



# WIZARDS PTA NEWS

Woodlin Elementary Parent Teacher Association Newsletter

September 2009



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## PTA President's Message

Welcome to another busy and exciting school year at Woodlin! On behalf of the Woodlin PTA, I want to thank Mrs. Sirgo, Mr. Clarke and the entire Woodlin team for all they have done to get the school prepared for a successful 2009-2010 year.

The PTA leadership was busy this summer, too. Already we have enjoyed a number of exciting events, including:

- A welcome back breakfast for teachers and staff, led by Jeannette O'Connor,

Eve Zimmerman, and Monica Kerns.

- A spectacular open house and, for the first time, picnic, coordinated by Sheila Maith, Karen Sharp, and many wonderful volunteers. It seemed as if the good spirits of the families gathered, old and new, were even able to chase away the rain for a few hours.



PTA President  
Chris Rutledge

- An energetic Sally

Foster program, led by Jane Curtin, as always, with Lois Trojan and Lynne Yao.

By the time this newsletter reaches you, we will also have

had our first general PTA meeting. Hopefully, there, you will have had a  
(cont. on page 6)

## Sally Foster Sales Are Off & Running

The Sally Foster gift wrap and chocolate sale is off to a great start! Help make this fundraiser a successful start to another year of our community's legendary support for Woodlin. Turn in your orders for this year's sale by **Wednesday, Sept. 23rd**. Order pick-up is at the school on **Monday, Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>**, which is Columbus Day and Woodlin's Parent Day.

As always, Woodlin's PTA receives half of all sales from the fundraiser, which helps pay for assemblies, field trips, after-school clubs, the GeoBee, social activities, and many other



programs that benefit our students.

Don't need wrapping paper or hate to sell? Make a direct donation and all of your money goes straight to Woodlin's PTA. Direct donations are tax-deductible.

During these times of tighter budgets, environmental concerns, and demands on

all of our schedules, Sally Foster is a good deal:

- All items are \$20 or less, with some overstock items as low as \$5.
- Out-of-town friends and relatives can order products directly online.
- Place an order totaling \$70 or more online, and the order is shipped directly to your home.
- More than 90% of paper products are recyclable and biodegradable. Gift wrap ink is free of ozone-depleting chemicals and heavy metals.

(cont. on page 5)





Principal Sarah Sirgo

*"Dr. Ferguson has identified the home conditions and parenting practices that can help children reach their academic potential."*



## High Achievement Parenting

In June, I had the pleasure of attending a conference with members of the Woodlin staff titled "Rigor Through Relevancy; Challenging 21st Century Learners." At this engaging conference we heard from Dr. Ronald Ferguson, director of the Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard University. Among the topics he discussed was a practice he called "High Achievement Parenting," which identifies the home conditions and parenting practices that can help children reach their academic potential. We know that many parents already do many of the things listed below, but perhaps there are one or two new ideas to stimulate your thinking!

1. Promote daily leisure reading at home.
2. Try to ensure that your child gets enough sleep not to be sleepy at school. Consult local experts to learn how many hours of sleep he or she should be getting.
3. Make sure your child eats a nutritious breakfast.
4. Express warmth regularly. For example:
  - a. Spend time together
  - b. Listen carefully to what your child has to say
  - c. Respond thoughtfully and sensitively to what they say
  - d. Hug your child
  - e. Tell them you are proud that they are good people
  - f. Tell them you are proud when they try to do their best
  - g. Tell them that you love them
  - h. Allow the child to help set rules, when appropriate
5. Discuss reading materials with children in ways that encourage them to enjoy learning
6. During bedtime reading, ask both easy (build confidence) and more difficult (but not stressful) questions about the story, which help with comprehension. Do it lovingly.
7. Have a variety of reading materials for children, especially materials that are related to your child's special interests. (For younger children, variety is important because it is difficult to have thoughtful bedtime discussions over and over about the same story.)
8. Try constantly to reinforce the idea that learning can be fun & fascinating.
9. Don't overemphasize getting things correct; emphasize effort and comprehension instead.
10. Seek opportunities at home to discuss and apply what your child is learning at school. For example, having them help with cooking and recipes is a good way to reinforce math lessons (adding, fractions, etc.). Discussing current events in the newspaper may connect to what your child is doing in social studies. Ask teachers for other ideas.
11. Actively seek out-of-school time opportunities for:
  - a. Tutoring and reinforcing school lessons
  - b. Extra-curricular opportunities with freedom to explore and be creative
  - c. Extra-curricular opportunities to develop special talents
12. Know your child's close friends and try to know their parents.
13. When it seems necessary, be a role model and caring adult for your child's friends.
14. Encourage your child to think about his or her future and to set goals. Help your children develop the habit of planning for both near-term and longer-term goals.
15. Try to limit television watching by substituting other constructive and interesting activities.
16. Build up your child's sense of being a valued person. Avoid using negative nicknames such as "dummy" or "knucklehead" or "lazybones." Instead, use names like "sweetheart" or "honey" or "my bright boy" or "love of my life."
17. Try to end every reprimand with a positive statement that lets your child know you have separated your disappointment about their behavior from your pride about what a good person they really are.

- Sarah Sirgo, Principal

## New Shining Stars Program Models Good Behaviors

This fall, the Guidance Advisory Committee (GAC) is introducing a new program at Woodlin called Shining Stars. The purpose for the program is to get students to recognize daily positive behaviors exhibited by their peers.

We all know that kids like to tattle (or at least mine do), but Shining Stars will encourage students to acknowledge and encourage positive behaviors by their peers. Students simply write down instances when they see their classmates do something helpful for someone else or contribute in a beneficial way to the Woodlin community. Children who are not yet able to write will describe their Shining Stars nominations to their teacher or a parent volunteer.

Each classroom has nomination forms and a Shining Stars envelope where children can put their completed forms. Teachers will randomly draw nominations or will facilitate a class discussion on which nomination should be posted.



The nominations will be posted on a school wide bulletin board at least monthly so other students can see these written descriptions of positive actions. Please encourage your children to not only make positive choices, but to also recognize others through the Shining Stars program.

- Shannon Parkin, parent representative of the Guidance Advisory Committee. (Troy Clarke and Mindy Rosenberg are co-chairs of this advisory committee.)



## Afterschool Clubs are Here!

The PTA has a great line up of after-school club activities starting this Fall. Clubs begin on October 6 and end on Dec. 10.

**New this year:** Karate club, Hip Hop Dance club, Mystery Academy Magic club

**Old favorites:** Create Arts, Chess, Sports and games, Mad Science, and Spanish

Please look over the packet and register your child early for a club. Some of these clubs fill up quickly and you don't want your child to miss out on all the fun!

The **deadline** to register for a club is **September 18th**.

**Reminder:** Please remember to include a check (made payable to the correct payee) with your child's completed registration form, or your child will be unable to participate in the club. Questions about clubs? Please contact the following coordinators:

**Just for Fun:** Chris Scanlon  
[cmscanlon@rcn.com](mailto:cmscanlon@rcn.com)

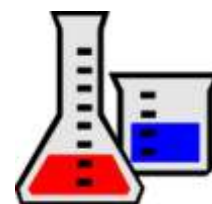
**Mad Science:**  
Krista Middlebrooks  
[kmiddlebrooks@verizon.net](mailto:kmiddlebrooks@verizon.net)

**Foreign Language:**  
Sarah Osbourne  
[seggie2009@gmail.com](mailto:seggie2009@gmail.com)

### Mad Science Club scholarships available

If you are interested in receiving for your child a full or partial scholarship for the \$112 tuition of the after-school Mad Science Club, consider serving as a parent volunteer.

Parents do not provide instruction, but serve as an additional resource to the Mad Science teacher. The Tuesday class is for grades 2 through 5, and the Thursday class is for grades K thru 2. This position can be shared with another parent if you cannot commit to all eight sessions. Please contact Krista Middlebrooks at (301) 563-6403 or [kmiddlebrooks@verizon.net](mailto:kmiddlebrooks@verizon.net) for more information.



## FIRST TOWN HALL MEETING



## Annual Open House a Success

On Friday, August 28, Woodlin hosted its annual open house. This tradition provides students with an opportunity to meet their teachers and see their new classrooms in advance of the first day of school. This year the event was moved later in the day and expanded to provide a picnic opportunity, allowing faculty, students and families to catch up with old friends and make new ones. Despite some serious threats of thunderstorms which moved the food and interest tables indoors, more than half of Woodlin's families turned out to celebrate back to school!

The staff sported their own "back to school outfits," with new t-shirts compliments of Ms. Sirgo. Families had an opportunity to join the PTA, see the new Woodlin spirit wear, and learn about Boy and Girl Scout troops at Woodlin. There were snack boxes, popsicles and drinks in the all purpose room, and great conversations and fun and games on the front lawn. We hope to build upon this event in coming years. It's a great Woodlin tradition that keeps getting better.

- Sheila Maith,  
membership committee  
chair

## Thanks Parents...

... for making teachers  
feel appreciated!

We want to offer a special thanks to the following parents who helped make the Teacher Appreciation Welcome Back Breakfast last month such a success: **Jane Curtin, Lynne Yao, Chris Scanlon, Lisa Alton, Jennifer**

**Sawin, Pat Price, Mary Press, Carolyn Yancey, and Chris Rutledge.** Your food contribution and assistance were very much appreciated!

Monica Kerns, Jeannette O'Connor, and Eve Zimmerman (the Teacher Appreciation Committee)

## PTA Directory Forms are on their way

The Woodlin Directory is a booklet that lists, in alphabetical order and also by class, the names of Woodlin students, their parents, addresses and emails. It's a great resource for arranging carpools for after

school activities, making play dates, checking homework assignments and sending out birthday party invitations. Directory update forms will be going home via backpack mail. Please return them to the

PTA Directory mailbox at school as soon as possible. You can send in one form for all of your Woodlin students. If you'd like to save paper, you can download a form at the PTA website & email

it to [jkdcpl@yahoo.com](mailto:jkdcpl@yahoo.com). If you have any questions, please contact June Krell at (301) 588-3340 or [jkdcpl@yahoo.com](mailto:jkdcpl@yahoo.com), or contact Sharon Bisk at (301) 589-6571 or [sharonbisk@yahoo.com](mailto:sharonbisk@yahoo.com).

## Support Woodlin While You Shop!

Three local grocery stores will reward Woodlin in exchange for your patronage. **Last year, we made \$3,900 from these programs to support enhanced learning opportunities for our children!**

Here are three EASY ways for you to help raise money for Woodlin:



1. **Giant Foods** - Every time your Bonus card is swiped or your phone number is entered at the cash register, a percentage of your sale is credited to Woodlin. Last year, Woodlin received over \$1,000 from Giant shoppers. **FOR WOODLIN TO BENEFIT, YOU MUST REDESIGNATE YOUR BONUS CARD THIS FALL.**



2. **Safeway** - Every time your Club Card is swiped or your phone number is entered at the register, a percentage of your sale is credited to Woodlin. Last year, Woodlin received over \$400 from Safeway shoppers. **MUST REDESIGNATE YOUR CLUB CARD THIS FALL.**



3. **SNIDER'S** (1936 Seminary Road) – Snider's will donate 1% of your shopping bill to Woodlin. Simply save your receipts and send

them in via backpack mail (marked "SNIDER'S RECEIPTS") or drop them in the SNIDER'S PTA box in the Woodlin mail-room. Last year, the school received over \$2,500 from Snider's receipts.

### HOW TO (RE-)DESIGNATE YOUR CARD(S):

1. Giant – go online to [www.Giantfood.com/aplus](http://www.Giantfood.com/aplus) and enter school ID# 00913
2. Safeway – go online to [www.eScrip.com](http://www.eScrip.com) and enter school ID# 6589421
3. Fill out the flyer sent home in your child's backpack and return via backpack mail.
4. Call Giant Food at 877-366-2668 or Safeway at 877-723-3929. You can also call these numbers if you do not know your number (i.e., you key in your phone number to get store savings).

6. Stop by Giant or Safeway and fill out a designation form using the Woodlin school ID #s above.
7. Pick up a form from the PTA information bulletin board around the corner from the front office - look for the Giant/Safeway folder.

Please ask relatives, co-workers, friends, and neighbors to register their cards on behalf of Woodlin and to save their Snider's receipts. **Let's try and raise even more this money year!** It only takes a few minutes and the whole school benefits from the money we raise.

Questions? Contact Bernadette Sweeney (for Snider's) at (301)512-1819 or [berna411@yahoo.com](mailto:berna411@yahoo.com) or Heather Lair (for Safeway or Giant) at [heatherlair@yahoo.com](mailto:heatherlair@yahoo.com) or (301)891-8452.

## Sally Foster, cont.

- The top Woodlin sellers will win exciting prizes, including an MP3 boom box, digital picture frame and digital camcorder.

To order online, click on the link on the PTA website ([www.woodlinpta.org](http://www.woodlinpta.org)) or go directly to [www.sallyfoster.com](http://www.sallyfoster.com). Remember to enter Woodlin's account number – **499069** – so that the PTA receives a portion of the sale. All online orders will

be counted toward your child's total sales for prize awards.

Just note on the envelope returned to school the last names of online orders associated with your child.

Finally, remember that although the Sally Foster sales drive ends on September 23, you and your family and friends can place an order all year and the PTA will still receive a

portion the sale.

If you have questions about the sale, contact Jane Curtin, at 301-565-2411 or [jane\\_curtin@yahoo.com](mailto:jane_curtin@yahoo.com), or Lois Trojan at 202-255-5386 or [l.trojan@rcn.com](mailto:l.trojan@rcn.com).

Thanks so much for your efforts to help make our children's school year great.

- Lois Trojan



Acclaim Images.com



"...we're always interested in new ideas and energies"

## PTA President's Message, cont.

chance to sign up to volunteer for one of the amazing PTA opportunities to serve the school. If you still haven't decided on what's right for you, please let us know – we're always interested in new ideas and energies.

It may be helpful to know a bit about the PTA leadership—listed at right. Please join me in thanking these individuals, and feel reach to reach out to any of them to learn more about opportunities to get involved. These teachers and parents have agreed to share their free time to help make Woodlin an even greater place!

Over the next few months, the PTA will host several wonderful activities. They include:

- The Sally Foster fundraiser and School Spirit sales, running in September
- A family bike ride, September 20
- Movie Night, September 25
- The return of Fun Fridays, starting September 25
- The October 6 PTA meeting, which will include a potluck to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month
- An International Night potluck on November 7
- Potential community service activities, the dates for which are to come

So, again, welcome to a great new year – we're looking forward to working together!  
Cheers!

### PTA Leadership

- Vice President Diana Arrington
- Treasurer Michael Horowitz
- Secretary Evita Smedley
- Membership Chair Sheila Maith
- Fundraising Chair Lisa Alton
- Enrichment Chair Abbi Lichtenstein
- Family and Community Programs Chair Karen Sharp
- Events Chair Yvette Harris
- Health and Safety Chair Ram Kurup
- Teacher representatives Michelle Carter and Stephanie Schaufelberger.

## The Woodlin PTA Listserv...

Did you know...the Woodlin PTA offers a list serve for parents of Woodlin students to exchange information and ideas related to Woodlin Elementary and its PTA.

To subscribe to the list serve, send an email to: [woodlnpt-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:woodlnpt-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). Once you are a member of the list serve, you can post a message on the list serve by sending an email to [woodlnpt@yahoogroups.com](mailto:woodlnpt@yahoogroups.com).

To make the Woodlin PTA list serve a useful tool for everyone, please remember that the list serve is a public communication and observe the "netiquette" guidelines at right.

- Deb Ferrin, PTA list serve moderator, [woodlnpt-owner@yahoogroups.com](mailto:woodlnpt-owner@yahoogroups.com)

### PTA Listserv "Netiquette"

- Please sign your name on all your emails and list your association with Woodlin. For example: From Deb, mom to Jeannie in 4<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Include your email address if you are asking others to reply to you, and ask them to reply to you directly, rather than to the entire list serve.
- Do not forward a personal email from someone to the entire list serve without the original sender's permission.
- Do not include the names of staff, parents, and especially Woodlin students in your discussions of sensitive topics.
- Please treat other people on the listserv the same way you would want them to treat you. Please disagree in a friendly and respectful manner and avoid speculation.
- Our PTA is exempt from federal income taxes because it is a non-partisan non-profit organization. Because of this, the list serve cannot be used for political campaigning. However, it is fine to talk about political issues.

## Get Involved!

### Room Parents Wanted

Every class at Woodlin has a "room parent." Being a room parent is a wonderfully rewarding job! It's **fun**, and the **kids love you** for doing it. It doesn't require a great deal of time at school.

If you love parties, this is the job for you! The job consists of: **welcoming** new families to Woodlin and to your child's classroom, **organizing the Halloween**

and **Valentine's Day** parties, **coordinating** the end-of-the-year gift for the teacher and **forwarding** information on events happening at school. Two or even three parents can share the job of room parent. The more the merrier!

Please consider being a **room parent**, your child's class needs you!



If you're interested, please contact: Mary Press, room parent coordinator, 301-588-3011. You can email her at [mepress@starpower.net](mailto:mepress@starpower.net)

- Mary Press,  
room parent  
coordinator

### Fun Fridays Start September 25



You know, tag, pickup basketball, jump rope? Is there a kid who wouldn't be thrilled to have Mom or Dad join them for tag, pickup basketball or jump rope after a school lunch?

No matter how cool your lunch hour was today, did you follow it with recess?

Join your kids for recess on Friday, September 25th. You can come for your kid's

recess or stay for the whole slew of them.

Please RSVP to [ramesh.ramrunner@gmail.com](mailto:ramesh.ramrunner@gmail.com), indicating your child's grade level and be prepared to have your best lunch hour in a long time.

### Woodlin Moves Bike Ride – September 20

Isn't it great to be a kid - to have an agenda for a fall morning "to play" or to "have fun." Well, moms and dads can do it with the kids on a leisurely bike ride on the Capital Crescent Trail.

Sunday morning, September 20, I invite you to join "Woodlin Moves" for a bike ride from the school. If you can make it just the couple of miles along the Capital Crescent Trail to get a coffee or a bagel at

the intersection of Connecticut Avenue, that's OK. If you want, you can press on a couple more miles to Bethesda for a scone and a latte.

We'll meet at the school at 9:00 am and will be done by 11:00 am. Please RSVP to Karen Donohue or Ram Kurup at [ramesh.ramrunner@gmail.com](mailto:ramesh.ramrunner@gmail.com). Please let us know you plan on going 4 miles or 8 miles.

This will be the first of several parent child bike rides, walks and games that we'll do during the year. If you have an activity that you'd like planned, or if you want to lend a hand, give me a shout.

- Ram Kurup, health and safety chair

### International Night Coming in November

*What: A festive night to celebrate Woodlin's diverse ethnic heritages*

*When: November 7, 6-9 pm*

*Where: Woodlin Multi-Purpose Room*

*Who: You! Bring a favorite dish, display items from your culture, don traditional dress.*

We'll provide music, games, and celebration!

Questions? Contact the organizers: Dena Leibman: [denaleibman@yahoo.com](mailto:denaleibman@yahoo.com) or Fida Adely [fidaadely@yahoo.com](mailto:fidaadely@yahoo.com)



**Woodlin PTA**  
**c/o Woodlin Elementary**  
 2101 Luzerne Avenue  
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**Treasurer:** Michael Horowitz

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[www.woodlinpta.org](http://www.woodlinpta.org)

## What's Coming Up...



### Fiesta Musical

Woodlin will celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month from Sept. 15 through Oct. 15. The celebration of Latino culture, spirit, and accomplishments will include a Fiesta Musical (a musical party).

For more info, or if you would like to volunteer, please contact Julie Rios, Latino Liaison at [rioslittle@gmail.com](mailto:rioslittle@gmail.com)

### Dates to Remember

#### September

- 18 Afterschool Club deadline
- 18 Woodlin T-shirt orders due
- 20 Woodlin Moves Bike Ride
- 23 Sally Foster due
- 25 Fun Friday—Share recess with your child
- 25 Movie Night
- 26 Sweep the Sligo Creek
- 30 Big Greek Café Dine Out for Woodlin

#### October

- 6 PTA Meeting

### Orders for Woodlin T-Shirts Due

Reminder: Orders for the new School Spirit Wear are due September 18. You should have received an order form in backpack mail. Additional order forms and information can be found on the PTA website, or contact Michelle Radecki ([mradecki1@aol.com](mailto:mradecki1@aol.com)) with questions. The new shirts will be delivered to your child's classroom in October.



## Join the Woodlin PTA!

**For the 2009-10 Year**

**Everyone must rejoin and pay dues every year!**

The Woodlin PTA depends on your membership dues and donations to support our many programs, services, and events. Membership fees are only \$10 per person—a small investment toward making Woodlin a great place for YOUR kids to learn and grow.

Parent/Guardian #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Student(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please add my email address to the Woodlin PTA list serve!

Total # of PTA members : \_\_\_\_\_ X \$10 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional tax deductible donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form with cash or check (payable to "Woodlin PTA") to school in your child's backpack. Address the envelope to "PTA Membership." THANK YOU!**