



ORCA

WEEKLY BULLETIN

September 16, 2008

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September

- 18 – PTSA General Mtg & Potluck 6:00pm potluck, 7:00pm mtg
22 – After School Programs Catalogs sent home
24 – Professional Development 1:15pm – Early Dismissal
26 – After School Programs Registration Due
26 – School Picture Day! Order forms due

October

- 02 – Curriculum Night
06 – Open Mic at Starbucks
06 – After School Programs Begin
07 – PTSA Board Meeting 7 pm Orca library
10 – Professional Development NO SCHOOL
13 – Leadership Council Mtg 7 pm
16 – PTSA GM/Race Forum Kick Off
13-17 – 6th grade Camp to OPI



THOUGHTS FROM KOICHI

Welcome back Orcans!! I hope your first weeks have been fruitful and full of discovery. And I also hope that you and your student have set some goals and are making plans on how you will accomplish the work. Being involved and engaged in your child's learning is the PTSA Board's first priority. Through community building activities, thorough communication and shared decision making, we hope to extend our reach to more parents and kids this year. Please share with us your ideas on how we can accomplish this. We have a few ideas, but your ideas are fresh and innovative.

In the meantime, please attend our first PTSA General Meeting on September 18th at 6pm. We will kick things off with a potluck and an ice breaker game. This is a great opportunity to meet the board and other families. It is also a great time to check out how to get involved with the PTSA. As you know, or will quickly learn, Orca depends heavily on parent involvement – it's what makes our school so unique! Let's continue this tradition of parent involvement and shared decision making. At 7pm, k-5 kids will be dismissed to child care and we will have a general meeting which will cover basic topics, announcements and updates from Ben. The meeting will end at 8pm.

As with last year, The PTSA will continue the "Don't swim alone, be herd" campaign. This play on words recognizes that not all feel that they belong to our community, but allows the doors to stay open to a place where we all can safely voice our thoughts, ideas and opinions. Please help me chant this mantra through the corridors, on the playground and in

your meetings with other parents. Together we will keep the walls down and the awareness up. Together, we will be aware.

With this in mind, the Board will continue its efforts to reinforce communication by making points of communication available to all. As a parent, your first point of communication anytime you have a question or concern should be your teacher...however, if you feel you have a concern that you would like to bring in front of an audience of parents and teachers, please bring this thought to your designated PTSA VP. Each grade band has been assigned a VP whose specific job is to receive feedback and ideas and make sure that they are heard ("herd"). We are continuing the Leadership Council (LC) this year. The LC consists of board members and teachers. We meet monthly and the agenda consists of current events which require joint decision making. All are welcome including middle school students.

In my second year as PTSA president and my 5th year as an Orcan parent, I will be mainly focusing on leadership, fundraising and male parent involvement. It is my intent to ensure that any program/event that we launch or conduct under my leadership will remain sustainable for years to come. I believe that we have the resources within this community to make this happen. Please stand-by for further announcements as to how to get involved with these plans.

Just before school started, my family and I went to see "Shrek the Musical" at the 5th Avenue Theater. With a little more detail than the movie, this hilarious show starts out with a little boy being sent off into the world on his own to fend for himself and deal with life's nuisances. Armed with only the education and culture he received from his parents, he does very well until one day when he is asked for help and protection. Thinking only of himself, he reluctantly obliges. As you know, in the end, Shrek the once lonely ogre discovers the satisfaction of selfless volunteering and community. I don't think there are any ogres out there...but if you're waiting for an opportunity to visit the land of "Far, Far Away" in hopes of a happy ending, then we have a spot for you.

As always, I'd like to thank Ben and his team for their openness and cooperation to truly make this alternative education opportunity which allows parents to engage and be a part of the learning experience with their child. Next I want to thank my team, The Board, for their dedication to create a welcoming environment for all. As you know, 80% of my team followed me from last year...(crazy right?)...this will help ensure the continuity needed to make progress from years past. And finally I want to thank my wife **Robin** and my 4th grader **Mika** for allowing me to serve you. It's only with their help and sacrifice that I can go to meetings, talk with teachers and parents and spend time at the school. Thank you all.

Please make an effort to find me on the 18th and introduce yourself. If not, then some time over email or phone soon. Thank you!

Koichi Kitazumi
kkitazum@starbucks.com

206.856.0571
"Don't swim alone, be herd"

Thursday, September 18 is the All School PTSA Family Potluck. Join us from 6:00 to 8:00 or so for great food, a chance to say hello to everyone, and help kick off a new school year.

And please don't forget to sign in! There will be a sign-in at the lunchroom!

🌟* ANNOUNCEMENTS 🦴

We are heading into the 2nd full week of school with an additional challenge. This weekend **Tanisha Brandon-Felder** made the difficult decision not to return to teaching. A letter from her follows this message. Tanisha has been a vital member of the Orca community for the last decade, and her departure will leave a big hole. For the next few weeks, we will be focusing on the immediate need to provide a replacement in Room 208. When things settle down a little we will have to bring her back for a celebration of all she has given to Orca over the years.

On a more uplifting note, 3rd grade teacher **Phi Ho Le** received a Heroes in the Classroom Award last week. He was presented with his award on Friday in front of his class, and was recognized at half time of Sunday's Seahawks game. The presenters cited the way Phi Ho creates a classroom that feels like students' second home, his high expectations, and the many ways in which he communicates his love for them. Orca has a staff full of great teachers, and Phi Ho's recognition reminds me how fortunate we are to have them working so hard every day on behalf of our children.

-Ben Ostrom

To The Families of Room 208

I want to thank you for your patience as the year starts. An ideal year has a stable teacher, a great group of students, and a wonderfully set up classroom space. Two out of three occurred this year and I apologize for my part in that.

After my certificate issues, and with the forced time out of the classroom, I had to make some decisions about what I wanted to do. A lot has happened to me over the last 2 years: a death, a birth, a book, and two teenage sons. I have not had the chance I needed to stop and catch up, and I really need to. My priority is my family, right now, and in particular my 15 month old daughter. The value of establishing a strong foundation so that children have greater chances at success has become clear to me.

So, I have made the difficult decision to leave Orca. I had not been planning on this move. It has come after lots of thinking and reflecting on what's best right now for me and my family. It is not easy for me to say goodbye. It has been a 10 year journey for me at Orca. Like all things familiar and close, I will miss it dearly.

What I will miss most of all is losing the chance to get to know your children. I know you will have strong feelings about this decision, and I know you will wonder about what will happen next. Please know that a strong teacher will teach your child and that they will receive an outstanding year with great experiences.

Sincerely,
Tanisha Brandon-Felder



Instrumental Music is Starting!

Our instrumental music program is expanding! In addition to offering lessons for students in grades four and five, we will also be offering lessons and ensembles as a middle school elective. Learning an instrument strengthens academics, fosters teamwork and teaches discipline. Plus, it's fun! Our program this year will be taught by Orca parent Deb Schaaf.

Parents and guardians of students grades 4 through 7, please look for instrumental music enrollment forms this week. Completed forms will be due Tuesday, September 16. Questions? Contact Deb Schaaf at 323-9023 or deschaaf@seattleschools.org.

Do you have a musical instrument collecting dust in your home? Please consider donating it to our growing music program! Donations are tax-deductible. For more information, contact Deb Schaaf at deschaaf@seattleschools.org or 323-9023.



VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR NEWS...

WE HAVE ONE ANNUAL FUND CHAIR BUT STILL LOOKING FOR A CO-CHAIR!

Susan King (Tuesday's Mom) has stepped up for one of the Annual Fund Co-Chair roles; thanks Susan! This is a big task and requires two people to organize it and the rest of us to help make it work! Please consider stepping up and joining Susan in making this year's Annual Fund a big success!

PLAYGROUND MONITORS FOR THIS THURSDAY'S (9/18) PTSA MEETING~ I'm looking for about six parents who would rather be on the playground watching and playing with the kids than going to the PTSA meeting! The 2nd graders and older will be on the playground during the meeting. We need some parents to keep them all safe and maybe set up an organized activity or two.

COME LEND A HAND TO ORCA-FY OUR SCHOOL! There is still some work to be done to "Orca-fy" our new building! One of our next tasks is stenciling the doors. If you want to throw on your paint clothes and help **Phyllis**, she will be stenciling beginning this Monday.

Here are the dates and times:

Monday September 15	9am to 12pm
Tuesday September 16	1pm to 6pm
Friday September 19	ALL DAY (9-3)

So if you can help out during any of those times; for all or part of the time, just show up and follow the paint smell and you will find Phyllis!

SOME OTHER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES; MAYBE ONE OF THEM WILL WORK FOR YOU!

PTSA BOARD ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Assist the Board Secretary (Flora) with various jobs including note taking at meetings and acting as back up when needed. (please!)

BUDGET AND FINANCE TEAM LEAD: (and members): This team works with the PTSA Treasurer to create a yearly budget and work on a five-year financial plan. If crunching numbers and having financial vision are part of your repertoire, come join the fun!

STUDENT BANKING LIAISON: Be available one hour or so per week to receive and tabulate money from the students. You will then deposit the money and help them learn the joy of saving and watching their money grow!

SPECIAL ED RESOURCE READING ASSISTANT: **Michelle Kaufman**, our Special Ed Resource Teacher, is looking for some parents who can assist students during the first forty minutes of the day. You would be assisting students while they work on computer reading programs, perform some timing tasks and charting. You can volunteer one morning a week or all five, whatever works for you! If you are interested, contact Michelle at: mekaufman@seattleschools.org or 252-6900.

AND MANY, MANY THANKS TO.....

Mike Leitner, Paul Talbert and Lisa Maynard who worked hard to move all of the furniture that was cluttering the hallway the day before school started! They transformed the place!

All of the parents and kids who helped get the first day packets stuffed and ready to go: **Irene Stupka and Echo, Koichi Kitazumi and Mika, Sauda Porter and Joi, Suzanne Wastier, Mikala Woodward and Flora Fleet.**

All of the parents and kids who came in the day before school and helped teachers get their classrooms ready; I don't have your names but wanted to send out a blanket "thanks" anyway!

I won't always throw this much at you, but there are many roles to be filled at the beginning of the year! If you want to volunteer for or find out any more information about any of the above opportunities, just get in touch with me!

Deb Koon, Volunteer Coordinator debkoon@comcast.net/723-7444



FUNDRAISING NEWS!

We are pleased to announce that Orca will be one of the first schools on the West Coast to participate in an amazing new fundraiser through Global Goods Partners. Please stop by our table at the first PTSA Meeting, Thurs Sept 18th to learn more about this exciting new opportunity to support Orca as well as communities in need around the world through online purchases of handmade goods. A representative from Global Goods Partners will be on hand to speak with us about this great organization as well as to share with us samples and information about the products available for purchase through their website. To get a sneak peak, visit www.globalgoodspartners.org.

ESCRIP: In other news, anytime you shop at Safeway between 9/12-10/06 our school can receive 10% cash back on your purchases! If you have already registered your Safeway Club Card, there is no need to do anything, your purchases will automatically be calculated and the funds deposited into our account! If you have not yet registered your Safeway Club Card, our school can still benefit from your shopping during this promotional period. Simply save your receipts and turn them into the box in the school office. You do not have to have a child at Orca to participate in this program, so please encourage friends and family to join in collecting receipts and registering their cards. This is a great opportunity for big \$ with little effort. To take advantage of this 10% back- to- school promotion, we will have a booth at the Mt Baker Safeway on Rainier Avenue **Saturday September 27th from 10:00am - 3:00pm.** We're seeking two individuals to join

Orca gets out the vote.

As you no doubt know, we will soon be electing a new president, governor, representative and many more officials. In an effort to get as near to 100% voter participation a voter registration table will be appearing Fridays before and after school near the north entrance. It's easy and pain-free to register. This is a non-partisan undertaking with the simple goal of encouraging all eligible voters to participate in our most essential role as members of a democracy. For those who want to take things a step further, we will also facilitate anyone who wants to register any unregistered family members, neighbors, etc. I think 100% participation is possible; "if you don't vote, you don't count", but first you have to register!

us in registering shoppers in the store that day. There are two shifts available 10:00-12:30, 12:30-3:00. If you would like to be part of this exciting day, please contact Sabranie at 206-721-7998 or email sabranie@hotmail.com.

Orca Rocks the House!

PCC Scrip totaled over **\$5000.00** in proceeds for Orca over the past school year! Not bad for our first year! 5% of PCC grocery sales go to Orca PTSA when you use your scrip card. If you are a PCC shopper please consider a scrip card. In the event the magnetic strip gets demagnetized or you need a replacement or extras just contact the Fundraising Committee. We'll want to order a batch early in the school year, so if you are interested contact Sabranie Coyne at Sabranie@hotmail.com. Thanks!

News from Community & Parents for Public Schools of Seattle (CPPS)...

Gear Up in Your Cluster: CPPS Ambassadors Can Help Every School Connect

This fall, Seattle parents are gearing up in three regions - central, northwest, and southeast - to support their community's schools, and improve neighborhood outreach, communication, and advocacy. We welcome new participants, and are looking forward to reporting on some exciting developments.

Central Cluster: Mon, Oct. 6, 7pm at Madrona K-8

Northwest Cluster: September TBA

Southeast Cluster: Mon. Oct. 13, 7pm at Mercer MS

With the new school year getting in gear, now is the perfect time to sign on as a CPPS ambassador to represent your school or neighborhood community. Join others in your region three times per year to share school needs and triumphs, engage the community, and help advocate for quality schools. To learn more about the program, contact [Stephanie Jones](mailto:stephaniej@cppssofseattle.org) stephaniej@cppssofseattle.org or [Anne Forester](mailto:anneforester@cppssofseattle.org) annef@cppssofseattle.org.

Stay tuned to hear more about what's going on in your community.

A QUICK NOTE ABOUT THE WEEKLY BULLETIN:

Please let your classroom coordinators know whether you would like to receive the weekly bulletin via email or hard copy. Thank you!

And one last reminder about the PTSA General Meeting this Thursday, Sept 18!

Time: 6pm-8pm

Potluck: BYOP (bring your own plate and cup)

Childcare will be provided

Hope to see you there!

Don't forget to sign in!

ABOUT THE BULLETIN: *The Weekly Bulletin is distributed on paper and electronically every Tuesday. Archived Bulletins are available at [Hwww.orcapta.org](http://www.orcapta.org). If you have something to add, please send information to Hannouncements@orcapta.org. Thanks for reading the fine print, and have a fabulous year!*