

Sharkbytes

ALWAYS MOVING FORWARD

Mark your Calendar!

September

- NEW PARENT PARTY
Sept 25/Fri 6:30 pm

October

- SPARKS 100 YEAR CELEBRATION
Oct 2/Fri
Oct 3/Sat 10:00–1:00 pm
- PTA MEETING
Oct 7/Wed 7:00 pm
- ICE CREAM SOCIAL
Oct 9/Fri 6:00–8:00 pm
- SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR
Week of October 5–9
- HALLOWEEN PARADE
Oct 30/Fri 2:00

November

- PTA MEETING
Nov 4/Wed 7:00 pm
- FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT
Nov 13/Fri
- AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK
Week of November 16–20
- GRANDPARENTS DAY
Nov 20/Thurs

December

- PTA MEETING/HOLIDAY TEA
Dec 2/Thurs 9:30 am
- WINTER CONCERT
Dec 15/Tues 7:00 pm

To contact the Sparks PTA

✉ 601 Belfast Road, Sparks MD 21152

☎ 410.357.0046

@ kimgraybill@comcast.net

A message from the PTA president...

On behalf of the PTA, I would like to welcome you back to another exciting school year. Once again, Sparks is fortunate to have a strong PTA board, including officers and committee heads that are dedicated to our school. They have been working through the summer, planning exciting programs and events for our children and families. The mission of the PTA is to make every child's potential a reality. We will achieve this by:

1. being a powerful voice between parents and educators
2. getting parents involved inside and outside of the school building
3. promoting a positive learning environment.

In the upcoming year, we hope to increase the relationship between teachers and the PTA, broaden parent involvement, increase communication between the PTA and parents, and increase parent involvement in decisions which affect our children.

We cannot reach our goals without your help! There are many ways you can make a difference in your child's educational experience: volunteer in or outside of the classroom, join a PTA committee or chaperone a class trip. I am confident we can find a volunteer opportunity that will fit your busy schedule.

Throughout the school year, you will receive a lot of important information from the PTA. That information will be located in two different locations. This PTA newsletter, **Sharkbytes**, is one resource. After this issue, we will be sending it via email. To continue receiving the printed version, please contact Meg Kimmel (megkimmel@mac.com). SharkBytes will

include important dates, events, news and lots of other pertinent information. The PTA website—sparkspta.org—contains the same information as the newsletter but in an expanded form. Most of our PTA materials and forms can be downloaded from the site. Be sure to check both informative sources to gather important PTA information and a calendar of upcoming events.

It was great to see so many faces at Back to School Night! I hope you were able to take with you the information you need to help your child have a successful school year.

In case you missed the news, our 2009-2010 PTA Membership and Direct Donation campaign has officially begun!

Direct Donation is the only fundraising we do at Sparks so it is critical that all families participate. The money we raise goes directly towards classroom support, educational enrichment programs, and family fun events.

Please contribute!

I would like to personally invite every parent, grandparent, friend, faculty and staff member to join the Sparks PTA.

Help us make every child's potential a reality!

I look forward to working with each and every one of you this year. I value your input and am open to your suggestions. Feel free to contact me at (410) 357-0046 or kimgraybill@comcast.net.

Have a wonderful school year!

Kim Graybill



Join in the celebrations!

Sparks School's 100th Anniversary Celebration & Sparks Elementary 10th Anniversary at our new location

SCHOOL ASSEMBLY October 2 **COMMUNITY CELEBRATION** Oct. 3 • 10:00 am–1:00 pm

Show your Sparks pride with a t-shirt sporting the great design shown above. Order forms can be found at sparkspta.org. Place your order by Sept. 21 if you want to have your shirts for the October 2/3 events.



Who wants some ice cream?

Hey Sparks Sharks!
We are gearing up for

the annual Ice Cream Social on Friday, October 9th, from 6–8pm. This is a great family event for all ages...ice cream with all the toppings, fun games and activities, dancing to a live DJ, face painting, a special raffle prize, and more! Come support your school. Bring your friends and neighbors!

We still need lots of volunteers, so if you can help, contact either Dana Piombino or Sarah Ebert at piombinos@comcast.net or sarahebert@yahoo.com. **Thank you!**

The Book Fair is coming!

Our Scholastic Book Fair is touching down in our very own library from October 5-9, including during the Ice Cream Social. In years past, we have used the proceeds to purchase books for our library and new computers for the Computer Lab! Look for more information to come home in the next week. If you can volunteer during school hours to staff the book fair, please contact Meghan Parker at starsmith21057@yahoo.com.

An Invitation for new Families

The New Parent Party is right around the corner on Friday, September 25th!

All new Sparks families are invited to this annual, meet-and-greet event. It is a great chance to meet other new families as well as Sparks teachers and staff. We need to firm up our numbers this weekend, so if you haven't already done so, please RSVP to Tracey Blair at tracey744@yahoo.com. (Also, please let us know if you can't make it.) This event is held outside, so please dress accordingly in case we have a chilly evening. **We're looking forward to meeting you!**

Lost and Found

Tired of lost sweat shirts, art smocks and gloves? Here is a possible solution: iron-on labels for your kid's gear. Order forms are being distributed in the PTA folders or follow the link to from sparkspta.org. Our Sparks ID number is 818. Sparks Elementary will receive a percentage of each sale.

Does your child like to sing?

Mrs. Brack has a great choral program—Sparks Stars—for 5th grade boys and girls. If your child is interested in participating, contact Mrs. Brack at hbrack@bcps.org.

Sparks needs you! Please Volunteer!

Rosters are in production

Sparks rosters will be ready in late October. Please complete the roster update forms that were sent home in the blue folders.

Attention Business Owners

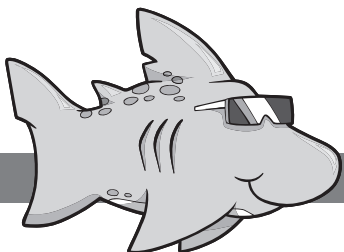
Have a business you would like to promote? The Sparks Roster is the perfect way to reach out to 500 local families while contributing to your child's education. For more information or to place an advertisement in the roster, please contact Diane Bedwell at dianebedwell@cookielee.biz.

Thank you, Teachers, Office Staff and Interns!

We are so grateful to be able to announce that 100% of our Sparks teachers, front office personnel and Villa Julie/Stevenson interns have given to our Direct Donation campaign AND have joined the Sparks PTA. We always appreciate their efforts in the classroom and now we thank them for their financial gifts to the school as well! **Please support them by donating now!**

Sparks PTA Mission

The mission of the Sparks PTA is to make every child's potential a reality by promoting a positive learning environment in school and at home.



Sparks Recycling Programs

This year, we are continuing our recycling efforts both to model environmental stewardship to our students and earn money for our school. **This year, we have expanded the program!** Collection containers are still located in the lobby. We now collect the following for recycling:

- Ink Cartridges
- Cell phones
- Kashi cereal boxes and bar packages (only Kashi please)
- Mars/Wrigley candy wrappers (Skittles, Starburst, M&Ms, Snickers, etc.)
- Bear Naked packages
- Capri Sun and Honest Kids drink pouches
- Nabisco Cookie Wrappers (any size: Oreo, Chips Ahoy, etc.)

Please feel free to deposit your paper recycling in the Abitibi Recycling Bin (located near the dumpsters). Please **ONLY** deposit paper (no boxes!) and of course, do not bring your other trash to the school dumpsters. **Thank you for supporting our recycling program!** If you have any questions please email Pokey Fair at efair@bcps.org.

School Wish List for 2009-2010

Each year, the teachers put together a Wish List of items that would benefit students.

- A sidewalk connecting the second set of trailers to main building
- PA system for outside trailers
- document camera
- countertop easel
- classroom library books
- large magnetic white board
- birdhouses made of recycled material (trex)
- computer speakers
- class set of Magnadoodles
- class set of clipboards
- new art tables

If you are able to contribute any of these items to the school, please contact Kim Graybill at kimgraybill@comcast.net

PTA Executive Committee

Tracey Blair First VP (Special Events)

Aimee Klink Second VP (Volunteerism)

Shanon Zinn Treasurer (Financial dealings)

Ed Kohlenstein Financial Secretary (Budget)

Diana Weiss Recording Secretary (Minutes)

Holly Inglisia Corresponding Secretary

Sparks PTA Goals

- Increase communications between teachers, parents and the PTA,
- Broaden parent involvement, especially as it pertains to the decisions affecting our children, and...
- Serve as a true liaison between parents, teachers and administrators as we work together to meet students' individual needs.

pta reflections program

We want to see your kids sing, dance... make a video, write a poem or story, paint, draw, make a collage or even take a picture! We want them to participate in this year's Reflections Program!

This program is a great opportunity for kids to express themselves creatively, have fun and win prizes. Every child has a voice through the arts, and we want to hear what they have to say! The theme this year is: **Beauty is...**

How do they get started?

1. Pick up an entry packet in the office or email: tannianhouse@comcast.net.
2. Read the rules.
3. Have your child think about what makes them say: **Beauty is...**
4. Have them pick a category. (They can enter more than one.) Categories are: visual arts, photography, film/video, literature, musical composition, dance choreography.
5. Create an original submission inspired by the theme: **Beauty is...**
6. Drop off your submission in the office on or before November 9th. Everyone gets a prize just for entering!

And, the fun doesn't end there. From Nov. 10th through 25th, participants have a chance to win a **Beauty is...** t-shirt in a daily, random drawing. (Students that win will no longer be eligible. Chances of winning are determined by the number of entries.)

Each child that that submits an entry will have their work displayed during American Education Week, join us for an Awards Ceremony and receive a participation ribbon later in the year.

Entries will be judged by a panel of local creative professionals during the week of November 23rd. Winners will receive a medal or ribbon and have their entry displayed in our award case at school. Each participating student will compete first at Sparks, then winners will go on to county, state and national competition.

Please forward any questions or requests for an entry packet to Kelly Tannian at 357.9244 or tannianhouse@comcast.net.

Remember to pick up your entry packet in the office!

Beauty is...