



# WIZARDS PTA NEWS

Woodlin Elementary Parent Teacher Association Newsletter

October 2010



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## The Fall Fundraiser

Thank you to all Woodlin families and staff for supporting our fall Sally Foster and Cookie Dough fundraiser. The grand prize winners and class pizza party winner will be announced at an upcoming town meeting in October.

Cookie dough orders will be delivered to the school and be available for pick-up on the stage in the all-purpose room on Friday, October 29th. This is the same day as the classroom Halloween parties and parade.

We know there were a lot of questions and concerns about the new Sally Foster gift cards this year. We appreciate all the feedback you gave us and we will be sharing it with Woodlin's PTA fundraising chair as well as with our Sally Foster area representative. Thank you for your patience with the changes and thank you so much for all your hard work and generous donations!

**Your Sally Foster Chairs:**

**Josephine Monmaney - [josiem@rcn.com](mailto:josiem@rcn.com)**

**Bernadette Sweeney - [berna411@yahoo.com](mailto:berna411@yahoo.com)**

## Principal's corner



Sarah Sirgo

**D**uring the summer I had the opportunity to catch up on one of my favorite things which is to read. I'm known for being an avid consumer of research and someone that enjoys conversations about the work we do in schools. I keep a stack of articles and books that are given to me throughout the year and had the opportunity to read an article from August 1<sup>st</sup> by Trip Gabriel in The New York Times titled, 'Plagiarism Lines Blur for Students in Digital Age'.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/02/education/02cheat.html?\\_r=1&hpw](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/02/education/02cheat.html?_r=1&hpw)

When I read, I often make connections to my work or experiences I have had as an educator. This particular article caught my eye because last spring we

had an issue with plagiarism at Woodlin with some fifth graders.

To some degree the plagiarism took us by surprise and frankly as a staff we approached it naively, assuming that the students who engaged in the plagiarism were unaware what they had done. Humbly, we thought that the plagiarism was in some way a reflection of a poor job that we had done in teaching these students how to do effective research, take notes, and cite resources. Much to our surprise, these students were well aware that they had plagiarized and were somewhat dismayed at the "big deal" we made about the incident. All they wanted to know was when their rewrite would be due ☺

While I'd like to consider myself technically savvy and old enough to remember life before email and the internet, I must admit as current graduate student I recognize the lure of easily accessed information. At the high school and college level, professors are presented with students who sit in class with laptops and wireless connections to the web so that before you even finish asking the question, "When did the first school open in the US?" they have Googled it and come up with the answer. As educators and families, we must not assume that students understand that shared knowledge is not common knowledge and that the intent of intellectual property is to protect the ideas of others while teaching students to make meaning from what they learn.

Some examples of plagiarism from the article are listed below:

- ❖ At Rhode Island College, a freshman copied and pasted from a Web site's frequently asked questions page about homelessness – and did not think he needed to credit a source in his assignment because the page did not include author information.
- ❖ At DePaul University, the tip-off to one student's copying was the purple shade of several paragraphs he had lifted from the Web; when confronted by a writing tutor his professor had sent him to, he was not defensive – he just wanted to know how to change purple text to black.
- ❖ And at the University of Maryland, a student reprimanded for copying from Wikipedia in a paper on the Great Depression said he thought its entries – unsigned and collectively written – did not need to be credited since they counted, essentially, as common knowledge.

According to the author, "in surveys from 2006 to 2010 by Donald L. McCabe, a co-founder of the Center for Academic Integrity and a business professor at Rutgers University, about 40 percent of 14,000 undergraduates admitted to copying a few sentences in written assignments. Perhaps more significant, the number who believed that copying from the Web constitutes "serious cheating" is declining – to 29 percent

on average in recent surveys from 34 percent earlier in the decade."

The situation described above from Woodlin and in the article are reminders that we have an additional responsibility to teach our students how to collect, analyze, and describe the information they gather in showing us what they have learned. Whether it be helping out kids with homework, projects, or long term assignments this article reminded me of a fundamental rule of learning....You cannot Google good thinking!

PTA President's message  
Chris Rutledge

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 2010-2011 year.

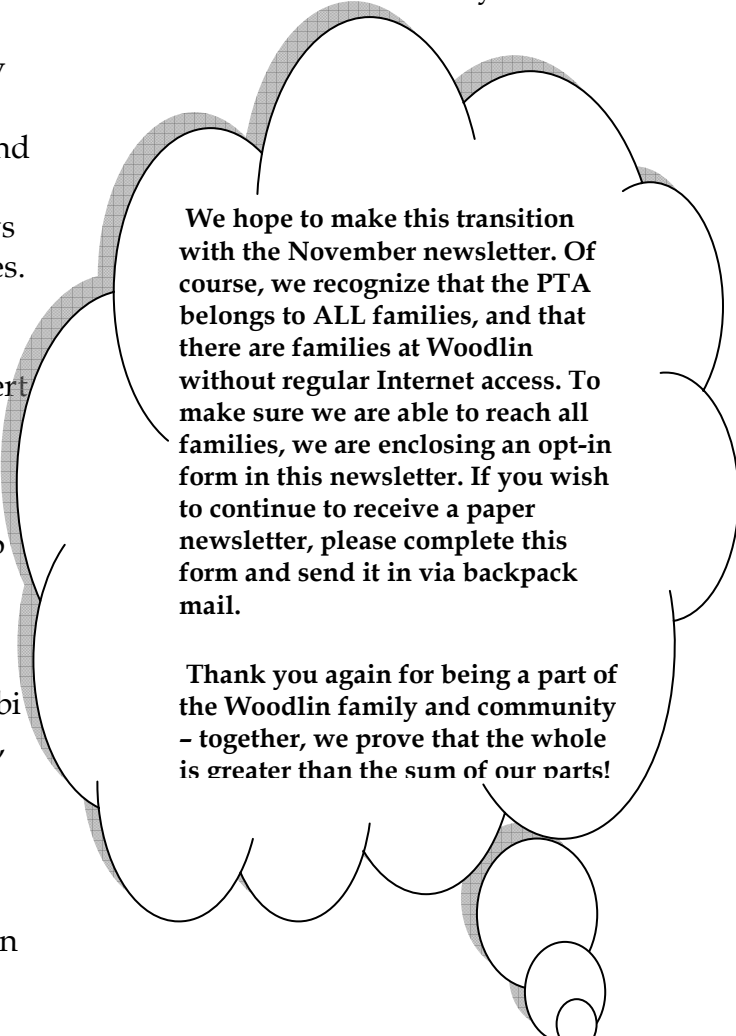
The PTA is always looking for ways to advance the mission and goals of the school, and to build our community. Since the last newsletter in the spring, there have been a number of exciting events, including many activities led by brand-new volunteers!

- ✓ We hosted a welcome back breakfast for teachers and staff, led by Jeannette O'Connor, Eve Zimmerman, and Monica Kerns.
- ✓ Parents and children enjoyed another amazing open house and picnic coordinated by new board members Liora Moriel and TC Le, and many volunteers.
- ✓ We undertook a newly-formatted Sally Foster program, led by two great new Sally Foster leads, Bernadette Sweeney and Josephine Monmaney. Sally Foster is an important fundraiser for the school, and the support shown by parents is critical and allows the PTA to do all that it does.
- ✓ Hispanic Heritage month continues with the help of new parent Marianne Hilgert and Bertie LoPiccolo and Christine Di Meglio and other volunteers.
- ✓ As I write this, Karen Sharp is working hard on another great movie night!
- ✓ After School Clubs are starting again, thanks to Abbi Lichtenstein, Chris Scanlon, Krista Middlebrooks, Joan Mahtesian and Sarah Osborne.

Another important contribution we can make to the school is to help support Woodlin's Green School initiatives. Once again, Linda Katz will be leading a Go Green Expo, this year featuring

hands-on activities designed to educate families on community needs, recycling and other environment-friendly skills we as parents can learn.

In that vein, we want to move in a bold new direction with the PTA newsletter this year. As you can imagine, monthly printed newsletters, distributed to hundreds of families, use thousands of pages of paper, gallons of ink, and vast amounts of electricity and volunteer energy. We seek to move to an electronic version this year, posted to the website and linked by the listserv.



**We hope to make this transition with the November newsletter. Of course, we recognize that the PTA belongs to ALL families, and that there are families at Woodlin without regular Internet access. To make sure we are able to reach all families, we are enclosing an opt-in form in this newsletter. If you wish to continue to receive a paper newsletter, please complete this form and send it in via backpack mail.**

**Thank you again for being a part of the Woodlin family and community - together, we prove that the whole is greater than the sum of our parts!**

**Chris Rutledge**

## The PTA is here for you

The Woodlin PTA wants to be sure that no matter what the national and cultural background of our students, as well as their special/ individual needs, that they and their caregivers are integrated as fully as possible into the tapestry of Woodlin life, socially as well as academically.

### *The PTA is here for you!!!*

If you are part of a nontraditional family such as a single parent, grandparent, lesbian/gay/bi/transgender parent, older sibling, etc and you would like to explore monthly get-togethers with others who struggle and overcome similar challenges in a safe and supportive environment, please contact the PTA outreach committee so we can set it up.

If you have a special needs child and would like to join a meeting with others who struggle and overcome similar challenges in a safe and supportive environment, please contact the PTA outreach committee so we can set it up.

If you have recently moved to this area and you would like to meet a family with children the same age as yours, please let us know so we can help.

If you have any other issue, or concern or idea, please sign up to join us. Please send me your name, email address, phone number and comments.

**Liora Moriel**  
**Chair, Woodlin PTA outreach committee**  
[lioram21@yahoo.com](mailto:lioram21@yahoo.com)



The Woodlin PTA email list serve is a place for Woodlin parents and staff to exchange information relevant to Woodlin Elementary, its PTA, and the surrounding community.

To subscribe to the list serve and start receiving emails, send an email to: [woodlnpt-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:woodlnpt-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

To remove your email from the group, send an email to [woodlnpt-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:woodlnpt-unsubscribe@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)

You can opt to receive either individual messages or daily digests of recent messages. To receive emails in digest form, send an email to [woodlnpt-digest@yahoogroups.com](mailto:woodlnpt-digest@yahoogroups.com). To switch back to individual emails, send to [woodlnpt-normal@yahoogroups.com](mailto:woodlnpt-normal@yahoogroups.com).

The list serve has an associated website at [groups.yahoo.com/group/woodlnpt](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/woodlnpt). Here you can change your subscriber options and view past messages and uploaded files.

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

**Sign your name on all your emails and list your association with Woodlin. For example: From Deb, mom to Jeannie in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.**

**Use "reply-all" when responding to a message only to clarify or add details to the original message. Otherwise, use "reply" to send a message to the original sender.**

**Avoid negative comments about individuals—even if that person is not a member of the list serve. Do not include the names of staff, parents, and especially Woodlin students when discussing sensitive issues.**

**Discussion of sensitive issues is allowed. However, disagree in a friendly and respectful manner and avoid speculation.**

**Do not use the list serve for political campaigning. Our PTA is exempt from federal income taxes because it is a non-partisan non-profit organization. It is fine, however, to talk about political issues.**

To view the complete PTA list serve guidelines, please visit the Woodlin PTA website at [www.woodlnpta.org](http://www.woodlnpta.org). Deb Ferrin, PTA List Serve Moderator [woodlnpt-owner@yahoogroups.com](mailto:woodlnpt-owner@yahoogroups.com)

### NAACP Parent Council meeting

Please join us for Woodlin's 1st NAACP Parent Council meeting of the school year. All Woodlin parents are welcome. The meeting will be held at Woodlin in the multi-purpose room on Monday, Oct. 11 at 6 pm. Dinner will be provided. Feel free to bring your children. Please RSVP by email to [robynseabrook@gmail.com](mailto:robynseabrook@gmail.com) or call Tommie at 301-257-4092 Hope to see you there!

If you are unable to attend but would like additional information or have questions about the Council, please contact Council Representatives, **Tommie Parker** ([tgoodpark@yahoo.com](mailto:tgoodpark@yahoo.com)) or **Robyn Seabrook** ([robynseabrook@gmail.com](mailto:robynseabrook@gmail.com)).

*Hispanic Heritage Month is Here*

Woodlin is celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM) from Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> through October 15<sup>th</sup> by focusing on the "faces" behind our Hispanic heritage. These are rock guitarist Carlos Santana, US Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, soccer star Carlos Bocanegra, astronaut and Johnson Space Center Deputy Director Ellen Ochoa and poet and author Julia Alvarez.

During HHM, the morning announcements may include information on the accomplishments and contributions of these individuals. The bulletin board close to the office entrance show cases these individuals while the world map in the hallway pinpoints the "roots" of our heritage. Woodlin will also be featuring events at the town hall meetings to celebrate HHM. Philip LoPiccolo will be playing the guitar with music by Santana on 9/20

- Professor Julie Green of the University of Maryland will be speaking about the Panama Canal on 9/27
- Woodlin students will be dancing the Colombian Cumbia on 10/04
- Tango dancers will be dancing on 10/11 (tentative)

In addition, a potluck dinner was planned for the Oct. 6 PTA meeting, and also slated to include a Capoeira, a Brazilian martial arts, presentation and workshop for the children.

**Marianne Hilgert**

## *Woodlin World Night*

Woodlin World Night is back by popular demand and will be held Saturday, Nov. 6 from 7-9 pm in the school's multi-purpose room.

It's a potluck, so we ask everyone to bring their favorite ethnic dish. In addition to delicious food, there will be a performance of singing, dancing and storytelling to celebrate Woodlin community's diverse heritages.

## *Thank you to breakfast organizers*

At the start of the school year, a number of parents jumped in to help make the August teacher appreciation breakfast a big success. Thanks to: Sangita Rao Leonard, Fida Adely, Krista Middlebrooks, Rachel Posell, Laura Hessburg, Noelle Kurtin, Lisa Tenley, Chris Scanlon, Karen Lee, Jane Curtin, Wynne Griffith, and Lynne Yao.

Thanks again for your wonderful food contributions ... the teachers and staff really appreciate your efforts!

**Monica Kerns**

# Join the Woodlin PTA!!!

If you haven't already, please join the Woodlin PTA.

One of the best things about Woodlin is the active involvement of parents in the PTA and its many activities.

**Membership dues are only \$10 a person** – you must rejoin and pay dues each year.

Parent/Guardian

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade/Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Please return this form with cash or check (payable to Woodlin PTA) in your child's backpack addressed to PTA Membership.**

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### IMPORTANT!!

The Woodlin PTA is going green. Future PTA newsletters will be delivered via the PTA Web site. Notifications will be sent out via the listserve when the monthly newsletter is available.

- Saves many hours of volunteer time copying
- Saves a lot of paper & money
- The newsletter looks better on-line because it's in color

If you still prefer to receive your newsletter in paper form, you **MUST** complete the below form and return it via backpack mail.



\_\_\_\_\_ I want to still receive the paper copy of the newsletter.

Child's Name (youngest at Woodlin)

\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_

Your name

\_\_\_\_\_

**Questions? Contact Mary Boyle at [mlb718@aol.com](mailto:mlb718@aol.com)**

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