RITCHIE PARK ES

PTA NEW­SLET­TER

2011-2012 RPES PTA Officers

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### **February 10, 2012**

# January Cultural Arts Update

In January, the PTA sponsored another wonderful assembly program, this time, from the Smithsonian Discovery Theater called **“How Old is a Hero?”**  The students watched history come alive with the stories of three young heroes who helped change America in the ‘50s and ‘60s.

Ruby Bridges was only six when she became the first black student to attend an all-white school and made inte­gra­tion possible at William Frantz Public School.  Ernest Green was a senior when he and eight other black students inte­grated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkan­sas.  Ernest went on to be­come the first black student to graduate from Central High. Did you know that Rosa Parks was not the first person to refuse moving to the back of a segregated bus?  It was 15-year-old Claudette Colvin of Mont­gomery, Alabama who claimed her constitutional right to sit anywhere on the bus.  These young students were all heroes because they fought for a cause they believed in and per­severed through very difficult times.

As the play was winding down, the students were left to ponder these very intriguing questions.  Have you ever helped someone who was afraid to do something you knew they could do?  Have you ever kept on to get what you knew was right even if everybody said you could never do it?  Have you ever stopped someone from picking on someone else just because they were different?  As the hands of the excited stu­dents went up in response to these questions, we were able to see numerous he­roes in our midst.  We learned that you don’t have to be an adult or have super powers in order to be a hero.  Just have courage and stand up for what you know is right, then you can change the world!

Our next Cultural Arts Assembly is sche­duled for Feb. 10.  History Alive, www.historyaliveshows.com, will be presenting **“Margaret Brent of Maryland."**

# Fundraising Forum

**What Your Loyalty Rewards Are Buying** Thank you to the 25 families who have registered their Bloom loyalty cards. The reward dollars allowed Ms. Long to order 12 lap-sized white boards for the teachers to use. If you shop at Bloom (soon to be converted to a Food Lion) please make sure that the Bloom Breeze card is registered for RPES. The PTA will let you know if any changes are required once the change from Bloom to Food Lion, with its MVP program, takes place.

**RPES Needs your Box Tops** The deadline for Box Tops to be turned in for this school year is Feb. 20. Check your pantry for Box Tops and send them in. This will be our last chance to mail in Box Tops to redeem rewards for this school year. You can still send in Box Tops to school, or earn rewards for shopping online by signing up at www.boxtops4education.com.

# MARK YOUR CA­LEN­DARS

# UPCOMING EVENTS

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| --- | --- |
| **Feb. 16** | Class Picture Day |
| **Feb. 17** | Group/Club & Activities picture day |
| **Feb. 24, 7-9 p.m.** | Music and Dance Night |
| **Mar. 6, 7:30 p.m.** | PTA Meeting in Media Center |
| **Mar. 8, 7-8 p.m.** | Community Service Night in APR |
| **Mar. 14, 4 p.m.-close** | Potomac Pizza Restaurant Night |
| **Mar. 18** | Barnes and Noble Book Fair |

**Valentine’s Day Parties** will begin at 2 p.m. on Feb. 14. Refer to specific instructions from your child's teacher and Room Parents regarding the indi­vidual parties and distribution of Valentine cards. Remember, volunteers are wel­come.  Please coordi­nate with the appropriate Room Parents. Due to space constraints and safety concerns, the school cannot accommodate younger siblings. Please allow enough time to sign in at the office. Thank you!

**Music and Dance Night** Get ready for a break from the winter cold with an exciting family night out.  Ritchie Park PTA is hosting its free annual Music and Dance Night on Friday, Feb. 24 from 7-9 p.m.  This fun night of music and games is a hit with not only the Ritchie Park kids, but siblings as well.  There will be two rooms of music and DeeJay-led games (the APR for Grades 3-5, and the gym for all kids second grade and under), as well as snacks sold by the 5th Grade Promotion Team, and a donation drop off area for non-perishable food donations to Manna Food Bank. Bring your kids, bring their friends, and help fight hunger in our community! \*\*\*Note - all kids should be accompanied by a parent. Please contact Kristen Swiggett, kswiggett@comcast.net, for more information

**Manna Mania is coming!** Manna Mania will be happening at Music & Dance Night! Please bring non-perishable food donations to the event, where we will collect food for Manna Food Bank. In past years, Ritchie Park families col­lected and donated over **400 pounds** of food in this one evening!!! Let's break our own record and help fight hunger in our community again this year.  Thank you to everyone who signed up to work at Manna's warehouse as part of Manna Mania!  Both slots are filled, which shows that Ritchie Park Panthers believe in community service!!!

**RPES Book Fair at Barnes and Noble** is coming on Sunday, Mar. 18. This year it will be at the Washingtonian Cen­ter, 21 Grand Corner Ave., Gaithersburg. Volunteers are needed for the upcoming **Barnes and Noble Book Fair**, scheduled on Mar. 18. To sign up, go to www.SignUpGenius.com/go/4090544A5AA229-barnes/. Enter the password "bn0318". For more information, contact Ana at anatungcod@comcast.net.

# WAYS TO VOLUNTEER

We are looking for a Chairperson or two Co-Chairs for the **Recycled Book Swap** in June. This job entails gather­ing donated books and sorting books by level, coordinating classes coming through the book exchange during school hours, and donating any left-over books to charity. This is a very popular event with the students and gives them a head start on their summer reading, but it won't happen if no one volunteers to lead it. It’s a great first time volunteer op­portunity! For more information, contact Karla Berggren (see sidebar).

# ADVOCACY CORNER: Continue Pressure on County Council

Thank you to the parents who came to the County Council hearing on school construction last night. Your pres­ence and support for keeping the construction of the new RM elementary school #5 on schedule for 2015 was noticed.  The campaign to convince the County Council to reject the County Executive's recommendation to delay the construc­tion of RMES #5 by two years continues.  If you couldn't make it to the hearing last night or if you want to continue the pressure on the County Council members, please consider writing a letter to the Council members and send it to 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850 or you can send an email to county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov and it will be distributed to all Council members.  In addition, if you want to write directly to the councilmember that represents the families of Ritchie Park, you can contact Phil Andrews at councilmember.andrews@ montgomerycountymd.gov.  For a sample letter, visit the RPES PTA webpage.  Please personalize the letter, addressing your own situation, as applicable.

In Operating Budget news, MCCPTA is holding an Operating Budget Forum on Wednesday, Feb. 15 at 7:30 p.m. in the Richard Montgomery High School Auditorium.  The Board will approve its proposed MCPS Operating Budget on Feb. 14, so this will be your chance to come and hear first-hand about the approved budget and the prospects for fund­ing for FY 2013.  Nearly all of the County Council Members have committed to participate, as well as many Board of Edu­cation Members, and a representative from the County Executive's Office.  This promises to be a very informative ses­sion and a great way to hear from the decision-makers and to share your concerns.