



Branching Out News from Maplewood



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At a Glance

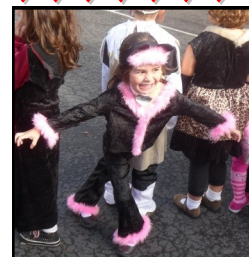
- Nov. 10 New Math Program viewed at PPS headquarters (See p. 5)
- Nov. 11 Veteran's Day (NO SCHOOL)
- Nov. 22 New Math Programs viewed at Maplewood (See p.5)
- Nov. 22-24 Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Nov. 25 Thanksgiving (NO SCHOOL)
- Nov. 26 Down Day (NO SCHOOL)
- Nov. 30 Picture Retakes
- Dec. 1 PTA Meeting
- Dec. 2 Grading Period Ends
- Dec. 3 Teacher Planning Day (NO SCHOOL)

Walking School Buses and Parent Coffees in the cafeteria take place EVERY Thursday.

Volunteer Coordinator

Needed: The PTA Board is seeking a Volunteer Coordinator for the 2011-2012. This person works closely with the PTA Board, committees, Foundation, and other groups in fulfilling volunteer opportunities in the school. The majority of the positions have been filled for 2010-2011 school year, so this person will be mainly focusing on 2011-2012, filling vacancies and helping parents and community members get more involved in the school.

Interested? Contact Jill Brown-Young, PTA President, jillyb4@me.com or 997-7575.



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Do You Like Our Halloween Parade?

Mr. Blanck fields many questions about our annual Halloween parade. These questions range from religious belief issues to the loss of teaching time during the parade and party.

Check in with John to let him know how **you** feel about the Halloween parade and party.



PTA News (minutes are published in full) Nov. 3, 2010



6:30 Call to Order – Jill Brown-Young, Alisa Castellano, Lori Hesse, Shannon Kimmel

Attendance: 19

Financial Report – Alisa

Carnival is \$618 over budget (income). We will also receive \$175 back from the bounce house and get a discount next year.

Used Book Sale money still trickling in. \$623 over budget!

Pupil Enrichment \$300 for each teacher will be going out this week.

Sandy Samuel and Eva Coefield did the audit this year. Thank you. If you are interested in helping with the audit next year, please contact Alisa Castellano.

Principal Report

Run for Maplewood last week – initial count was about \$2,000 raised and might be double that when we get the final monies in.

Teachers have lost about 20% of planning time during the week because we lost 1/2 time PE and music teachers this year. We are working on ideas on how to get a little time back for their prep and planning.

Staff is working on writing with the students.

John may offer a 1/2 hour class before PTA meetings for parents on how to help their kids with writing.

Flu issues - Stomach flu going around. Please have your kids wash their hands. Keep your child home if they are ill or you think they may be ill.

Halloween –Principals from other schools have questions regarding our Halloween parade each, for example religious beliefs, loss of teaching time for parade and party. We encourage parents to let John know how they feel about the Halloween parade and party.

New Principal - There might be a community meeting in January or February to talk about what we want in a principal.

TEACHER REPORT:

All teachers enjoyed the Halloween parade and party. Teachers are feeling extra pressure – time has been

taken away from them. Pick something positive that is happening with your child and let your teachers know that you appreciate them and what they do.

EVENTS/FUNDRAISERS – See individual committee reports in newsletter for more information and contact.

Playground committee met to talk about what to spend the last monies in the account for: boulders for climbing near the playground, benches around the big tree in front of the school, art project mosaic tiles, etc. If you have ideas, please submit them to Jim Battan.

PTA Membership is at 95 members. 5 short of our goal of 100 families. If you haven't filled out your PTA envelope, you can find them in the office.

Wreaths – Flyers will come out toward the end of November for holiday wreaths.

Box Tops – Kari submitted \$150 in box top money. There will be a Civil War box top challenge coming soon. Who will gather the most box tops? Ducks or Beavers?

Book Fair – Gift certificates are being sold now. Book Fair will be in the music room this year. There will be plenty of signage directing people where to go. Family Night event this year is a "free buffet" on Thursday, November 18th with an all American/Red White and Blue theme. Finger foods and buffet type food donations are needed.

NEW BUSINESS

Volunteer Coordinator needed - Please let Jill Brown know if you are interested in being the Volunteer Coordinator next school year. You will get to work alongside Jill for the rest of this year to get to know the position before the 2011/2012 year.

Lori & Jill will be leaving the board as President and Vice President of the PTA. If you or anyone you know is interested in either of these positions, please contact Lori Hesse. If you are interested in being on the nomination committee please contact Lori as well.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25



Committee Updates & Information

Maplewood Neighborhood Association

Meet new neighbors and learn more about the Maplewood Neighborhood Association at our annual dessert potluck on Monday, December 6th at 7:00 p.m. at the Friends Church on 52nd St. across from the school. Bring a dessert to share. Children are welcome.

Contact: Ronda Zakocs, rzakocs@bu.edu.

Walk & Bike to School

Thursday walking school buses are still running until November 18th. After November 18, we still encourage folks to walk to school on Thursdays, but there will be no designated parent leaders. We'll resume the Thursday walking school bus routes next April. Watch for Celebrate the Earth Walk on April 22, 2011. Walk + Bike continues to advocate for making our community more walkable.

Interested? Contact Ronda Zakocs, rzakocs@bu.edu or Nancy Upton, cnupton@msn.org

Chess Club

The Maplewood Chess Club meets Fridays from 2:15 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the library. Two sessions are offered. Space is limited to 30 students each session. There is no fee for participation, however a parent or guardian is *required* to sign up to help supervise one or two Fridays when the club meets.

Participating students must return a permission slip to keep on file. Forms went home last week.

Contacts: Leah Johnson, 503-504-2070 or Rankin Johnson, 503-504-2060, rankiniv@gmail.com

The Green Team

We received some disturbing news regarding Maplewood's energy use. It is up ... way up. Sadly, we are the only elementary school in the district that has not reduced its energy. This may be a result of some equipment in the modular classrooms being installed last year, but even so we need to reduce our energy use.

We are eligible for a \$2,000 prize from PPS Conservation initiative if we can decrease our energy use 2% lower than last March by March. This is a lot of money for a little effort... and it's good for Mother Nature at the same time.

To help remind everyone to do their part, we will come to each classroom and put "please turn me off" signs on computers and light switches. We will also address recycling and have the students put signs on their recycling boxes and garbage cans. Watch for the signs, and please watch your energy use!

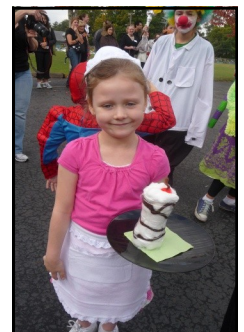
The Green Team, with the help of DEQ, will be putting up two signs in front of Maplewood that read:

"Idle-Free Zone. Turn Engine Off. Young Lungs at Work."

According to DEQ, idling your vehicle no longer than 30 seconds will drastically improve the air our children breathe and improve the air quality of our neighborhood.

For more information from DEQ, go to <http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/index.cfm?c=34771&a=131195>

Thank you for your help and support!



Scholastic Book Fair

We will be holding a Book Fair Family Night again this year on Thursday, Nov. 18. We need finger foods for our "Salute to Heroes" buffet. We would appreciate "All-American" finger foods like cocktail wieners or red/white/blue finger foods. Please contact Amy Manning at aw233@cornell.edu by Nov. 12 if you have something to contribute.

You can also still place orders for Book Fair gift certificates ("all merchandise" or "books only" in the amount of your choice) and "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" No. 5. Please note that "Wimpy Kid" orders must be placed by Nov. 5 to guarantee a copy; we will have extra copies at the fair but they will be first-come first-serve if you have not placed an order. To place a gift certificate or "Wimpy Kid" order, contact Nancy Upton at cnupton@msn.com.

Books from the Book Fair make great for holiday gifts and benefit your school.

Don't Let the Holidays Waste the Planet

Marie Gettel-Gilmartin

Did you know?

Americans throw away 25% more trash between Thanksgiving and New Years Day? That adds up to an additional 1 million tons a week going to the landfills.¹ December 24 and 25 generate 3 billion extra tons of garbage each year.²

Gift wrap and shopping bags generate 4 million tons of trash annually, and most are not recyclable.³ Half of the paper consumed in the U.S. is for wrapping and decorating consumer products.⁴

The 2.65 million holiday cards sold each year in the U.S. could fill a football field 10 stories high.¹

At least 28 billion pounds of edible food are wasted each year (over 100 pounds per person).¹

About 40% of all batteries are sold during the holidays.⁵



What can I do to reduce my holiday waste?

Send holiday cards by e-mail or use electronic greetings. If everyone sent one less card, we'd save 50,000 cubic yards of paper.¹ Reuse holiday cards by creating gift tags.

Use newspaper, children's artwork, or fabric bags for gift wrap. If every American family wrapped three presents in reused materials, it would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields.⁶

Forgo the ribbon, or reuse it. If every family reused 2 feet of holiday ribbon, the 38,000 miles of ribbon saved could tie a bow around the entire planet?¹

Shop wisely. Take reusable shopping bags when you go shopping. Purchase gifts with minimal packaging or ones that don't use batteries.

Use less energy. Drive less and combine trips: if each family used 1 less gallon of gas during the holidays, we'd reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 1 million tons.¹ Encourage carpooling to holiday events. Use LED lights to reduce 90% of energy consumption.

Cut back on gift giving (see Page 6 for more ways to simplify your holidays). Ask your friends and family to participate in "[the Hundred Dollar Holiday](#)," started by environmentalist Bill McKibben and friends (participants limit holiday spending to \$100). A national survey found that 70% of Americans would welcome less emphasis on gift giving and spending.⁷

Produce less waste while entertaining. Send leftover food home with guests or donate to a shelter. Set up recycling stations at holiday events. Use cloth napkins and durable goods instead of paper and plastic. Offer water in pitchers rather than bottled water.

¹www.use-less-stuff.com/ULSDAY/42ways.html

²www.sunset.com/home/sustainable-holiday-00400000033070/

³ <http://earth911.com/recycling/paper/wrapping-paper/facts-about-recycling-wrapping-paper/>

⁴www.eco-action.net/pollution.html

⁵www.epa.gov/osw/wywd/funfacts/winter.htm

⁶eco-chick.com/2006/11/599/eco-wrapping/

⁷www.newdream.org/holiday/stats.php

School Benefit Day at Thinker Toys

On December 1 and 2 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thinker Toys will donate 15% of your purchase to the school of your choice. When checking out, simply let them know you would like your purchase to go toward to Maplewood.

Thinker Toys is located at 7784 SW Capitol Hwy. in Multnomah Village. For more information and a video tour of the store, visit <http://www.thinkertoysoregon.com/>.

Contacts: Joan & Tye Steinbach, Thinker Toys, 503-245-3936

OR Beth Blenz-Clucas, Sugar Mountain PR , (503) 293-9498 beth@sugarmountainpr.com

New Math Program

PPS will be adopting a new math program, and parent comments are welcomed at one of two display opportunities:

- 3:45 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the PPS main headquarters Nov. 11
- 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Nov. 22 at Maplewood and several other schools

Two programs being considered. Books and materials for each option will be displayed.

More information is available at:

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/news/4665.htm>



Library Corner



OPAC (online patron access catalog)

Remember, students can renew books at home. They need their eSIS number and can log in at <http://library.pps.k12.or.us>. While you are there you can browse the collection to look for ideas for your child's "next book" to check out.

IRA - Children's Choice Award

Maplewood was invited to participate in the national Children's Choice Book Award process (thanks to Maplewood parent David Ward). Publishers sent copies of their best new books to two organizations (The International Reading Association and The Children's Book Council) to distribute to 10 sites around the nation. Over 2,500 kids at each site will have access to these books and to give their input. We are one of a handful of schools here in Portland participating.

It has been terrific having access to these possible award winners and newly published books. One fourth grader found his first "hook" book in the pile and is now turned on to independent pleasure reading. Hurrah!

OBOB (Oregon Battle of the Books)

"Overview: The Oregon Battle of the Books is a state-wide reading motivation and comprehension program

sponsored by the Oregon Association of School Librarians in conjunction with a Library Services and Technology Act grant. Students, regardless of ability, are exposed to quality literature representing a variety of literary styles and viewpoints. The goals of the program are to encourage and recognize students who enjoy reading, broaden reading interests, increase reading comprehension, and promote academic excellence.

Lists of books are chosen and questions are written for elementary and middle school. Students read the books, discuss them, quiz each other on the contents, and then compete in teams of four students to correctly answer questions based on the books in a "quiz show" format. Questions may begin with the words "In which book..." so that the answer will be a title and author or it may be a content question with the title of the book supplied. Teams may participate at local, district, regional, and state levels of competition.

An attempt is made to vary the titles chosen according to genre and difficulty so that readers may encounter a broad range of books." (from the OBOB web site.)

Books titles have been introduced to Maplewood 3rd-5th graders and "contracts" have been distributed to interested students (grades 4-5, grades 3 soon.) More copies are available in the library.

**As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns (Elin Kordahl
kordahl@pps.k12.or.us)**

10 Ways to Simplify the Holidays

By Marie Gettel-Gilmartin

The holidays are fast approaching. Did you know that the average American household spends \$1,700 on holiday gifts and accessories each year¹ and carries credit card debt of \$15,788²? Furthermore, the holidays can be a particularly stressful time of year, especially for women and people with lower incomes.³ Here is some good news, though: people can feel more love and happiness during the holiday season because they connect or reconnect with loved ones.³

One secret to creating more happy moments and minimizing your holiday stress is to simplify your holiday traditions. You can start planning stress-free holidays now by making lists and organizing your family's gift giving and traditions. Here are 10 ideas to consider:

Gift giving

Draw names for gifts or plan a yankee swap. I have a large extended family, and my cousins and I used to buy gifts for all of our children. Now we have the kids draw names, while the adults do a yankee swap.³

Shop local. I like shopping in Multnomah Village so I can get my gifts wrapped for free. Or support Maplewood by purchasing scrip, coffee, or Scholastic books!

Make your own gifts. You don't have to spend a lot of money to give wonderful, personal gifts. How about a cookbook with your family's recipes, a tree ornament, or a photo calendar? Search the library or the internet for easy handmade gifts you can make with your kids. Making gifts can save you a lot of money, and the gifts are much more personal.

Give experiences instead of physical gifts. Last year we gave our two oldest children tickets to see "Rain" (the Beatles tribute band). Other ideas are theater tickets, restaurant gift certificates, sports events, trips to the beach or mountains, or movie tickets.

Give a donation instead of a gift. You could consider donating to a charity in lieu of gifts (this is especially easy for spouses). We like [Interplast](#), [Mercy Corps](#), [Oregon Food Bank](#), [Medical Teams International](#), [Water For People](#), and [Pennies for Peace](#). A few years ago my sister and her family signed up to sponsor three children (matching their children's ages) in developing countries through [World Vision](#).

Holiday traditions

Give back to your community. Local organizations look for people to sponsor needy families. Try the [Salvation Army](#), St. Vincent de Paul, or [Lutheran Community Services NW](#). Or surf [Hands On Portland's comprehensive Web site](#) to find a volunteer idea that fits your family. The [Children's Book Bank](#) is a great local charity that is always seeking volunteers and donations.

Plan low-stress holiday events. Can you say "potluck"? It's the most beautiful word in the holiday dictionary. If you host gatherings, ask guests to bring a food or beverage to reduce your time and cash outlay. Or plan a cookie exchange with friends.

Look for opportunities to spend quality family time. We always go to the [Macy's Holiday Parade](#) downtown (and it's especially fun now that our Robert Gray Middle School student marches in it!). It's a great way to start the holidays. We also like to go out into the sticks to choose a tree and stop by a McMenamian's afterward.

Take in some great Portland entertainment. Check out Northwest Children's Theater Company's production of "Annie," [Portland Center Stage's](#) "A Christmas Story" and "The Santaland Diaries," or the Northwest Dance Company's [Nutcracker Tea](#) (a family-friendly, less-expensive, and condensed "Nutcracker"). Have you experienced traditional British pantomime? You don't have to leave Portland to partake in this hilarious tradition. "[Holly Jolly Hullabaloo](#)" is great fun. And it's FREE, FREE, FREE! (Can you tell how much our family likes the theater?). Pioneer Courthouse Square hosts a holiday ale fest, a holiday artisan market, the "Tuba Christmas," and a Christmas Carol singalong, in addition to tree and menorah lighting.

Spread out the fun. Who says that the holidays have to end on Dec. 9 (Chanukkah) or 25 (Christmas)? Our family has celebrated Boxing Day (the day after Christmas) with a tea party. We leave our tree up until Epiphany and continue my husband's family tradition of leaving our shoes under the tree so the "three kings" can put a small gift in them. Some companies plan holiday parties in January when it's less chaotic. Think about ways you could spread out your celebrations.

Here are some more resources:

<http://www.newdream.org/holiday/>

<http://fun.familyeducation.com/holidays-and-seasonal-events/stress/35214.html>

<http://christmas.organizedhome.com/simplify-your-holidays>

<http://www.squidoo.com/green-your-holidays>

Sources:

¹www.economist.com/node/8336489?story_id=8336489

²www.creditcards.com/credit-card-news/credit-card-industry-facts-personal-debt-statistics-1276.php

³www.greenbergresearch.com/index.php?ID=1843

⁴www.yankeeswap.com/yankee-swap-rules.php

Library Volunteers

Thank you to the many, many library volunteers. Parents are helping with almost every class. They are checking out books while I scurry about answering questions that otherwise may go unanswered! Even more parents drop in to shelve books, making sure popular titles make it back to the shelves as soon as possible for another child to check out.

Maplewood is a terrific community.
Thank you for your support.

--Elin (503-916-6308, kordahl@pps.k12.or.us)

Did You Know?

Thursday's Parent Coffees also have tea available for anyone who is avoiding caffeine.

Holiday Wreaths

Attached is the order form for holiday wreaths, poinsettias, and planters order form. Please return your prepaid order form to the office by the firm deadline of Friday, November 19th. The items will be available for pickup after school on Tuesday, November 30th.

If you did not order last year, don't miss out!

BIG Thanks

The PTA board would like to express great thanks to Anna Taff for her outstanding leadership putting together the carnival this year. Everyone had a wonderful time.

Drama Club

Once again Young Players will offer drama classes at Maplewood. The winter session is 2:20 p.m. - 3:20 p.m. every Thursday from Jan. 20 to Mar. 10. The cost is \$89 per student; \$99 after Jan. 13 for late registration.

Classes fill up quickly. Permission slips went home in backpack mail last week. Registration can also be done online at www.theyoungplayers.com.

Contact: Janea, 503-624-7499 or info@theyoungplayers.com

Party Boards

Q: What is a party board?

A Someone agrees to host a party (hosts pays for all expenses) and others buy a spot to attend the party. Maplewood receives 100% of the profit. We are in need of winter party board hosts who can throw a party between December and March. Co-hosting is a great way to share the fun and expense of a party. Almost anything can be a party board so please consider hosting one.

Contacts: Kari Weakland at weakland3@msn.com or Shannon Kimmel at shannon_kimmel@yahoo.com

Kudos From The Green Team

- ~ Thanks to the chair of the communications committee for making the directory available in pdf format
- ~ Thanks to Anna Taff and the carnival committee for their willingness to make adjustments to help "green" the event
- ~ Thanks to Ronda Zakocs for taking the lead on recycling at the carnival
- ~ Thanks to all the Green Team members who made contributions to the Green Team raffle basket

