



Paw Prints

Letter from the PTA President *Derby Pattengill*

Hello Benchley Weinberger!

My name is Derby Pattengill. I am a stay at home dad with a 4th grader (Pete) and a second grader (Lily). I am right now at my computer faced with a PTA newsletter deadline. Not only is a piece due, but a piece for the President's Message. All I can think is "whoa, what just happened?" As a new parent 5 years ago, my knowledge of PTA was strictly based on TV stereotypes. I'm not PTA material, I thought. I like cars, low brow art and loud music. Well somehow, I stumbled into a meeting, observed for a time, volunteered for a few things to help out, was elected secretary, later EVP and now president. I mention this not to talk about myself, but to showcase something that truly makes Benchley Weinberger great; parent involvement and volunteerism. This along with great students and a dynamic staff, make this school one of the top schools in the county. With that said, we the BW PTA welcome new and returning parents to the 2009-2010 school year.

The PTA has been busy all summer to get September going with a bang. Members Regina Young and Christy Walsingham welcomed the teachers and staff back to school with a luncheon on September 3rd. The dynamic duo were at it again the first day of school to welcome parents with coffee and bagels on the breezeway. Thank you Hospitality! Right as school begins we head right into the PTA book fair(9/10-9-17), volunteer orientation(9/15), and curriculum night(9/16). The end of September brings us Back to School Night on the 25th. This PTA sponsored event has a sports theme and provides an opportunity for BW families to get together for an evening of spirit building, with dinner, games and dancing. This busy September only prepares you for October where we begin our Reflections student art show and host that Fall juggernaut we like to call, The Halloween Happening.

I am looking forward to a great year at Benchley Weinberger. I am honored to lead the BW PTA this year as I am humbled and awed by the work of the dedicated parents and staff of this school. If you already volunteer at school, I thank you for making a difference in our children's lives. If you have yet to volunteer, I encourage you to do so as the reward is so worth it! If you have the desire, we will find a job for you. Go ahead. Make my Day. Feel free to contact me via phone, computer or person with questions, concerns or even praise with regards to PTA business. Better yet, plan to attend our first general meeting on October 13th @6:00pm in the auditorium.

As a special bonus for reading my letters, each month, the first non PTA Board person to see me and mention my Clint Eastwood reference in Paw Prints wins a prize.

Derby Pattengill
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Message from the Foundation President *Drew Smith*

I hope you all had a great summer!

Now that school is in full swing I want to welcome all new students and all returning students and their families. This is going to be a great year and I hope you all enjoy it. The money the Foundation has raised has gone to building a new shade structure, purchasing document cameras, funding the music and art programs. Our future projects include putting a drinking fountain and shade structure on the upper playground and continued support of the art and music programs.

The Foundation will be changing our fundraising efforts this year. We will be doing the tile projects and hope to tile the school and library. Look for the flier in your child's, red folder. *(Continued on page 3)*

Letter from the Principal

September 2009



Calendar Highlights

Sept. 8—First day of school

Sept. 10-17—Book Fair (see flier for times)

Sept. 15—Volunteer Orientation 7:45 AM, Foundation Meeting 6:30 PM

Sept 16—Curriculum Night (6:30 grades K-2; 7:15 grades 3-5)

Sept. 25—Back to School Night, Spirit Assembly

Oct. 13—PTA Meeting 6:00 PM

Dear Families,

I would like to welcome everyone back for a new and exciting school year. There is some new district policies and school information for the upcoming school year that I would like to make you aware of:

- **NEW Bell Schedule on Wednesdays.** Students will be dismissed at 11:45.
- The district has implemented a new policy for students to eat lunch on Wednesdays. Students can buy lunch, bring a sack lunch, bring a snack to eat during this time or wait until they go home to have lunch.
- New forms in the Facts for Parents Handbook that need to be returned to the office include: Photo/Media Release Form, Zero Tolerance Policy and Health Policies Acknowledgement.
- New District Volunteer Policy: Every parent volunteer needs to fill out a new school volunteer application, a request to conduct volunteer screening form, and have a current TB test on file. If you plan to do any type of volunteering at the school including driving for a field trip, you must have these forms turned in. These forms will be available in the classroom on Curriculum Night or you can pick one up at the office. Please do not wait until the last minute to do this. Remember, this is for the safety of our children.

I would also like to welcome our new staff at Benchley-Weinberger:

- Kim Filner, Grade 4/5 Teacher
- Renee Carlo-Ruiz, Nurse (Mondays only)
- Teresa Wenham, Health Tech
- Angie Adams, Resource Aide
- Joni Uden, Special Education Assistant

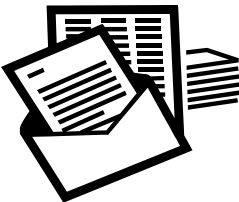
Some changes this year include:

- Teacher Shauna Shelley moving to grade 4
- Grades K-3 at a student ratio of 24:1
- Grades 4-5 at a student ration of 33:1
- i21 promethean boards in all grade 3 classrooms

I am also very excited about Benchley-Weinberger's test scores. Our test scores exceeded our expectations and were the best in over 6 years. There was a 21 percent increase across the board between language arts, math and science. This is due to our exceptional teachers/support staff, fantastic parent support and our extraordinary hard working students.

Sincerely,
Marian K. Jacobs
Principal

Welcome Kindergarteners! *Kim Klein*



I would like to welcome all the new families to B-W this year. I would like the opportunity to introduce myself to you and to offer you a link to the PTA and Foundation. I have a daughter entering second grade this year. I have thoroughly enjoyed the time I have spent being involved with the school, the PTA and the Foundation. I know firsthand how overwhelming it can be to have a child starting kindergarten. We have four (I think it will be five) great kindergarten classes. At times throughout the year, you may have uncertainties about what your child is doing academically, apprehensions about how your child is relating to others, and questions about how you can stay connected to your child and the school. Our teachers and staff welcome parent volunteers in the classroom and on campus. Our PTA and Foundation are open to all of you who want to join in on the fun of working on our special events and programs. Please feel free to contract me at 619-741-8767 or 760-473-4740 if you have any questions about being a new kindergarten parent. I look forward to meeting all of you at drop off and pick up in the kindergarten area!

Message from the Foundation President continued

Stop and see the tiles already up in the breezeway by the office and at the library.

We will show a movie in the auditorium at Night at the Bench on December 4th 6:30pm.

The Jog-A-Thon is Wednesday February 10th. Look for updates from the Jog-A-Thon chairs: Christy Walsingham, Louis Bertsche, and Drew Smith.

Since there will not be an auction this year we will be having an opportunity drawing. This will run all year and we will be selling tickets during Benchley events for 2.00 per ticket or 3 for 5.00, 6 for 10.00 or 15 for 20.00. At the May assembly a ticket will be pulled and the lucky winner will receive ½ the money raised. The remainder will go towards programs funded by the Foundation.

Our first meeting is September 15, 6:30 in the teachers' lounge. The meeting is open to all parents. Again, welcome to Benchley and have a great year!

Drew Smith
Foundation President.

Annual Halloween Happening Committee Needs You!!

The 2009 Halloween Happening Carnival is just around the cobweb! This spooktacular spirit building event will take place on Saturday, October 24 from 3 to 7 PM. In addition to the familiar favorites such as: the haunted house, bake/cake walk with a cake decorating contest, pumpkin carving contest, fire truck ride, lots of fun games, we will be having the very popular "Monster flush" again-- where one of your favorite teachers, staff members or parents gets soaked with water.



We are looking for volunteers to assist with this haunted event. You can volunteer for anything from advertising, coordinating volunteers and donations, decorating, set-up, tear-down, and just basic planning!!! No commitment is too small! This is a great way to not only help out our school, but also a great way to meet a monstrously fun group of people while having a howlingly good time!

All interested mummies, daddies, ghosts and goblins please contact Cathy Monroe at tcmonroe5@cox.net or stop by the teacher's lounge any Wednesday morning at 7:45am beginning September 9th.



Calling all artists for the 2009 Reflections Arts Program

Hey, kids – want to be in your very own art show? The B-W PTA is gearing up for this year's Reflections Arts Program, and the theme this year is "Beauty is..."

All you need to do is create your own original artwork that reflects the theme. You get to express your creative talents in one of four areas:

- Visual arts (including drawing, painting, collage and printmaking)
- Literature (including poetry, prose and drama)
- Musical composition and
- Photography.

It's easy! Here's what you do:

1. Return your registration form (in a flyer coming home soon) on Thursday, October 1st
2. Read the official rules and guidelines that you will receive on Oct. 5th
3. Create your artwork
4. Bring your artwork to the classroom no later than Wednesday, Oct. 21st at 7:45 a.m. with the official entry form (NO late entries accepted)
5. Come to the Reflections Art Show & Awards Ceremony on Wednesday, Nov. 4th at 6:30 p.m. in the B-W auditorium

The Reflections program, developed by the National PTA, is open to all students at B-W. (Continued on page 4)

Dine Out Days

One of the easiest and tastiest ways to help raise funds for PTA programs is to participate in designated 'Dine Out Days'.

Fliers with more detailed information are usually distributed in your child's communication folder .



Earn Cash For Our school

1. Clip your Box tops 2. Send Box tops to School - turn them in to your teacher. 3. Our School Earns Cash

Paw Prints is edited by Jeannette Stumpfel and the Benchley-Weinberger PTA

All dates and locations mentioned within articles are subject to change. Refer to fliers sent home in the communications folder for the most current information.

Next issue's deadline is September 25 for publication in the October issue.

Reflections continued...

Fliers will be sent home soon with all the details. A school art show and awards ceremony will be held on Wednesday, November 4th at 6:30 p.m. in the B-W auditorium. All students who participate will be recognized and awarded. Additionally, the 24 finalists will be announced at the art show. We look forward to seeing artwork by our returning artists and welcoming new artists to this year's Reflections Arts Program!

Sarah Calbreath, Heidi Dromgoole and Kristin McGraw, co-chairs

Volunteer Orientation

Benchley-Weinberger Elementary offers many opportunities for parents to become involved in supporting their children's education.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in their children's classroom, to chaperone field trips, to join the PTA and to volunteer for PTA and/or Benchley-Weinberger Foundation events or programs and to work in the library among other things.

Come join us for an informative meeting to learn how to get involved and to familiarize yourself with the volunteer policies at our school on Tuesday, September 15 at 7:45 AM in the Auditorium.

Consider Being A Room Parent....

Being a room parent is a great way to stay connected to your child's teacher, fellow students and the school. We would like to encourage parents to be co-room parents with one other parent so that each class has at least 2 room parents. We have found that this combination is a great way for parents and teachers to divide tasks and collaborate on ideas. There will be a room parent information meeting in the near future (date and time TBA).

Remember to get your TB test done (if you haven't had one or haven't had one in four years) so you can start volunteering at school. We have many new ideas to support room parents this year. We invite you to please consider taking on this very rewarding role in your child's classroom.

Curriculum Night:

A chance to Visit the Classrooms and Meet the Teachers!

Mark your calendars for Curriculum Night on September 16 . This is an important opportunity for parents to visit their children's classrooms and meet their new teachers.

Teachers will present their plans and curriculum for the school year. In order for parents to get the most out of the evening, it is suggested that children not attend. Parents are also invited to visit the Book Fair .

Detailed information will be distributed in the red communication folders.

No Parking in the White Zone...

Please obey the traffic signs posted in front of the school and note that there is no student drop-off in the parking lot.

And even if you think you'll only be gone 'a minute', don't forget to lock your car and take or stow your valuables. Have a safe school year!