RITCHIE PARK ES

PTA NEW­SLET­TER

2010-2011 RPES PTA Officers

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

**Cheryl Moss Herman, Delegate to MoCo Council of PTAs and Cluster Coordinator for RM Cluster**

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**Richard Hart, Delegate to MoCo Council of PTAs** **and Past President**

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**Catherine McCoskey, Teacher Representative**

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**Catherine Long, Principal**

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**Mary Ellen Dixon, Asst. Principal**

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### **May 20, 2011**

# End of the Year Teacher Gifts

The end of the school year is fast approaching and the PTA would like to offer you the opportunity to contribute to a class gift for your child’s teachers.   Contributions from each grade will be divided equally among the homeroom teachers for that grade.

While any amount is welcome, a contribution of $10 per student is sug­gested.   If you would like to participate in this gift**, please send your contribution to school, in a sealed envelope marked “End of the Year Teacher Gift” with your child’s name and grade clearly labeled on the front no later than TUESDAY, MAY 24.** Cash is strongly preferred as it makes it much easier for the coordinators!  If you must send a check, please make it payable to RPES PTA.  If you have any ques­tions, please contact the Room Parent for your child’s class.

# Two Authors to Visit Ritchie Park in May

The PTA-funded Guest Author Visits will bring two local authors to visit Ritchie Park this month. Thank you to Ms. Fontyn in the Media Center for coordinating these visits. **Fred Bowen**, who writes sports fiction, will be visiting with all grade levels on May 20. He also writes a weekly sports column for kids in *The Washington Post*.  Check him out at www.fredbowen.com. **Mary Downing Hahn**, who writes a variety of books--most recently ghost stories, will be sharing her insights with students in grades 3 through 5 on May 26. You can read more about her at www.hmhbooks.com/features/mdh/.

Mrs. Hahn has offered to sign books that are submitted to the Media Center by the deadline of **May 25**. You may purchase her books at local bookstores or on amazon.com. **Please complete a Book Signing Form and place it in each book to be signed.** Forms are available in the Media Center or on the RPES website homepage under News, "Authors to Visit Ritchie Park in May!"

# PTA Online Survey

This year, we implemented two new roles to help with communication be­tween the PTA and our whole parent community and to encourage even more parent involvement in the PTA. Please take a few minutes and complete an anonymous survey on our PTA communica­tion process – including the new roles of Grade Representative and Room Rep­re­sentative.  Use the following link to access the 10 question survey:  [www.surveymonkey.com/s/S9WYF7S](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/S9WYF7S)/.  *All surveys must be completed by Monday, May 23.*

# MARK YOUR CA­LEN­DARS

**Book Swap** -   **Calling all Book Lovers!** The Ritchie Park Book Swap is back and we need books! Please set aside any gently used K-8th grade level books that could be donated to our Book Swap! *We are in particular need of books suit­able for older readers (think 5th – 8th grade*).   Our goal is for each student to take home a “new” book for the summer re­gardless of whether they donate one, but this requires some generous donations!  This is a great way to spring clean, sup­port RPES and promote summer reading all at once!

Books will be collected in school from Monday, May 23 through Monday, May 31.  The Book Swap will take place

 during school hours on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 7and 8.  We will need volunteers to sort books and to help out at the Swap. Sign up at www.SignUpGenius.com/go/2011570/!

The last **PTA Meeting** of the year will be on Tuesday, June 7 at 7:30 p.m. in the APR. At the meeting we will be voting on approving the budget for next year. Also, the Volunteer Tea will be held from 8-9 p.m. honoring the volunteers who helped during the school year. Come and have some treats provided by the teachers and see the banners, posters, and flowers the students make to say “thank you” for all your hard work. Complimentary babysitting will be provided in the Music Room for toilet-trained children ages 3 and up.

# WAYS TO VOLUNTEER

**New for 2011-2012:  Fundraising Committee Now Forming**

Interested in helping gain support for our technol­ogy fund drive?  Have great ideas on how to raise much needed funds to support RPES, especially with the MCPS budget being slashed? Want to learn more about the fund raising programs at RPES?  If so, please consider joining the newly formed Fund Raising Committee.   If you are inter­ested, contact Sharri Freedman, see sidebar.

**Open PTA positions for next year**

Get involved in the PTA, help the school, meet people and have fun! We are looking for someone to serve as **President-Elect** next year and then move on to serve as President for the 2012-2013 school year. There are also many other ways to get involved and positions open for next year such as **Volunteer Coordinator, Lunch & Recess Volunteer Coordinator, Chairing the Barnes & Noble Book Fair, welcoming New Families**, etc. Please contact a PTA Board member (see sidebar) for more information.

# ADVOCACY CORNER: ES#5 Feasibility Study Options Determined

The Richard Montgomery Cluster inched closer to new elementary school capacity when the committee convened by MCPS to study school options selected a school-only option as its preferred option during the final Facility Advisory Committee meeting on May 12. The second choice option was also a school-only option, with the two proposals that co-located county office space on the school site in a distant third and fourth place. All four elementary PTAs in the cluster approved resolutions supporting new school construction and strongly opposing the co-location options.

About 60 people–parents, neighbors, principals and elected officials– attended the meeting. The elected officials, all of whom strongly favor new school construction in our cluster, included: Mayor Marcuccio and Council members Newton and Gajewski of Rockville, State Senator Jennie Forehand and Delegate Luiz Simmons of District 17, and Board of Education (BOE) member Laura Berthiaume.

Next steps are for the architecture firm to complete the Feasibility Study that will document the pros and cons for each option and calculate rough costs. This is likely to be done this summer in time for MCPS staff to work with the new Superintendent. Superintendent Starr will make a recommendation to the BOE in late October regarding school capacity in our cluster as part of his FY13-18 CIP recommendation. The BOE will vote in Nov. 2011 whether to seek the request from the County, and the County Council will vote in the spring of 2012.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

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| **May 26, 7 p.m.** | Spring Chorus & Instrumental Music Concert |
| **June 7&8** | Book Swap |
| **June 7, 7:30 p.m.** | PTA Meeting in APR, followed by Volunteer Tea |
| **June 28, 7-9 p.m.** | PTA Planning Meeting in Media Center |

In order to keep the community apprised of the process, PTA leaders are working with MCPS officials to hold a “Community Town Hall” in late Sept. or early Oct. in order to share the latest in enrollment projections and CIP plans for our cluster. Stay tuned!

# A BIG THANK YOU TO…

* Adina Topfer and Kristen Swiggett for organizing the Arts and Science Fair and Mrs. Stylos for preparing the stu­dent art for display. Their hard work is very much appre­ciated and we hope everyone learned something new about science and enjoyed the beautiful artwork.
* Christine Van Essen, our volunteer coordinator who presented at Volunteer Training, logged volunteer hours throughout the school year, and coordinated volunteers.
* Natalie Childs, our Lunch and Recess Volunteer Coordinator, who tirelessly scheduled volunteers to cover lunch and recess daily for us for a two-year term!