



# Pleasant Views

A PTA Publication

Volume 41, Issue 9

Pleasant Hill School

434 West Illinois Avenue

Palatine, IL 60067

## JANUARY

29 SPARK Meeting, Plum Grove—7:00 PM

30 Grade 6 Boys 2-Ball Competition

31 Grade 6 Girls 2-Ball Competition

## JANUARY 29-FEBRUARY 9

2nd Grade ITBS/CogAT Testing

## FEBRUARY

1 Spring Portraits

Boys Grade 3/4 Rec Night,  
7:00-8:00 PM

2 School Pride Day

Fun Fair—5:30-8:00 PM

Kindergarten Report Cards Go Home

Manna Orders Due

5-9 MAP Testing

8 Girls Grade 5/6 Rec Night,

7:00-8:00 PM

Student Council Candy Sale

9 Last Day of ITBS/CogAT Testing

Student Council Candy Sale

14 Valentines Day parties

Board of Education Mtg,  
Sundling—7:00 PM

Waste Free Lunch

15 Boys Grade 5/6 Rec Night,

7:00-8:00 PM

Student Council School Store

Manna Orders Due

19 NO SCHOOL—Presidents' Day



## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Pleasant Hill Parents and Guardians,

Pleasant Hill School celebrated our 50th anniversary with a wonderful student assembly in December. Mayor Rita Mullins, Senator Wendall Jones, Superintendent Robert McKanna, Board of Education member Wendy Rowden, and PTA co-Presidents Mary Hanson and Karen Schutz delivered excellent speeches that truly illuminated how connected our learning community has become over time. Other people who have been a part of Pleasant Hill's history came to help us celebrate, including former Principals Joanne Rooney, Tavia Floyd and Ed Nelson; former Building Assistants Marianne Kipp and Diane Murphy; and numerous former Pleasant Hill teachers. "Scrapper," our very own Cougar mascot's new name, was unveiled with his new cougar mascot jersey. The name "Scrapper" was suggested by Mrs. Willis' class, and the letters in Scrapper's name stand for our Cougar Character traits. The assembly was concluded with a slide show that took our students on a walk down memory lane.

I would also like to thank Mrs. Atkinson, Mrs. Hansen and Mrs. Lehan for our wonderful geography challenge assembly in December. Students and staff alike enjoyed the challenge!

Thank you to Mrs. Murakami and the Staff Appreciation Committee for the wonderful December staff appreciation hot drinks and delicious treats in December! All staff members really appreciated the delightful mid-day refreshment.

### Student Council

Our Pleasant Hill Student Council is holding a Candy Sale on February 8th and 9th during the lunch periods to raise funds for student activities for the remainder of the school year. Candy will be sold at reasonable prices. The school store will be open on February 15th during lunch hours, where students can purchase various "cool" school supplies. Student Council is also planning

*Continued on next page...*

Mary Geregach, Ph.D., *Principal* ● Scott Scafidi, *Assistant Principal*

● Mary Hanson and Karen Schutz, *PTA Presidents*

● Jan Sieben and Penny Schmit, *Newsletter Editors* ● PTA Website: [www.phpta.org](http://www.phpta.org)

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE, CONTINUED

various school spirit activities throughout the rest of the winter months and the spring, including Rainbow Day in March. Thanks, Student Council!

### Standardized Testing

We have begun the ACCESS testing for our English Language Learners. Our 2nd graders will begin the ITBS and CogAT testing on January 29th. Our 3rd-6th grade students will take the MAP test (see more information below) for the first time in the area of math from February 5th through the 9th, and our 2nd graders will take the math portion when they have finished the ITBS/CogAT. Our purpose for this first MAP testing session is to have the students practice taking the test on the computer and to have our staff practice administering the test. Our 3rd through 6th graders will take the ISAT test from March 5th through the 16th.

### Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) are state-aligned computerized adaptive assessments that provide accurate, useful information about student achievement and growth. Test items dynamically

adjust to a student's performance level, and as a result, test scores are more accurate.

The assessment itself is unique in that it adapts to the student's ability, accurately measuring what a child knows and needs to learn. In addition, MAP tests measure academic growth over time, independent of grade level or age. Most importantly, the results educators receive have practical application to teaching and learning. **For more information, see the MAP website at <http://www.nwea.org/index.asp>.**

Please continue to encourage your child to read every night. Reading is the best way to build a child's vocabulary, increase comprehension skills, improve reading fluency, and develop a larger background knowledge.



**Please feel free to contact me at any time at [geregacm@ccsd15.net](mailto:geregacm@ccsd15.net) or 963-5900.**

Sincerely,

*Mary Geregach*

## FUN FAIR NEWS

If you haven't marked your calendar for the 2007 Fun Fair, now is the time...

**Friday, February 2nd**  
**5:30-8:00 PM**

You still have time to **pre-order your tickets**. All families who pre-order tickets will be automatically entered into a **special drawing!**

All pre-ordered tickets can be picked up on



Thursday 2/1 or Friday 2/2 at the back entrance of the school from 8:00-9:00 AM or 3:30 - 4:00 PM.

Otherwise they can be picked up at the pre-paid table the night of the event. (Only adults can pick-up tickets.)

If you do pick-up your tickets early, please come to the Fun Fair with your **wristbands on**. You can then proceed directly to the gym.

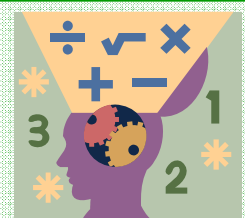
**We still need some volunteers**, so if you haven't signed

up to volunteer, please contact Donna Hirsch directly at: 847-934-3071.

Also, a quick reminder to drop your **cake walk donations** at the front or back door table on 2/2 from 8am - 4pm. All donations should be wrapped and in a disposable container.

The PTA and Fun Fair Committee are looking forward to providing a fantastic evening of food and fun for your family!

**For current updates on the Gifted and Out of Level Math Committee meetings, please check out the Pleasant Hill PTA Website: [www.phpta.org](http://www.phpta.org)**



# SPRING PORTRAITS: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST

All students will be photographed on Thursday, February 1st for Spring Portraits. This program is different than the fall school pictures in several ways:

- You may choose from 3 poses.
- The portraits have a natural background, similar & coordinating with last years' portraits.
- No payment is required in advance.

Each student receives a full portrait package, including some "fun" options. You pay for only what you keep: nothing; 1 or a few sheets; or the whole package.

We had a huge positive response to this program last year. The pictures make great spring holiday gifts!!!

*Note: There is no retake day for Spring Portraits.*

The Spring Portrait program is sponsored by the PTA-Yearbook committee. **Please contact Jennifer Draznik at [ph.yearbook@mac.com](mailto:ph.yearbook@mac.com) with any questions.**

**The pose choices and background can be seen at: <http://schoolportraits.lifetouch.com/picturedate/Detail.aspx?lid=18474&pgm=7>**

## IDENTITY THEFT HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF—AND YOUR KIDS

*Excerpted from Parenting Magazine and The Today Show, by Penny Schmit, Parent Education*

In the U.S. each year, about 9 million people fall victim to identity theft—from a few hundred dollars charged to your credit card to someone posing as you to get a job. A growing concern: It's happening to kids, even babies.

### **Children: the perfect target**


Child victims aren't as common, but when it happens to kids, it can be very serious. Why?

- It can go undetected for years (since your baby won't apply for credit anytime soon).
- It will affect your child's credit and employment history when the thieves obtain credit cards, even get jobs.
- If the thieves are arrested for another crime, it will go on your child's record, too.

### **To protect your child:**

Don't give out his/her social security number (SSN)—to anyone. Though they may ask for it, her doctor and school don't need it unless the child's receiving a government service, like free lunch. At the doctor's office, only give out the insurance card number. Teach your child that his/her SSN is a secret.

### **Red flags that your child's identity has been stolen:**

- Suspicious mail, like pre-approved credit cards and other financial offers normally sent to adults, start coming in his/her name. 
- You try to open a financial account for your child, but find one already exists, or the application is denied because of a poor credit history.
- A credit report already exists in his/her name. A child who has one is probably targeted, since only an application for credit starts a report.

### **Lower your risk**

To protect yourself:

- Carry only **one or two credit cards**—and nothing that lists your SSN.
- Keep a **photocopy of the front and back of all your cards** at home. If you keep copies at work, make sure they're locked up.
- **Substitute your driver's license** for your SSN whenever possible, such as at a doctor's office.
- **Check your bank statements** and credit card bills carefully for activity you don't recognize.
- **Don't mail bill payments from home**, stolen

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## IDENTITY THEFT—CONTINUED

checks are a common tool for identity thieves. Take them to the post office or a post office mailbox.

- **Don't put your full name on your checks**, make the thieves guess your full name, and whether you are male or female.

**If you think you or your child might be a victim:**

### Step 1

Call one of the three national credit-reporting agencies to place a fraud alert (one call will activate the other two). The agency will then verify that it's you if anyone tries to authorize new credit within 90 days. If you request a permanent alert in writing, you'll be notified directly regarding requests for new credit for the next seven years. If your child was the victim, the agencies must remove all suspicious activity from her report once you prove he/she is a minor. **To place a fraud alert, call Equifax (800-525-6285); Experian (888-397-3742); or Trans Union (800-680-7289). These are automated calls.**

**"30% of identity thefts are accomplished using stolen checks and credit cards!"**

### Step 2

Cancel lost or stolen credit and ATM cards, and close accounts that have been tampered with, or worse, opened. To dispute

new accounts with financial institutions, you'll need to provide an ID Theft Affidavit, which is available on the FTC website.

### Step 3

File an incident report with the police, even if it's just for a lost wallet. If you know someone is misusing your info., file an identity-theft report and make sure you keep copies of all police documents.

### Have Questions?

Contact the FTC or the Identity Theft Resource Center (ITRC). The ITRC can answer questions about child identity theft—for example, what do to if the thief is a family member.

FTC: 877-438-4338 or [consumer.gov/idtheft](http://consumer.gov/idtheft)  
ITRC: 858-693-7935 or [idtheftcenter.org](http://idtheftcenter.org)

## 6TH GRADE STUDENTS & PARENTS

The sixth grade classes have received their questionnaires for the yearbook.

**They are due back to their teachers by January 31st.**

All 6th graders are requested to submit a baby photo (age newborn—18 months if



possible) for the yearbook as well.

Your photo WILL BE RETURNED. Please place it in an envelope labeled with the names of the student & teacher.

**You may contact Jennifer Draznik, PTA-Yearbook at [ph.yearbook@mac.com](mailto:ph.yearbook@mac.com) with any questions.**

## LEGISLATIVE CORNER

### Northwest Suburban Council PTA Sponsors Candidates Forum

Come March 1<sup>st</sup> to the Sundling Jr. High Gym to see the PTA-sponsored Candidates Forum. Candidates running for School Board in District 15 will be answering questions in a PTA moderated Forum. This is an excellent opportunity for you to see who the candidates are and what their positions are on issues facing District 15. There will also be PTA voter registrars available, if you are not registered to vote (the deadline to register to vote in the April election is March 17<sup>th</sup>).

### Updated PTA Bylaws VOTE

Come to the next Pleasant Hill PTA meeting February 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM to vote on the amendments to the PTA Bylaws for Pleasant Hill PTA. Bylaws are updated every two years and must be voted upon by the general PTA membership at a regular PTA meeting. **You can view the bylaws and proposed amendments on the website at [www.phpta.org](http://www.phpta.org).**

*You are encouraged and welcome to join any Pleasant Hill PTA meeting, which are held in the Teachers' Lounge (just inside the school's back door).*

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE CLUB UPDATE

The club volunteers have been busy creating and designing quilt squares for children of parents stationed abroad. Our goal is to create 15 quilts, one of which will be given to Jesse Alcozar's 8-year-old sister. You may recall that Jesse died last year in Iraq and a few weeks later his family's house burned down. At that time, our school community supported the Alcozar family with a benefit raffle. When I saw Jesse's father last week he expressed through his tears and a strong hug his gratitude to his friends in Palatine for lending a hand to a stranger. Our hope is that a homemade quilt and a teddy bear will provide Jesse's younger sister some comfort as she continues to cope with the absence of her "big brother".

If you would like to participate as a family in designing a quilt square for a soldier's child please

contact Judy. We are continuing to collect teddy bears and fabric remnants to aid this cause. ***Both teddy bears and fabric remnants can be dropped off in the collection boxes located by the front doors.***

Club members please remember to forward your \$2 for the club activity to school. We are looking forward to giving the children's quilts to the Great Lakes Naval Station representative in February.

Thank you for supporting the club's activity.

**Judy Benka** ([judybenka@yahoo.com](mailto:judybenka@yahoo.com))



## WHAT HAPPENS TO THAT BOXTOPS MONEY?

Inquiring minds want to know where the BOXTOPS money has gone in the past. This money is added to the PTA budget for unexpected (and unplanned for) expenses.

Two years ago it helped buy the **new trophy case** in front and helped pay to **frame photos** for the halls. It is used when the current PTA budget has an opportunity that comes up mid-year and no budgeted funds – so



THANK YOU!

In case you wondered... Campbell's soup labels are still collected and the points earned are used "in trade" for classroom teaching aids and tools that will enhance the learning environment. Last year we traded for a fully rotational **solar system for use in the third grade**. This year we will be trading for **office**

**equipment** as well. These much needed, but "free" supplies free up money to be used elsewhere.

REMEMBER: ***Please trim your***

***BOXTOPS so that we don't have to***—it takes you a second but if the team has to trim them all it takes HOURS. Also Campbell's soup is now ONLY ACCEPTING the bar code with the "Campbell's Kids" connected to it – so even if the kids are 2 inches over to the side – cut them all in one piece and we can submit them. SOUP CAN FRONTS ARE NO LONGER ACCEPTED.

Thanks to the volunteers that continue to help. We will start the spring triathlon soon!

**Questions?** [patriciamurakami@yahoo.com](mailto:patriciamurakami@yahoo.com)

## STAFF APPRECIATION

Ever wondered how you could help show the staff how much the kids love them? This year the Staff Appreciation Committee has committed to a monthly program of little acts of kindness for the entire Pleasant Hill community. This has included the Back to School Breakfast, Break-

fast during the Pre-Book Sale, Sweets and Treats in December and a Homemade Soup 'N Stuff lunch in January. Are you interested in baking or making or helping or cleaning? **Contact Pat Murakami at [patriciamurakami@yahoo.com](mailto:patriciamurakami@yahoo.com) to be added to the list!**

# ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

It's time for my mid-year review (ooh, aaah!). First, I'd like to thank all those who have been bringing in your old athletic shoes to recycle.



We are participating again this year in Nike's Reuse-a-Shoe program in which worn out athletic shoes (athletic shoes only—no spikes or sandals or dress shoes, etc.) are collected throughout the year and delivered to Nike via the Glenview Transfer Station to be ground up and turned

into sport surfaces like tracks, basketball courts, and tennis courts. **Shoes can be turned in now through March** in the bin by the front office.

Earth Club members then go through the shoes to prepare them for recycling.

Second, we are **also collecting old cell phones** as part of Motorola's Race to Recycle program in which cell phones are sent to Motorola for refurbishing, and the school receives \$3.00 per intact phone submitted. Phones should be in good condition—no cracked displays—and can be dropped off at the front office as well.



Finally, we conduct a **waste-free lunch each month**. So far this year, we've been pretty lenient on the number of non-recyclable or non-reusable items allowed in lunches. Starting in February, however, we will be cracking down on that, so I thought it timely to offer a bit of a refresher on what actually constitutes a waste-free lunch and why it's so important to participate. A child taking a disposable lunch to school creates an average of 67 pounds of lunch waste annually. That's a lot of waste going into our already stretched landfills! Landfills across the continent are reaching capacity, and new ones are being built farther and farther away from the actual source of most of the garbage (cities and suburbs). This distance in-

*"A child taking a disposable lunch to school creates an average of 67 pounds of lunch waste annually."*

creases the pollution caused by large trucks having to haul our garbage even farther away to dispose of it. Packing a waste-free lunch helps to not only teach our children about the three R's (reduce, reuse, recycle) but also helps to instill in them a respect of the environment and of our planet.

So, try packing a waste-free lunch using a reusable lunchbox. Pack your food in reusable containers, avoiding plastic bags, plastic wrap, and other non-recyclable items, including prepackaged foods, as much as possible. Include a drink in a refillable bottle. Unfortunately, juice boxes and CapriSun pouches are not currently recyclable. Include reusable utensils and cloth napkins, if you have them. Paper napkins are generally very biodegradable, so that's not a big deal. But if you have some cloth napkins that you're not using (read, scary wedding gift—that's my source!), toss 'em in, more to make a point with your kids about being waste-free than to really save the environment from a paper napkin. Once you have these reusable containers on hand, you'll find you use them for snacks in the car for your children and for yourself. They've also made great containers for very tiny toy parts that need to be kept together (like if you're "lucky" enough to have Polly Pocket shoes in your midst!). I find uses for them everywhere! For more information/inspiration, please visit [www.wastefreelunch.org/parents.html](http://www.wastefreelunch.org/parents.html).

Our next Waste-Free Lunch is on Wednesday, February 14th (get it? We ♥ planet Earth!), so get ready to go waste-free! We will be looking for cold lunches with no throw-away items (except paper napkins). Hot lunch folks will be recycling as usual. Thanks in advance for your participation in this PTA-

sponsored event and in helping to save our planet!

**Margo Ban**

# SPOTLIGHT ON THE BOARD

## Notes from the District 15 Board Meetings

**S**potlight on the Board is a collection of notes taken at the District 15 School Board meetings by Frank C. Whiteley PTA's newsletter editor, Jennifer Mondy. They are meant to help parents and staff who are unable to attend the Board meetings on a regular basis to keep informed about the issues and plans affecting the district.

These Notes are not endorsed by District 15 nor the Board of Education. Full Spotlight on the Board notes available at [www.phpta.org/DistrictInfo.htm](http://www.phpta.org/DistrictInfo.htm). The next scheduled Board meeting was Wednesday, January 24th—highlights will be in our next issue of Pleasant Views.

### Highlights from the January 10th Regular meeting.

#### 2006 Annual Student Achievement Report Presentation

Data was given on reading, math and science scores by grade level as well as reading scores by student subgroups. District met their performance target for having no significant difference between student subgroups meeting/exceeding standards – for those students who have been in District 15 for at least one year. Copy of the presentation is available online at [www.ccsd15.net](http://www.ccsd15.net) (under Curriculum and Instruction, Student Achievement).

**Citizens Address the Board**—Four of the five citizens addressing the Board spoke on the recent superintendent's contract amendment.

#### Action Items—Other

Items brought forward for Board discussion included how Special Board meetings are called, how the Board handles its attorneys, educating the community on school funding and an orientation workshop for Board of Education candidates.

#### Freedom of Information Act Requests

Seven requests were received during the month of December, 2006.

### Highlights from the December 18th Special Meeting:

Keenan, Millar and Rowden were absent.

#### Revised Amendment to Superintendent's 2004-2009 Employment Contract

Board approves amendment (4:0)  
(Carlson, Boucher, Mikula, Silverman voting "yes")

Source: Posted agenda, District 15 Board of Educa-

tion Secretary—January 3, 2007. Copy of Amendment dated Dec. 18, 2006

### Highlights from the December 13th Regular meeting:

**Authorization for Certificate of 2006 Tax Levy Approved**—Handout available

#### Final ISAT results announced

- All 19 schools made AYP (average yearly progress)
- 86% meets/exceeds in reading
- 89.6% meets/exceeds in math

**Proposed District Web Site Policy presented**—Handout available

Key issues addressed—student privacy and external links. Committee recommended updating district's privacy policy to allow for an option that gives 100% privacy protection. Current policy is "opt out" - the proposed policy would require an "opt in" to release privacy information. The district's Web site will be updated with a disclaimer concerning external links. Special mention was made that the district will not be "policing" PTA Web sites.

#### Board of Education Policy Manual Review – 1st Reading

Policy items requiring updated legal references were presented to the Board.

Board members disagreed about the purchasing policy. Some were concerned over policy language, wanting option to bid items exempted by school code and advance notice before decisions need to be made. Other Board members believed that the policy does not preclude the district from bidding, sometimes a district can do better negotiating with

## SPOTLIGHT ON THE BOARD—CONTINUED

vendors and bidding only exists to keep school districts honest. Policy will be brought back for a 2nd reading in January.

### Board Member Roles and Responsibilities

Dispute revolved around a Board member's decision to hire an outside attorney without prior Board approval as per policy. Costs amounted to over \$35,000.

### Amendment to Superintendent's 2004-2009 Employment Contract

Board approves (4:3)  
(Carlson, Boucher, Mikula, Silverman voting "yes"; Keenan, Millar, Rowden voting "no")

**To read Full Spotlight on the Board Notes, or subscribe via email to Spotlight on the Board, just go to: [www.fcwpta.org/board\\_notes.htm](http://www.fcwpta.org/board_notes.htm)**

## WELCOME TO THE PLEASANT HILL PTA

Joining the PTA gives you a voice in your child's education and your community. PTA is the largest child advocacy organization in the country. Did you know that Pleasant Hill PTA supports the following activities?

Pleasant Hill Newsletter ● Recreation Nights ● Field Day ● In-School Assemblies ● Fall Fest ● Resource Center Helpers ● Calendar ● Fun Fair ● Birthday Book Club ● Room Parents ● Roller-Skating Party ● Ice Cream Social ● Book Fair ● Teacher Appreciation ● Yearbook ● School Phone Directory ● Kindergym ● Room Parents ● Reflections Contest ● School Clubs

Every family who joins the PTA will receive one copy of the **VERY** popular and useful Pleasant Hill Directory. This is the only way to obtain a directory which will be distributed along with your PTA Membership card. Dues are only \$6.50 per family or \$3.25 per individual. Please complete the information below and return it with your membership dues to your child's classroom.

Thank you for becoming a member of the Pleasant Hill PTA!

**Joanne Wojcik, Membership, 847.202.6534**

**Family Membership: \$6.50 ● Individual Membership: \$3.25 ● Make checks out to "Pleasant Hill PTA"**

**Please fill out all names and room numbers**

Family Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
last name first name

Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
last name first name

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Room # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Room # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Room # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Room # \_\_\_\_\_

**This newsletter is funded by the Pleasant Hill PTA and produced by Pleasant Hill PTA Volunteers.**