

September 18, 2006

# Shark Bytes

www.sparkspta.org



## Newsletter Highlights

- Faculty Profile
- PTA Meeting Minutes
- Ice Cream Social

## The Weeks Ahead

**Yom Kippur - School Closed**  
Mon., October 2  
**PTA Meeting**  
Wed., Oct. 4 - 9:00 AM

## President's Message

It was so nice seeing so many families represented at Back to School Night and our first PTA meeting. Thank you for all your support with our membership drive and our direct donation campaign. Our volunteer training was a big success. Our new volunteers are motivated to get to work on our many upcoming events. Please come to our next PTA Meeting on Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM in the cafeteria. We will be discussing the ice cream social, family nights, new parent dinner, and budget updates. -Robbie Stout

## PTA Meeting Minutes

September 6, 2006, 7:00 PM

**PRESIDENT:** Robbie Stout. Pleased with the turn out at Back to School Night. By-laws have been updated and are good for 3 years. Membership award granted last year.

**VICE PRESIDENT:** Vandy Harman. New Parent Orientation was a success. Resulting in 34 new members and some funds raised.

Caribou Coffee generously donated coffee for this event. Seeking to hold a monthly family event. Ideas include safety night, ice cream social, skating party, movie night, reading night, Sparks Shuffle, science fair, spring fling, June picnics & parties.

**TREASURY:** Arianna DiFrancesco and Jim Elker. 235 members signed up at back to school night. Received \$15,630 in direct donations. The New Parent Party budget was discussed. Also discussed possible increase to budget for environmental programs.

**PRINCIPAL:** Barb Bisset. Sparks now has 500 children. Full-day kindergarten starts next year. Estimates 515 kids next year. Our staff is stable. Sept. 22 will be the Outdoor Learning Center Dedication. Also honoring the 90 year partnership with The Halston Garden Club. Sept. 23 we have Community Pitch-In Day to help maintain nature trail and grounds. Encouraged all parents to help at Sparks. Thanked the PTA for \$9,000 that goes directly to teachers for supplies in classrooms.

### OTHER BUSINESS:

**Membership:** 235 members gained at Back To School Night. More members joined at new parent orientation. Still more joining.  
**Hospitality:** Starting the Welcome Wagon for new families. Two volunteers per grade wanted. Refreshments are available, contact Lauren May if you need supplies.  
**Direct Donation:** Great response at Back to School Night. Mailed requests to 100 local businesses for ads in roster. A star will be put up for each donation.

**Ice Cream Social:** Teachers wanted to scoop, face paint, sand art, graffiti wall, Sparks Shark. Cost: \$4.00 advance, \$5.00 at door. Getting

sprinkles from Carvels. Looking for ice cream donations (Cold Stone, Wegmans, Moxleys, Graul's) Other sponsors may include Jeppi Nut, McDonald's, Sweetheart Cup.  
**Fund Raising:** If direct donation does not meet target a fundraiser may be necessary. Noted that Spirit Wear is not a fund raiser and if any child cannot afford Spirit Wear please see Barbara Bisset.

## Sparks Has Talent!

When the curtain rose on the *Sparks Has Talent!* campaign at Back to School Night, the stage was set for fun and fundraising. This year's opening night was a success by all accounts: more than \$15,000 was received in donations that night alone.

Those who attended were greeted at the school's entrance by friendly ushers, who invited the crowd to "follow the red carpet" to the pre-show festivities. Thanks to our talented Sparks' alumnae: Dakota Riley, Meta Kate Mooney, Maggie Cave, Ivy Smith, Jonathan Williams and Quinn Salditch for warmly welcoming the audience and handing out popcorn to those who contributed.

Before the PTA meeting began, Center Stage came to life with acts from several Sparks' students. Bridget Maher (fifth grade) strummed the guitar with fellow band member Jeremy Suls (fourth grade). Tommy Purdie (third grade) tinkled the ivory. The Hereford 8-10 year old cheerleaders got the crowd going with several of their favorite crowd pleasers. Lauren Litwak and Andrea DiMayo (fifth grade) tapped their feet to their favorite show tunes. And Caroline and Emily May shared their beautiful artwork. Even Pokey Fair

got into the act, deftly juggling several objects in the air at once (a skill she most likely honed in the classroom)! Later on stage, Katie Rogers and Timothy Mooney joined the other talented children during a brief presentation.

As the ushers gratefully accepted the many donations that came in that evening, they gave each contributor a bag of popcorn. Hidden in several bags were pieces of Cookie Lee jewelry. Those people who returned their donations that evening were also eligible for some delectable incentives. Congratulations to Dean and Wendy Flowers, whose names were drawn for a Dinner for Two at The Milton Inn. Steven and Damita Baldwin were the fortunate recipients of Lunch for Two at the Milton Inn. And Ed and Pam Kohlenstein will soon enjoy Dinner for Two at the GreystoneGrille. We extend many thanks to these fine establishments for their generous support of our school.

As we move into mid-September, the campaign continues to build with impressive momentum. To date, approximately 20 Sparks' teachers, administrators and staff members have contributed; this week, Janet Maltese won a gift certificate to The Manor Tavern!

### One Star Equals One Donation

Look to Center Stage, near the entrance to the gym, for a quick visual overview of our success. Each star on the stage equals a family, teacher or staff member who has contributed to the campaign. Since our goal is 100% participation, it is our goal to have close to 400 stars adorn Center Stage. In the future, additional information about *Sparks Has Talent!* will also be included in this newsletter and on Sparks TV. And soon every child in the school will have the chance to share his or her talent or select a piece of spirit wear in a weekly drawing on Sparks TV.

### Many Thanks for Many Gifts

Many thanks to our talented committee members: Adrienne Smith, Michelle Schiffer, Debbie Banister,

Adrienne Smith, and Sharon Williams. Thanks also to Hunt Valley Signs, The Milton Inn, the GreystoneGrille, and The Manor Tavern for the gift certificates. We also gratefully acknowledge Café Isis (for the usher hats), and Constellation Energy (for the stage lights), Kitt Rogers and Robbie Stout (for their help with the mailings). Thanks to each of you, too, for your generous support of this fundraising effort.

As of this writing, over \$16,000 of our \$28,000 goal has been raised through parent, teacher, administrator, staff and local business contributions. If you haven't contributed yet, please consider making a donation of any amount to help meet our goal of 100% participation. Look to this column for future participation incentives, including gift certificates from Christopher Daniel, Liberator's and other fine restaurants. All who have contributed to date and those who contribute through September 30<sup>th</sup> will be eligible to receive some very special incentives.

Thank you for sharing your gifts to help nurture theirs. - Ann Mooney and Kellie Huffman, Direct Donation Co-chairs

Look for our talented students in future newsletters and on the morning announcements.

## Cub Scouts

Interested in Cub Scouts? Cub Scout Pack 485 is interested in you! We are recruiting new members, grades 1-5. For more information, contact Bill Mann at 410-472-2928 or Diane Bedwell at 410-357-8776. The first pack meeting will be held Friday, September 29, 6:45 PM, at Immanuel Episcopal Church, 1509 Glencoe Road.

## Ice Cream Social



Come get the scoop at the Sparks Elementary School Ice Cream Social, Saturday, October 14th from 2:30 - 4:30 in the Sparks Sharketeria.

Tickets are \$4 per person in advance and \$5 at the door. Ticket order forms can be found in the office if you did not receive one in your children's folder. Come and mingle with teachers, friends and welcome new families to the school. In order to make this day a success we are still in need of volunteers. Please contact Liz Neave at [jonneave@comast.net](mailto:jonneave@comast.net) or Amy Nozemack at [Amynoz@msn.com](mailto:Amynoz@msn.com) to volunteer.

## Profile: Jen Morris

Mrs. Morris is one of Sparks Elementary's wonderful kindergarten teachers. She and her husband Matt share their home with two well-loved cats named Tucker and Tilly. Jen and Matt are expecting a baby this February! Here are some more interesting facts about Mrs. Morris.

**Hometown:** Perry Hall

**Hobbies:** Scrapbooking, dance

**Favorite Food:** Her Grandmother Rosalie's spaghetti

**Favorite Color:** Pink

**Favorite Film:** Any Disney cartoon

**Favorite Children's Book:** The Little Mouse, the Red-Ripe Strawberry, and the Big, Hungry Bear