

# Rolling Terrace News

A publication of the Rolling Terrace Elementary School PTA

March, 2007

Your PTA on the Web: [montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/rollinges](http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/rollinges)

## A Community School

*A few words from PTA President Nora Cartland*

As I work on behalf of RTES PTA I often am asked why I send my kids to RT. RT is not my home school. My home school has higher standardized test scores than RT, it is not a Title I school, the building is newer, and the bus stop is around the corner from my house. *So, why do I choose RT every year for my kids?* The answer is simple. RT is a community school. At first I chose RT because of its partial Spanish Immersion Program. I was excited that my children could be part of a group that values bilingualism and multiculturalism. I am from Mexico and my husband is American. Prior to attending RT my children would only speak English. Now, they have friends and a school that supports the idea that being bilingual is special.

I *continue* to choose RT, however, because I have found a community of people who support each other.

For me a community school means we all work together to create a good learning environment for ALL children. It is also a *gathering place*, where families and staff can come together to enjoy activities and get to know each other.

RT is a community school because from the moment you enroll your kids until the moment they leave, there are a core group of staff and parents who can assure you get the information you need to support your

child at home and school. Our PTA sponsors many programs that reflect this communitarian spirit including: family fun nights, math and reading nights, the International Dinners, Hands on Science, Creative Adventures, the Book Fair, and June Carnival. Our PTA is also one of a few that supports its families and staff through the RTES Emergency Family Fund, after school scholarships, and Mini-Grants Programs.

On a more personal level, RT is filled with people that “show up” when a member of our community is need. In December I had ear surgery. During my recovery many RT families and staff members have gone out of their way to help get my children to school, send get well cards, and offered us help. Similarly, at the end of January one of our teachers, was diagnosed with a serious condition. The families from her classroom and fellow staff members have organized to support her and her family as well. Times of crisis are not the only ways we are there for one another. We celebrate the births of siblings, participate in dances, or walks to raise money for our students, we’ve cheered Gilbert Arenas as he scored points for RT. It is this giving, sharing, laughing, and building that makes RT the special place I choose to send my kids.

As we continue our work this Spring, I invite you all to participate in the numerous RT events being planned. Come join us at one of our Family Fun Nights, the Book Fair, PTA meetings, or fundraisers. If you have an hour to give, then please come and volunteer at your child’s school. It is your community, too.

*Paz, Nora Cartland*

### Upcoming Events

#### MARCH

**Tue 20<sup>th</sup> - SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING, 7pm**

**Thu 22<sup>nd</sup> - PTA EXEC. BOARD MEETING, 7pm**

**MARCH 31-APRIL 9 - SPRING BREAK; (School resumes Tue Apr 10<sup>th</sup>)**

#### APRIL

**11<sup>th</sup> - PTA MEETING**  
**16<sup>TH</sup> -20<sup>TH</sup> - BOOK FAIR**  
**24<sup>TH</sup> GARDENING DAY 3pm**

#### MAY

**FRI 4<sup>TH</sup> SQUARE DANCE**  
**FAMILY FUN NIGHT! 7pm**

## Fourth Graders St. Mary's City-bound in April

Did you enjoy the sundaes at Family Fun night? That ice cream was on a mission. Fundraising! (and "Thank You, Greg" from **Summer Delights** for donating it!) The 4<sup>th</sup> grade have been studying native cultures and are excitedly planning their annual field trip to Historic St. Mary's City, the site of the fourth permanent settlement in British North America. The trip to Historic St. Mary's City will

offer the students an opportunity to see and hear about how the Native Americans of the area met their basic needs. The trip is scheduled for April 11<sup>th</sup> – after Spring break.

If you would like to make a donation in support of the trip, or if you have questions, please contact Kate Bauer <[kateeric@verizon.net](mailto:kateeric@verizon.net)> or Heather Skilling <[heatherskilling@yahoo.com](mailto:heatherskilling@yahoo.com)>

### BOOK FAIR COMING, APRIL 16-20

Set up is Friday April 13<sup>th</sup>. Remember, the school gives each student a voucher to buy a book. The Book Fair takes muscle; if you can contribute time, resources or talents, please contact Leigh Sours, [SoursLA@state.gov](mailto:SoursLA@state.gov)

## RT Participates in National Geographic Bee

As many parents, teachers and students have noted, elementary schools these days do not focus nearly enough attention on geography. At RT we're taking the first steps towards remedying this. Several RT parents and administrators have been looking at ways to bring more geography to our students. We've brainstormed a few ideas ... geography month ... geography clubs ... summer geography packets ... geography bowls and bees ...

To get things started, RT participated this year in the National Geographic Bee for the first time. The NG Bee is a nationwide contest open to students in grades four through eight - so our students were presented with questions structured for students as old as 8<sup>th</sup> grade! There are three levels of competition: school, state, and national. The first round took place in the classroom where each student answered 7 questions in categories ranging from US cities and landmarks, cultural geography, continents, to world geography.

The top scorer from each 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom then participated in the school-wide bee. The bee was attended by the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> graders and there was much excitement, encouragement and interest from the audience. The geo-whizzes who represented their class were: Jeffrey Moreira, Alyssia Graves, Meriel Caprioglio-Chase, Josue Amaya, Clinton Huynh, Vinson Do, Reva Resstack, Blanca Arevalo-Bosos, Erica Mckinney & Ruben Martinez. The first runner up was Jeffrey and the RT champion was Meriel. To compete for advancement to the state level, Meriel took a written qualifying exam which will be graded along with the other school winners' exams to determine the highest 100 scorers. These 100 will go on to the state-wide bee.

The questions were very challenging and a big kudos goes to all of the kids who participated and especially to those who made it to the final round. The results were quite interesting - our students showed that they know a fair amount about US geography and continents but their knowledge starts to wane when asked about different countries, regions and cultures around the world. The exercise highlighted the need to incorporate geography into their learning environment -- the interest is there!

We are exploring other ways to bring geography to RT and welcome any ideas you may have.

If you have any questions or would like to help in our effort to bring geography to RT please contact Katie Sebastian at [kdls123@comcast.net](mailto:kdls123@comcast.net).

*And many thanks to the National Geographic Society for donating 5 full size maps to our school -- 3 World maps, 1 of Europe, and 1 of Africa. Look for them over the next weeks in the halls near 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade!*

## Digest of Nov 30, 2006, Board Meeting

A regular meeting of the Rolling Terrace PTA Executive Board was held on November 30, 2006 at Rolling Terrace Elementary School. The following topics were covered: the PTA listserv, plans for the next PTA meeting, the new nurse who has joined RT's staff, Blair Cluster issues including the approval of the health center at RT, RT's Parent Involvement Implementation Plan, fundraising options, a form acknowledgment letter to be sent to donors, \$500 made at the fundraiser at El Golfo, Takoma Park Foundation and Montgomery County Teacher Association funded grants for talking book mobiles that allow students to listen to historical books on tape, and the recent successful food drive.

### Healthy Snacks - Tips from the Nutrition Committee

In January the cafeteria began selling new a la carte items. Instead of Funyuns, Doritos, and Cheezits, students can now purchase a bagel with cream cheese (\$1.25), mini strawberry fig newtons (\$.75), or a smoothie (\$.50). These items will be for sale for the last 10 minutes of the lunch period on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If you prefer that your child not purchase snacks, you can make a special request to the Cafeteria Manager.

Because snacks are now a larger part of children's diets, serving healthy snacks is especially important for growth and development, to support lifelong healthy eating habits, and to prevent heart disease, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity.

Below are suggestions for healthy drinks and snacks from the Center for Science in the Public Interest:

- **Almost all of the snacks served to children should be fruits or vegetables** -- since most kids do not eat the recommended five to thirteen servings of fruit and vegetables a day. Serve fruit fresh or frozen; applesauce; fruit cups, dried, or in fruit leathers, juices and juice popsicles, or in homemade smoothies – all without extra sugar. Vegetables can be served with dips like hummus, in salads, or in veggie pockets.
- **Whole Grains** - Serve whole grain snacks, which provide more fiber, vitamins, and minerals than refined grains. Tortillas; cereal; crackers; rice cakes; popcorn; tortilla chips; granola; cereal bars; breadsticks; or flatbreads and pretzels can all be whole grain.
- **Low-Fat Dairy Foods, Nuts and Trail Mix** for added protein.
- **Water** should be the main drink served to kids at snack times.

*For a more detailed list of healthy snack ideas, visit [www.cspinet.org/healthysnacks](http://www.cspinet.org/healthysnacks)*

### 5th-Grade Promotion Planning Underway

The Promotion Committee has begun planning a pool party and promotion ceremony June 8<sup>th</sup>. We will be sending notices via email and backpack to keep you informed and ask for volunteers.

We are now looking for a computer-savvy parent who to put together a power-point presentation with photographs from the students' years at RT. This has been a special feature of past promotion ceremonies and we would be thrilled to have one this year. We will be asking parents to contribute photographs from the classrooms, fieldtrips and other school events over the years. If you have the knowledge and time to undertake this project, we would greatly appreciate your help.

Please contact Collette at [cdemarneffe@starpower.net](mailto:cdemarneffe@starpower.net) or 301-270-2711

# Creative Adventures Needs a Creative (or at least organized) Parent Coordinator

Has your child ever benefited from an after school enrichment program? Creative Adventures needs a Parent organizer. We are grateful to Rosana Keleher who has been organizing Creative Adventures for the past 2 years – even after her daughter left RT!

Creative Adventures is a PTA-sponsored after-school program at Rolling Terrace. These fun classes run once-a-week for six weeks straight. There are two sessions during the school year. It is the liaison's responsibility to announce the program (through email, and actual distribution of flyers to the teachers for the Wednesday folders), and to collect the money. He/she will coordinate with Rosana Azar, the creative director of the program, to ensure that the school art room is ready. The job will require someone who has time to stop by the school regularly during the sign-up period. I volunteered because my daughter so enjoyed the program, and this was my way to thank the PTA for it. Please check out the program website for more information. [www.artinyou.com/schoolyearclasses.html](http://www.artinyou.com/schoolyearclasses.html)

## **SALLY FOSTER, our biggest annual fundraiser, needs a new co-chair!**

We want to thank Kathy Kurz who has coordinated the Sally Foster Fundraiser for the past 7 years. Her able co-chair, Alma Orellana, is looking for another parent to help share the responsibility this year. Sally Foster generates 50-60% of the annual PTA budget, \$10-12,000 each year, which helps pay for all the wonderful activities and events that take place at school each year.

If you would like to help coordinate Sally Foster, please contact Alma at 301-649-7509  
Or [orellanakalin@verizon.net](mailto:orellanakalin@verizon.net)

## **WAYS TO HELP**

- Donations to the PTA are ALWAYS accepted! This can happen with a check made payable to the PTA. During the carnival, a few families always donate money to pay for the moon bounce and dunk tank.
- Several people donate to their classrooms in many different ways (tissue, wipes, pencils, field trips...) and others buy needed things for the school that teachers request -- clocks, pencil sharpeners, snow removal, "ice melt."
- Another ongoing call for parents is at Recess-- starting at 11am and ending at 1:15. Go for an hour or two, go for a day or two, just go!
- The RT Health Room needs donations of girls underwear in sizes 4-12 and unisex sweatpants in sizes 4-12. Please bring your donations to the Health Room and thank you in advance for your help and caring.

## **UMD is part of the RT Community, too!**

But did you know that the Family Room has a friend at the University of Maryland? For the past several years, the students, faculty and staff of the University Honors Program and Office of Undergraduate Studies at UMD have donated toys and books to the Family Room for those most in need.

This year, they made a contribution \$375 "in celebration of the holiday season and...for outstanding work."

And how do they know about that "outstanding work?" A former RT parent, Georgette De Jesus works with Barbara Thorne, a Professor at UMD and the Director of the Honors program. Haydee Puertas—take a bow!

**TIGER TRAITS – March's focus is IMAGINATION!**