



*Home of the
Timberwolves*

The Howler

Publication of the Shady Grove Middle School PTA • March 2004

Springing Towards Next Year

Spring is just around the corner. Hopefully, all the “snow days” are behind us. As you know they have extended the school year two days. I will keep you posted! We are halfway through the third marking period. Interims will be mailed home on Friday, March 12. This would be a good time to re-commit ourselves to working together to ensure our students meet with success. If you have not already done so, please have your children organize their notebooks and check to be sure that they have all the supplies they need. As you guide your child through the semester, please review his/her homework every night to stay informed, and if you have any concerns about your child, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We have started the process for registering your child for next year. Our counselors have visited with the students during their world studies or science classes and discussed the courses and options for next year. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact your child's guidance counselor. The guidance counselors from Magruder High School spent two days with our 8th grade students and the students have completed their four-year plans for their first year as freshmen in high school. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Counselors office at Magruder High School, 301-840-4614.

Our incoming 6th grade students will be visiting Shady Grove on Friday, March 12. Hopefully, the snow will stay away. Our spring musical, *The Wizard of Oz*, will take place on March 25, 26, and 27. Mark your calendars! We have half days on Thursday and Friday, April 1 and 2 for report card preparation, and Spring Break begins the following Monday, April 5.

Thank you for your continued involvement in our school. If I can be of any assistance at any time please do not hesitate to call me at 301-548-7539 or email me. Lancellotti_dempsey@fc.mcps.k12.md.us

Sincerely,

Lance Dempsey, Principal

Mark Your Calendars!

SGMS Drama Presents ***The Wizard of Oz***

Wednesday, March 24 at 4:00 p.m. (preview performance)*

Thursday, March 25 at 7:00 p.m.

Friday, March 26 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 27 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets:

\$10 orchestra seating ❖ \$6 general admission

*** special preview performance price to be announced**

(students purchase tickets during lunch or at the door ~ details coming home soon)



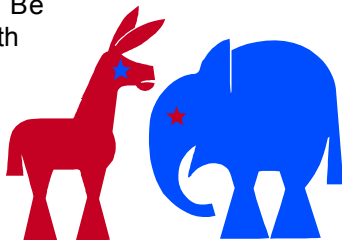
It's Academic

Sixth Grade News

Top news for sixth grade has been preparing our students for MSA testing. Each academic subject has been teaching students how to respond to brief constructed responses in reading, while in our connect classes, we have practiced sample MSA test items. We are confident that our students are well prepared and will make their parents and teachers proud of their achievements. On the last day of testing we will celebrate our hard work with an ice cream and movie event. The film, *Remember the Titans*, serves a dual purpose. We will be rewarding the hard work of our students while laying the ground work for instruction in May on the 50th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision, *Brown vs. the Board of Education (BoE)*. *Brown vs. BoE* was the decision that marked the end of the "separate but equal" era in our country. Seeing each day how well our diverse student body works together is the true legacy of that decision.

Social Studies

The end of February saw our students learning about the election process in our country. At the end of this day of civics instruction, students participated in a mock presidential election. Results have not been in by press time. Be sure to ask your sixth grader after the primary election which candidate was the choice of the Timberwolves.



Our present unit is ancient China. One of the highlights of this unit will be sixth grade Kite Day. Students will be assigned to study one of the Chinese dynasties. Using the results of this research, students will decorate a handmade kite that will have symbols unique to their dynasty. Just prior to Spring Break, we will have the entire sixth grade flying kites in our field behind the school. Come and watch the festival.

Reading

We are now in our biography unit. Each student is reading a biography and will be preparing a book report presentation at home. In class, we are reading excerpts of biographies. We are reviewing reading strategies, text structures and features as they apply to our biographies. We are also working on analyzing texts and trying to teach a deeper understanding of text which involves inferencing. The students are working on analyzing characters. You should be seeing your student work on vocabulary at home. We will be working on building a stronger vocabulary for the rest of the year.

Science

February brought the beginning of our third unit, Diversity and Adaptations. Students studied biodiversity, classification and variation. We even explored the variety of adaptations organisms have by creating well adapted butterflies for our classroom. "Birds" then swooped in and fed off as many butterflies as possible. Finally we looked at which butterflies

PTA Meeting...

*Tuesday
March 9
7:30 p.m.
Media Center*

Who's Who

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Sixth Grade News Continued...

survived and analyzed why they were able to survive the activity. In March, we will end the unit by studying the process of natural selection and designing a fictitious organism and environment.

Mathematics

Math A students have been working with fractions. We have been comparing them with decimals and percents. Our new unit will be on Geometry, where we will work with angle pairs and identify the relationships among their properties. Math B students just finished the unit on Geometry Relationships and have moved on to Proportion and Reasoning. In this unit, we will develop an understanding of proportions. They will apply strategies for solving problems involving the skills. IM students are working on Unit 5, which is the Data Analysis unit where we have been creating and interpreting box and whiskers, stem and leaf, scatter plots and other ways of organizing data. All math students have been working hard in preparation for the Math MSA's, which were held on March 1 and March 5 of this year.



English

We are currently in the Triumphs unit. Students are reading about individuals who have achieved triumph in their lives. We are continuing to use major and minor details in our paragraphs and writing multi-paragraph essays. Students have been studying how to write complete sentences with subjects and predicates, and how to correct fragments and run-on sentences. We are also studying adjectives and incorporating them into our writing.

Eighth Grade News

It's official! Eighth graders are beginning their transition to high school. Students have completed the registration process with the guidance counselors from Magruder High School. As the transition process continues, eighth graders are reminded that becoming a ninth grader can be a very difficult adjustment. The best way to prepare for this is to continue with the academic strategies that have led to your success so far: come to class prepared, stay focused in class, complete your homework and study, study, study for your tests. The habits you develop now will carry over into high school. Keep up the good work!

During the month of March, students and teachers are working to organize a variety of spring events. Mark your calendars now—it's going to be a busy spring!

March 1

Mock President Primary Election (in World Studies classes)

March 12

Interims are mailed home

April 2

Career Day **We still need guest speakers to share their careers with our students. Please contact Chrissy Beane or Amy Hilliard at 301-548-7540 if you would like to be a guest speaker.

April 2

End of 3rd marking period

April 13-23

Distribution and collect of permission slips & money for a field trip to Antietam National Battlefield. (look for the permission slip AFTER spring break)

May 14

Field Trip to Antietam National Battlefield

June 4

Eighth grade Dance at SGMS, 7pm-9pm

June 10

Eighth grade Promotional Ceremony at Magruder High School 7pm-9:30pm

It's Academic

Art News

The Youth Art Month exhibit during March 2004 will be held in the tunnels of the State House in Annapolis. This "Underground Art Exhibit" will be the first of its kind with every public school in Maryland invited to participate by submitting one piece of artwork for this display. Since the legislators travel through the tunnels each day, in addition to celebrating the talents of our students, this exhibit will be a means for thanking our legislature for its continued support of art education. Congratulations to 8th grader **Boretta**

Lim for having her work selected to represent our school in Annapolis. Congratulations to 7th grade students **Robin Matty**, **Diamond Pennington** and **Shannon Owen**. Their artwork was chosen for display in the Executive Office building, in conjunction with the Martin Luther King commemorative ceremony, which took place on

February 1, and throughout this month in celebration of African American History Month. Their artwork reflects Dr. King's life, achievements and aspirations.



Counselor's Corner

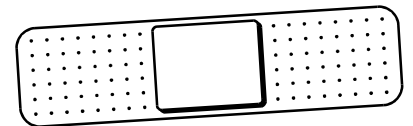
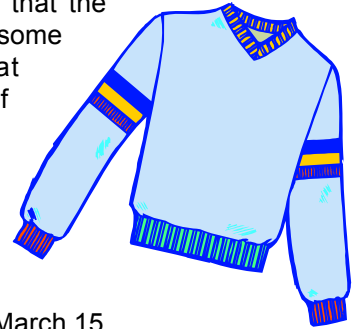
Career Day is around the corner and we need you. We are looking for speakers for the 8th grade Career Day scheduled for April 2, from 7:55 a.m.-12 noon. If you are interested in participating, please contact Ms. Mosely at 301-548-7534.

Registration for the upcoming school year will be held March 15 and 16. Counselors will be inputting your child's choice of electives, as well as recommended academic classes. Parents will be notified by mail of level recommendations. Eighth grade registration for next year has been completed. Each student had the opportunity to meet with their assigned high school counselor. Please refer any questions or concerns regarding classes to Magruder High School's Counseling Services Office at 301-840-4614.

Physical Education

The Physical Education classes are still inside until the middle of March. Most of the 7th and 8th graders are now in elective classes. Those that are in elective courses will return to their "base" teacher on March 15. As March approaches, the children may be going outside on the warmer days. We are recommending that the students have some sweats here at school so that if they do go outside, they will be warm. Most of the classes will be in outdoor activities after March 15, so please make sure that your children will be properly clothed. After spring break, all of the Shady Grove students will be participating in a five-day dance unit that includes folk dancing, line dancing, square dancing, and/or partner dancing (Swing or Cha-Cha). Dance is a great way to learn about dances from other cultures, to develop rhythm, to learn proper etiquette when asking another person to dance, to learn how to dance with another person at a social event, and a way to formally express themselves to music.

Children may start to develop more injuries at this time of year doing extracurricular activities, due to inactivity through the winter months. Children should try not to have the "weekend warrior" mentality when they perform in activities, because just like adults, children can get injured. A way to help prevent injuries is to encourage your child to exercise throughout the winter months, perform an adequate warm up and cool down/stretch. If your child does encounter some type of injury, please make sure that he/she has a note and that the specific activities that he/she IS ABLE to do are also included.



It's Academic

Teach Students To Be Responsible For Their Own Success

Research says that students can learn to achieve. But they must be trained to be responsible and self-motivated.

Here are concrete ways to encourage students to take charge of themselves:

- ❖ **Help students figure out** what motivates them. What are their needs, goals and incentives?

- ❖ **Don't harass** and nag students. Show them how to establish their own routines and manage big projects by breaking them down into smaller steps.

- ❖ **Give students** choices. They need opportunities to make decisions.

- ❖ **Don't get in the way** of natural consequences. If you give students the easy way

out of difficult situations, they won't make the connection between their actions and the results.

- ❖ **Introduce games to teach** the value of having a strategy. Let students see how their efforts are directly related to the results they achieve.

- ❖ **Talk about careers** with students. Help them link their learning and interests to future jobs.

- ❖ **Urge students to read** biographies of successful people in various fields. Encourage them to emulate the traits and habits of these people.

Source: Donald R. Grossnickel, *Helping Students Develop Self-Motivations: A Sourcebook for Parents and Educators* (National Association of Secondary School Principals).

Summer Enrichment Opportunity

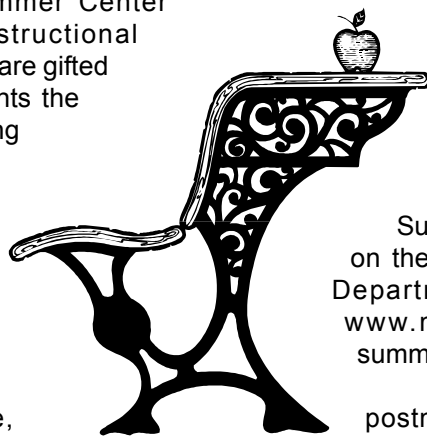
The Maryland State Department of Education recently announced the schedule of upcoming Maryland Summer Centers for students entering Grades 3 through 12. Summer Center programs offer unique instructional experiences for students who are gifted and talented, and give students the opportunity to work in a setting and with resources not available during the regular school year.

Centers are located throughout the state and offer one- or two-week residential and non-residential programs with a focus on the arts, science, mathematics, technology, and history. Activities are designed to encourage critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving while challenging students

academically. Tuition ranges from \$50 to \$675. A limited number of full and partial scholarships are available for those who need financial assistance.

The 2004 Maryland Summer Centers brochure and application is available to be looked at in the guidance office. Brochures, application forms, and a video about Summer Centers may also be found on the website of the Maryland State Department of Education at www.marylandpublicschools.org/summercenters.

Applications must be postmarked by Thursday, April 15, except for Fine Arts Centers, which have earlier deadlines and may require an audition.



PTA & Cluster News

Magruder Parent Advisory Committee

Thanks to all who braved the cold to attend the recent meeting of the Parent Advisory Committee in early February! We value your ideas, suggestions, and opinions as a great resource in our common goal to improve communication, implement new initiatives and enhance the learning environment for all Magruder students.



The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meets several times a year to discuss issues and concerns, brainstorm new ideas and act as a forum for new initiatives that affect the greater MHS community. It is an informal gathering of parents, administrators and staff, with no set agenda—the floor is open to all topics. And although there are few meetings, there is lots of work that goes on “behind the scenes” that culminates in attaining real results.

For example, discussions about parking lot congestion and safety concerns along Muncaster Mill Rd. have resulted in a

study of the issue by MCPS and the Department of Transportation. Proposed changes to the traffic flow and a reconfiguration of both lots are now

being considered, with initial changes to be implemented in the summer of 2004.

Other examples include improved class scheduling in the Spring, better supervision during after school activities, more AP class choices (as well as offering a few AP selections in tenth grade), increased home/school communication via email, and more frequent interims for all students.

However, in order to better serve all MHS students, we need to hear from representatives of all communities, so that we can better understand the issues that confront them. For example, what special challenges face ESOL students and their families, and what can we do to improve communication? What can we do to make it easier for more families to be involved at Magruder and ensure that all of our activities represent the diversity of our entire community? How can we, as parents and school, join together to help families support their students' achievement, including those students who are ineligible and those students who could succeed at more challenging levels?

Although we continue to search for answers to these and many other questions, we need your help and participation! Please come to **the next Parent Advisory Committee meeting on Thursday, April 29 at 7:30 p.m. in the MHS media center**, and help us to make Magruder an even better place for students to learn!

Please feel free to contact Debbie Milder at 301-926-4760 or debmilder@comcast.net for more information.

Looking for Next Year's PTA Board

If you're interested in joining the Board, chairing a committee, or serving on the nominating Committee, please contact Carole F. at 301 963-3040.

Earn Student Service Hours!

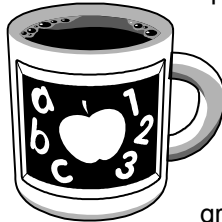
Flower Hill ES is looking for student volunteers to help out at their annual Spring Fair on Saturday, May 8, from 2 – 9 p.m. Help is needed to run carnival booths, face painting, food sales, etc. If you are interested, please contact Kathy Hartley at kbhartley@comcast.net, or call 301-990-3880 before 8 p.m.

PTA & Cluster News

Magruder Community Outreach Program and Principal's Coffee

The second Community Outreach Program/Principal's Coffee was held on February 5 at the home of Debbie and Dan Milder. There were 22 people in attendance, which included representation from Resnick and Mill Creek Towne Elementary Schools, Redland and Shady Grove Middle Schools, and MHS. We were especially pleased that Mrs. Lance Dempsey, principal at Shady Grove Middle School, was able to join Dr. Steinberg for this interesting and informative event.

Dr. Steinberg began the Community Outreach Program/Principal's Coffee as a way to communicate with parents who are unable to attend meetings at the high school. The idea is to hold a "coffee" at a home in one of the "feeder" communities (i.e., Flower Hill, Candlewood, Mill Creek, Shady Grove, Redland, etc.), and invite parents in that community to meet with Dr. Steinberg in an informal setting, to discuss concerns, exchange ideas, and share information.



Topics for discussion at the last "coffee" included the new Science Curriculum, the Academy Programs, lunch time issues, class scheduling, home/school communication, and sports/activities eligibility issues, to name a few.

The feedback has been tremendously positive. Many who attended expressed how much they had learned about Magruder in just one evening, and the parents of eighth graders left feeling much more confident about sending their students off to high school next year!

Dr. Steinberg would like to hold several more Principal's Coffees this year. If you are interested in hosting one, please contact Mrs. Gibson at 301-846-4600.

P.S. I'd like to personally thank Mrs. Dempsey and all the SGMS parents for attending this event! Debbie Milder

We Need Your Support!

The SGMS PTA uses money from the **Direct Appeal Fund** to support various projects and activities throughout the year to help all students. In the past, we have provided the printing and mailing expenses associated with *The Howler*, a school directory for each student, and many requested items the teachers have requested for use in their classroom. In order to continue funding these items in the future, we will need your help!

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to our Fund. All monies collected go directly to various programs within the school. Your support is vital to all students, teachers, and the school. This is also an excellent opportunity for grandparents and other family members to support and make a difference at Shady Grove Middle School.

To make a donation, please complete and return this form with payment (made payable to SGMS PTA) to your child's Connect Time teacher. We thank you for your support!

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Child's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Amount: _____

Please note the Direct Appeal Fund is separate from PTA membership. Contributing just to the Fund will not give you voting rights or representation to the local, state, and national PTA. (Membership forms are available for downloading at: <http://www.familynetsource.com/sgms/>)



March 2004

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 MSA Math ~ gr 6	2 NO SCHOOL Election Day	3 MSA Math ~ gr 7 & 8	4 MSA Math ~ gr 7 & 8 Basketball v. Redland (G/H, B/A)	5 MSA Math ~ gr 6
8 MSA Make-ups	9 MSA Make-ups PTA Meeting 7:30 p.m.	10 MSA Make-ups	11 MSA Make-ups Music Concert ~ 7 p.m.	12 MSA Make-ups 5th Grade Visitation Day Interims mailed
15	16	17	18 Orchestra Festival at Northwest High School	19 Poster for Family Fun Night Contest due
22	23	24 Band Festival at Damacus High School	25 Spring Musical ~ Wizard of Oz 7 p.m.	26 Wizard of Oz 7:30 p.m. SATURDAY, MARCH 27 Wizard of Oz 7:30 p.m.
29 Family Fun Skate Night 6-9 p.m.	30	31	1 EARLY RELEASE .Apr	2 EARLY RELEASE

* B=boys, G=girls, H=home, A=away

Family Fun Night



March 29, 2004

6 - 9 p.m.

Rockville Skate Rink



\$4.95 (plus \$1.65 if renting skates)

PRIZES AWARDED ALL NIGHT LONG

Raffles for McDonald's, Lake Forest Mall and Hungry Howie gift certificates.
Grand Prize ~ CD player