



3rd-Graders Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF

CALENDAR

December

6th - BUSD Meeting Karen Hemphill sworn in. 2134 MLK Way. 7:30.

12th - Fire Drill at 1:20.

12th - First School Governance meeting. All welcome. 6-8 p.m. in the Cafetorium. Childcare and dinner provided.

12th - African American Unity Meeting 5:30 p.m.

14th - Washington Winter Concert 6:30-8 p.m. Cafetorium.

22nd - Winter Recess Back to School January 8th.

No December PTA Meeting

January

11th - PTA Meeting 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Cafetorium

15th - No School M.L. King Jr. Birthday Holiday

20th - District Kindergarten Faire 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Le Conte School.

23rd - Washington Kindergarten Faire 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Many students in Ms. Moustakas' and Ms. Geminder's 3rd-grade classes participated in a UNICEF Halloween fund raiser coordinated by parent Jamie Greenblatt. Students trick-or-treated with orange UNICEF boxes to collect change instead of (or in addition to) candy, and together raised \$141. UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund) provides health care, clean water, nutrition and education to children and their families in 156 countries around the world.

The teachers based some math exercises around the funds collected, counting the total and calculating what UNICEF can do with it. Based on UNICEF information, they calculated that \$141 is enough money to supply crayons to 2,014 classrooms, immunize 141 children against polio, or nearly provide clean water for a whole village. The students felt very proud of what they accomplished. Here are a few samples of what they wrote about the experience:

I think it's important to trick or treat for Unicef because it's important to me that everyone has shelter, warmth, food, and clothes. -- Warren



When I went trick or treating for Unicef I felt good because I was helping the kids who needed help.

-- Akeyla

It's important to trick or treat for UNICEF because people are more important than a bag full of candy. -- Addie

I think UNICEF is important because some kids and parents do not have the stuff we do. -- Desmond

I forgot my Unicef box when I went trick or treating, so I said that I forgot the box and still needed to get money for Unicef. People really trusted me. -- Phoebe

I think it is important to trick or treat for Unicef because it helps people have: water, crayons, schools, biscuits, books, paper, and more! -- Matt

Measure A Passes!

No doubt you have heard by now that Measure A passed -- the final vote was 79.68% Yes! Thanks to everyone who took part in the campaign -- the community's involvement made all

the difference. Measure A will ensure that our class sizes remain low and that music, arts, libraries and other important programs will continue for the next 10 years!

Holiday Escript Reminder

Be sure to update your ATM and credit card numbers at eScrip.com so that your holiday purchases can benefit our school. To ensure that Washington gets extra credit from your online shopping, you can easily install AutoTrack on your computer through eScrip.com. Once you install AutoTrack, you are not required to go to escrip.com first. Shop anywhere online and any purchase from an eScrip Online Mall merchant will automatically benefit our school.

If you are not already part of eScrip, you can sign up by going to www.escrip.com, enter the Washington Elementary PTA group number - 137657765, click on "my account", and enter your name.



Cell Phone & Ink Cartridge Recycling

You can support our school by bringing in your empty ink cartridges and placing them in the "Cartridge World" tall blue and yellow box across from the office. Cartridge World reuses the cartridge and gives our PTA 25¢ - \$1.00 for every ink cartridge we collect. We also collect used cell phones and accessories -- there's a box on the counter-top across from the office next to the PTA bulletin board.

PTA Budget News

By Abigail Surasky, PTA President

At the November PTA meeting, PTA members approved our 2006-07 budget. Here is a brief summary.

The good news is that we have already raised \$4,000 this year without any official fundraisers. But we have a long way to go to raise our target income of \$24,500. The sooner funds are raised, the more time our school has to enjoy the benefits instead of waiting for each fundraiser to spend a little more money! (Please respond to the letter that was sent home a few weeks ago!)

Some of the changes in this year's budget as compared to last year's include:

- Income is projected to be higher for three main reasons:
 1. We plan to put more of the money that PTA actually has back into the school this year instead of saving it, while still keeping a healthy reserve of between \$3000 and \$6000.
 2. We have been told by the administration that allocating \$2,500 to Family & Community Resources (a.k.a. Healthy Start) is not as big of a priority to that program as it has been in the past, so it was eliminated from PTA expenditures this year.
 3. A few hundred dollars more in earnings is projected this year from each fundraiser: Direct Donations, Read-a-thon, Silent Auction, Spring Faire Raffle, and eScrip.
- Projected expenses have been increased in the following areas:
 - Copy costs +\$200 (rates have gone up)
 - PTA dinners +\$800 (more people are attending PTA meetings)
 - YMCA Swim Lessons +\$500 (more classes are getting access to swim lessons this year, which costs more)
 - Teacher Funds and Special Requests from Staff +\$1275 (This amount has been increased to give classrooms more money, as per the "sticker vote" on budget recommendations held at the second PTA meeting).
 - Spanish Translations +500 (Increasing expenditures here means that a higher percentage of PTA materials and meetings will be translated to fulfill

our mission of including all families at our school)

- General Supplies/Misc. +500 (More accurately reflects actual costs).
- Expenses that have been added, per the sticker vote, include:
 - Emergency Preparedness Supplies \$100
 - Speakers: Parent-Student Education \$500
 - Principal/Teacher Meetings (hiring a sub) \$600

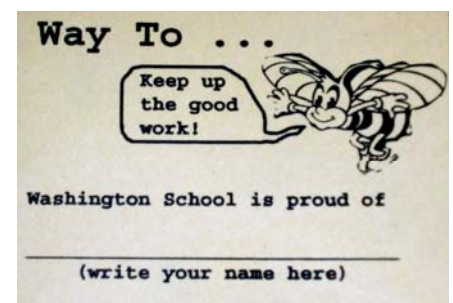
All other budget categories are about the same as last year.

The budget is not meant to be an exact predictor of what the PTA will actually earn and spend. Some things will go over budget, and some under. The main fiscal responsibility of the Steering Committee, however, is to spend within the PTA's means, using the budget as a guide.

Washington's 3 B's

At Washington, the "3 B's" are our school rules: Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be Responsible. All staff carry "Way 2 Be" cards (pictured) to give to students when they "catch" them being safe, respectful and/or responsible. The child who receives a card writes their name on it and drops it into a collection box, from which one is drawn at the Monday assembly.

This year, the child whose name is drawn will receive a certificate and an encouragement pencil. All of the "Way 2 Be" cards from the box are stapled up onto a bulletin board in the main hallway. Ask your child about the 3 B's -- and use them at home!



Washington News Shorts

School Governance Council Elections Being Re-Held

Due to inaccuracies on the ballot last month, the elections for School Governance Council are being re-held. Nominees are due December 4 and completed ballots are due Friday, December 8. The first council meeting, which is open to all, will be on December 12. Minutes will be posted to the PTA website.

Washington's Winter Concert

Washington's Winter Concert will be held on Thursday, December 14 in the Cafetorium. Every class will be participating in one form or another with poems and singing, either as a class or a grade level, or with their music teachers. It will run from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. (Students in the orchestra need to arrive at 6:15.) The winter-themed event should be a great evening. Come and let our children shine!

Cody's Receipt Deadline Dec. 14

The absolute Final Deadline to turn in Cody's *School Book Days* receipts is December 14. Place them in the PTA mailbox in the school office. If you have feedback on this event (for instance, how to better publicize, etc.) please contact me. Also, let me know if you would like to help coordinate this project next year. -- Jamie Greenblatt (email: barryw1@juno.com, phone: 510-486-1742).

December Movie Matinees for Kids

Elmwood Merchants are supporting "Kids Movie Madness" at the Elmwood Theater on College Avenue near Ashby on all December weekends. Tickets are just \$2, and the proceeds will benefit the PTAs of schools in that neighborhood. The films will be shown on Saturdays at 10 a.m. and Noon, and on Sundays at Noon. The films for the remainder of the month are: Shrek (9-10th), Madagascar (16-17th), Polar Express (23-24th), and Wallace & Gromit - Curse of the Wererabbit (30-31st).

New Lost & Found Rack

Lost and Found clothing is now located hanging up on a rack in the Hallway across from staff room. Please make a habit of checking it regularly for missing clothes! Items left longer than a month will be donated to charity.

Washington T-Shirts & Sweatshirts For Sale!

Show your school spirit and support Washington PTA! Thanks to Joal Arvanigian and Kory Worley of G-Bear Prints for doing a great job printing the t-shirts and giving Washington School a discount!

Washington School T-shirts and sweatshirts are for sale, in these sizes and colors:

T-shirts (\$12)

Youth - S, M, L (blue, red, pink and black)
Adult - S, M, L, XL (mostly black)

Ladies' Cut T-shirts (\$14)

S, M, L (black)

Sweatshirts (\$20)

Youth - S, M, L, XL (black)
Adult - S, M, L, XL (black)

William Gordon (designer of the logo) will be selling the shirts at the Winter Concert on Dec. 14 and other school events. You can also place an order by tracking William down at 848-0780 or email him at viola@lmi.net.



Enter the California Coastal Art & Poetry Contest!

The California Coastal Commission invites California K-12 students to submit artwork or poetry with a California coastal or marine theme to the annual Coastal Art & Poetry Contest. Up to eight winners will win \$100 gift certificates to an art supply or book store, and winner's sponsoring teachers will receive \$40 gift certificates for educational supplies. Entries are due January 31, 2007. For rules and entry form, visit www.coastforyou.org, email coast4u@coastal.ca.gov, or call (800) Coast-4U.

PTA Coffee Hour Every Wednesday

If you have a few minutes to an hour on Wednesday mornings at 8:00, please join parents in casual conversation at the PTA's coffee hour, directly across from the office.

Stay Connected, Electronically!

Get the latest news and announcements from Washington School by email -- sign up for Washington Talk! To join wTalk, send a blank email to: wTalk_subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

You can keep up to date on all Washington School events and other information on our website: <http://washington.berkeleypta.org>.

PTA Officers

Please contact any one of the officers if you have ideas, questions or concerns.

Abigail Surasky - President.
Phone: 649-9413, email:
acubabe_2000@yahoo.com

Kathy Stafford - Vice-President.
Phone: 510-848-7223

Sahoko Tamagawa - Secretary.
Phone: 848-0780, email: sahkot@yahoo.com

Margaret Norman - Treasurer.
Phone: 848-8338, email: margaretnorman@sbcglobal.net

Newsletter Editor - Nancy Rader,
phone: 510-845-5077, email: nrader@igc.org.
Ideas, information and articles for *The Acorn* are welcome!

We're on the Web! <http://washington.berkeleypta.org>

Washington Elementary

2300 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Berkeley, CA 94704
Phone: 644-6310
Fax: 644-7718

Rita Kimball, Principal.
Email: rita_kimball@berkeley.k12.ca.us

Paula Shoemaker, Secretary.
Email: paula_shoemaker@berkeley.k12.ca.us

Berkeley Unified School District

2134 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Berkeley, CA 94704
Phone: 644-6348

Meet Ms. Skowronski, 1st-grade teacher

Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of articles profiling our new teachers. Laura Skowronski is teaching 1st grade in Room 1. Here, she tells us a little bit about herself.

I grew up in Connecticut and went to school in Massachusetts. After getting my undergraduate degree at Springfield College, I spent seven months in Australia learning, traveling and volunteering, picking fruits and vegetables and tutoring small groups of kids after school to get by. The experience was remarkable and a personal education in itself. After that, I moved to the West Coast, enjoying a lot of outdoor activities, and ended up in Lake Tahoe. I substituted in the district there and took a couple of long-term positions.

Wanting to teach full time and looking to get my master's degree, I moved down to Berkeley and went to SFSU for a year, specializing in Special Education. I started teaching in 2004 at Rosa Parks in the autism classroom and immediately loved the diversity and creativity of teaching in Berkeley. Although I was learning so much and everyday becoming more amazed with the autism disorder, I missed teaching in



the regular ed classroom. The teaching styles between the two are very different and, personally, I enjoy teaching to a whole-class environment, using thematic units and teaching the kids to learn from each other.

As for my master's degree, I am very interested in the strategies for supporting English Learners and changed my emphasis to the TESOL program (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). About half-way done with my degree, I'm currently taking a break from classes. I am enjoying my first year at Washington and am thankful for all the support I have here.

Kidz Club Staff Profile

Ms. Jenna

By Ann Callegari, Kidz Club Coordinator

Kidz Club After-School Teacher Jenna Tower works closely with our 4th-grade students. Jenna says that what she likes most about working with kids is their energy and excitement. She knew this before coming to Washington Kidz Club, as she worked for two years at the Lawrence Hall of Science.

Ms. Jenna (as our students know her) was raised right here in Berkeley. She has one younger brother, who I'm sure gave her plenty of practice working with children. She enjoys photography and art, and she is using her skills in these areas to add value to our after school program. Ms. Jenna attended St.



Mary's College High School and UC Berkeley.

A valued member of Kidz Club, Ms. Jenna works hard to help her students to understand their work. She says that her hope for her students is that they "learn to be responsible adults with goals." Ms. Jenna does hold her kids accountable, so they are on their way!!