on the Ridgeview website - PTSA -> Forms

Questions? Contact Lisa Konecke - [lkonecke@hotmail.com](mailto:lkonecke@hotmail.com)

## Committee News, School News and Upcoming Events...

### Happy New Year, Ridgeview!

After many years, several public meetings, and much community pleading for help, the Montgomery County Board of Education on January 12<sup>th</sup> approved the necessary construction funding for Ridgeview Middle School's capital improvements. These long awaited improvements will transform Ridgeview into a "new school" for anyone walking through the front door after August 2012, according to Montgomery County Public Schools.

The planned improvements include:

Relocate the administrative offices to the front of the school by bumping out the front with a mini-addition. This will provide greater security, will better situate resources, and dramatically improve the ability to supervise the main entrance of the school.

Replace and update the existing HVAC mechanical system. This will eliminate the thermal extremes throughout the school and significantly improve the air quality for our students and staff.

Decentralize the existing locker banks to reduce congestion, improve security, and widen the corridors to improve interior circulation. New and shorter lockers will be placed in three locations, one for

each grade – two will be on the main level and one on the lower level.

Replace the existing interior ramp with a "grand staircase." This will save space, shorten travel, facilitate better management, and provide a more traditional school environment for the students.

Completely renovate the existing science laboratories. Originally planned as a "face-lift," this improvement will replace and update all facilities in the labs.

Completely enclose and acoustically isolate the cafeteria, and add separate trash and recycling rooms outside adjacent to the loading dock.

Distribute computer outlets in the walls of the classrooms, to permit multiple teaching areas, and flexible learning spaces.

All areas of the proposed improvement will meet national and local building codes including fire, life safety, and health standards.

Upgrade the electrical system to conserve energy and to provide enough power to meet the needs of the "new" school.

Technology infrastructure will be improved to offer major improvements to the computer and video systems, including wireless access.

If this is not enough, Ridgeview will be repainted and the flooring replaced throughout the school.

During the construction period, classes will be relocated inside the school and to 4-5 portable classrooms located on the school property. We expect the disruption to begin this summer and end by August 2012. Much of the work will occur during the summers and from 3-11pm during the school year to minimize any learning disruption or interaction with the students.

We are very excited about the support shown by our School Board, especially Laura Berthiaume and Shirley Brandman who spoke in support of our project at the hearing, and the willingness of the MCPS' Division of Construction to work to meet the needs of our community of teachers, staff, students, and parents. It has been a long time, but we now believe the path is set to transform Ridgeview into the kind of learning environment we all want.

Thank you to everyone who has helped along the way. It could not have been done without your support!

By Jim Keenan

# Happy New Year!

## Committee News, School News and Upcoming Events...

### Box Top Ends Next Month

The time will be here before we know it, so please collect those Box Tops for Education labels now! Box Tops may be found on a variety of products, including Avery products,

such as the 3-ring binders, Zip Loc, Kleenex (large-sized boxes), and other paper goods. When collecting Box Tops, please put them in the designated container by February

25th located in the main office. The first period class who collects the most Box Tops over 300 will receive treats. Thank you for your support.

### Reflections Program

Ridgeview Middle School PTSA proudly recognizes our participant, Vishnu Balajee 6<sup>th</sup> Grade in the

**2009-10 Reflections Program Theme: "Beauty is..!"**

Thanks for your extraordinary effort! Participation in the program is completely voluntary and we realize that it's above and beyond your regular school work. The program is designed to enhance a quality arts education and provides opportunities

for students to express themselves artistically and to receive positive recognition for their artistic efforts.

Also, a huge Thank You goes to our Music Teacher, Ms. Heidi Schiller and our Art teacher, Ms. Angela Brame-Suggs for their enthusiastic support of the program!

We are pleased to announce that Vishnu Balajee's Musical Composition entry has been sent to the next level of judging where he will com-

pete against Musical Composition entries all over Montgomery County. We wish him the best of luck!

The Ridgeview PTSA will be offering the program again to our students in 2010. Get your creative engines running next year's theme is "Together We Can . . .".

Sincerely,

Tara Murayama

RMS PTSA Reflection Chair

### RMS Wins "Thinking Green" Contest

RMS won Harris Teeter's "Thinking Green" Fall contest and will receive a check for \$750.00 plus a \$250.00

Harris Teeter gift card. RMS submitted 315 30-gallon plastic bags filled with grocery bags and other recyc-

ble plastic. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this contest.

### Scripps National Spelling Bee at RMS!

Mark your calendars for January 29, 2010 when 9 of our talented students go head-to-head to represent Ridgeview Middle School in the Scripps National Spelling Bee. Come cheer on Antoin Lee-

Hairston Spann, Nazanin Sahiholnab, Aakruti Patel, Shadi Davari, Afina Karapetyan, Shema Mugabo, Matt Habel, Vishnu Balajee, and Morgan Rauscher at 7:00 p.m. in Mrs. McArdle's room. The winner of our

school bee will move on to the Regional Spelling Bee on Saturday, March 13. The first place winner of the regional bee will represent Montgomery County at the Scripps National Spelling Bee in June!



## Committee News, School News and Upcoming Events...



### **BRING THIS FLYER TO FUDDRUCKERS**

Join us for Restaurant Night benefitting  
**Ridgeview Middle School**

Give the flyer to your cashier and tell them  
you are a RMS supporter  
10% Of sales is given to RMS PTSA fund for student activities.

### **Fuddruckers**

Gaithersburg (Quince Orchard)  
12111 Darnestown Road  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878  
Phone: 301-869-6010

Thursday, February 11, 2010  
**Benefit Hours 5pm - 8pm**

## Committee News, School News and Upcoming Events...

### NAACP NEWS

February, African American History Month, is a special time for our families to learn about and experience African American culture. On February 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM the NAACP Parents' Council and PTSA will be sponsoring its third annual Heritage Café. The Heritage Café is the school's major African American history month event. It consists of instrumental music, singing, step and spoken word performances by students as well as visual art displays by staff all designed to promote pride in African American culture and achievements.

We are especially proud to welcome the guest speaker, Mr. Jason Green, who is not only a Ridgeview alumnus, but also the son of our Media Assistant, Mrs. Rita Green. Mr. Green received his J.D. degree from Yale Law School, was the National Voter Registration Director for the Obama Presidential campaign, and is now the Deputy Associate White House Counsel. His personal experiences and accomplishments speak to the 2010 Heritage Café's theme "Living the Dream."

This year's Heritage Café will include a special project for Swab a Cheek

Save a Life which gives the Ridgeview community the opportunity to participate in an invaluable program that recruits prospective bone marrow donors from the minority population.

I look forward to the community coming out to attend the Heritage Café and supporting other upcoming events sponsored by the NAACP Parent Council. Please look for upcoming information about a film and discussion on the "Neo African Americans" planned for March, and Self Esteem and Conflict Resolution workshops in May.



## PTSA Meeting Schedule

February 9<sup>th</sup>  
 No meeting in March  
 April 13<sup>th</sup>  
 May 11<sup>th</sup>

### Swab a Cheek. Save a Life.

The RMS PTSA has decided to highlight the organization, **Swab a Cheek, Save a Life**, at two of our events in coming months. We hope that by increasing awareness of this organization, we can help them increase the number of minority donors in the bone marrow registry.

Did you know that every year,

10,000 people need a bone marrow transplant to survive cancer and other blood and immune disorders? Tragically, many people do not have a matched donor to save their life. A patient's best chance of finding a genetic match lies with those of similar racial or ethnic background; but the numbers of minority donors are too

few to help those in need.

The mission of **Swab a Cheek, Save a Life** is to recruit minority donors and to keep them enrolled in the donor bank so that they are available to anyone who is in need to a bone marrow transplant. Stop by their information table at the Heritage Café and the 39project.

## Committee News, School News and Upcoming Events...

### Student Service Learning (SSL) Notes Give a Little Time...Make a Big Difference

*Students MEET REAL NEED and ACHIEVE CURRICULAR OBJECTIVES.*

- Participate in school-sponsored clubs and organizations that promote service.
- Consider service activities in celebration of President's Day, February 15, 2010.
- Get involved in service-learning activities on the afternoons of "Early Release" days. (Like Friday, February 26, 2010--- coming up!)
- Remember: SSL is a state graduation requirement just like any other...It must be completed in order for students to graduate from Montgomery County Schools.
- Find meaningful, high quality service-learning opportunities by searching [www.mcpsssl.org](http://www.mcpsssl.org).

### Current 7<sup>th</sup> Graders and Families Join Your Fellow Ridgeview Classmates in Spain during Spring Break of 8<sup>th</sup> Grade!

Every year, 8<sup>th</sup> graders at Ridgeview Middle School have an exciting opportunity to travel overseas with their classmates during Spring Break, thanks to Mr. John Senuta, Social Studies teacher, and other experienced chaperones. Some of our current 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be traveling to Italy this spring. Planning is already in the works for next year's trip to beautiful Madrid and Andalusia, Spain. The exciting itinerary for this trip includes the capital city of Madrid, majestic Toledo, the famous

Alhambra in Granada, the beaches of Costa del Sol, cultural Seville, and historical Cordoba. What a fantastic learning opportunity!

Parents and older/younger siblings of rising 8<sup>th</sup> graders are welcome to join us on this trip. A student that is at least in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade at the time of the trip may travel without a parent. The trip is coordinated through EF Tours, an organization experienced in planning affordable international student trips. The trip is not officially spon-

sored by Ridgeview, and travel costs are the responsibility of the student. EF Tours is offering a \$150 early enrollment discount for those that enroll for next year's tour by March 31, 2010.

For all interested in next year's trip to Spain, you are invited to attend an informational meeting on Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, at 7 pm, in the Media Center.

We look forward to seeing you there!

### SPIRIT WEAR

We hope everyone is enjoying their new spirit wear. The new designs look great. We apologize about the delay in receiving your items but due to the snow and school closing we did the best we could. All orders have been distributed to the students first period teacher. If you did not receive your order please contact us immediately so we can track

it down for you. Due to the popular response to the new spirit wear items we will be having another sale in the near future. Keep an eye out for more information. We still have a good supply of flannel pants, magnets and a few t-shirts and sweat-shirts available for immediate sale.

Thank you for your continued support

Rebecca Hallam [kiwi-inusa@verizon.net](mailto:kiwi-inusa@verizon.net) and Barb Textoris [bara\\_b\\_textoris@mcpsmd.org](mailto:bara_b_textoris@mcpsmd.org) spirit wear co-chairs

## Committee News, School News and Upcoming Events...

### SGA HELPS HAITI

Ridgeview's SGA is currently collecting donations for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. Money will be

collected during lunch time for each grade level. A prize will be awarded to the grade level who collects the

largest amount of money. Questions can be directed to Mr. Doggett, the SGA Coordinator.

# LET'S HELP HAITI

### IT'S MSA TIME, SNACKS NEEDED PLEASE

It is MSA time again and the PTSA is preparing snacks for the students to have during the testing. We are collecting donations of granola bars to put in the snack bags.

Granola bar donations can be dropped off in the school office at Ridgeview or at the home of Suparna Shah through Friday, February 19th. Please contact Suparna

at [suparnashah@hotmail.com](mailto:suparnashah@hotmail.com) or #301-990-9754 if you have any questions.

### RMS PTSA

#### 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament Is Coming Soon!

Friday, March 19<sup>th</sup>

3:00-6:15 pm in the RMS Gym

This is going to be an exciting, fun event for the players and their classmates who come to cheer them on! Come show your school spirit and your support for your 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade class. Watch some of the teachers play in an exhibition game with 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

Flyers and permission slips will be handed out through PE classes this week. Those forms will also be available on the RMS web site.

Here's the important information about the tournament...

\*The cost to play in or attend the tournament is **\$6**. This cost includes a t-shirt that will be distributed on the day of the tournament for each student who turns in money and permission form by February 26<sup>th</sup>.

\*Each team must be coed and made up of players from the same grade level.

\*There will a total of 24 teams in the tournament with 8 that will represent each of the three grade levels.

\*Teams will be registered for the tournament on a **first come, first serve** basis.

\*Students are responsible for forming their own teams and turning in the forms together. So, grab your friends and get a team together, and get your forms and money turned in to the office at school!

\*Permission slips to **play** in the tournament and **\$6** must be turned in at the school office no later than **Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup>**.

\*Permission slips to **watch** the tournament and your **\$6** must be turned in at school no later than **Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>**. These forms may be turned in to the school office or to the "Tournament Table" that will be set up at some lunch periods the last two weeks of February.

\*Entrance to the tournament on the day of the event will cost **\$6** for parents or siblings. Any student who did not turn in a permission form by February 26<sup>th</sup> will only be granted admission if a parent accompanies them and stays. No t-shirts will be provided for those paying admission on the day of the tournament.

\*If you have questions contact Kristin Paolini at #301-977-1056 or [klpao@comcast.net](mailto:klpao@comcast.net)

## Note these Key Dates



### SAVE THESE DATES

MSA Testing Dates  
 March 9<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>  
 Make-up days March 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>  
 Please do not plan to be out of town on these dates or plan any appointments where your child would need to miss school. It is very important that all students are in school on the testing dates.

February 9<sup>th</sup> – PTSA Meeting, 7:00 pm and 8:00 pm Principal's Coffee, RMS Media Center

February 15<sup>th</sup> – MCPS Holiday for President's Day

February 17<sup>th</sup> – NAACP Meeting, 7-8:30 pm

February 19<sup>th</sup> – Heritage Café, 7-9:00 pm

February 26<sup>th</sup> – Early Release Day

March 5<sup>th</sup> – Snow Date for Heritage Café

March 9<sup>th</sup> – PTSA Meeting, 7:00 pm, RMS Media Center

March 8-11 – MSA Testing Reading

March 12-17 – MSA Testing Math

## PTSA Officers

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 cobbparker@aol.com

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 Linda Pett

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Laura Mackail

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Suparna Shah

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Miriam Mokuena

### PARLIMENTARIAN

Nancy Ketterer

### REFLECTIONS

Tara Murayama

### RESTAURANT NIGHTS

Wendy Shokrai

### RIDGEVIEW SIGN

Maria Laracuente

### SPELLING BEE

Janine Rauscher

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7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE – Ann Marie Kase

8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE - Terri Cohen

### VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

### RMS

Elana Hoopes

### YAHOO GROUP

Laura Mackail

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