CINCO DE MAYO AUCTION THIS YEAR!

Save this date for the TOPS Spring 2001 Auction: Saturday, May 5 at the Asian Resource Center. This year we have a new auctioneer, Steve Hardy, to emcee the festivities. We’re looking forward to a fantastic evening of fun, feasting, and community—plus some serious fundraising. Note that the deadline for turning in your auction items is March 30—which will, as usual, come sooner than you think!

If you’re new this year to TOPS, you might be interested in what the annual TOPS Spring Auction means to TOPS. It started in the early 1990s and has grown to be our most important fundraising event, clearing over $40,000 last year. This success doesn’t come easily; it takes the participation and hard work of everyone in our wonderful TOPS community—parents, kids, teachers, and business leaders alike.

Every year TOPS asks each family to procure at least three items (though some families seem to come up with dozens of interesting items). Items can be anything you think someone would pay money for—sports or theatre tickets, restaurant dinners, clothing, wine, airline tickets, cabin rentals, boat trips, art work, jewelry, babysitting, home-cooked dinners, quilts, chocolate, theme baskets of food and videos, consultations, legal work, gardening, home-baked desserts, and store gift certificates.

When you ask for donations, you can tell business owners that their names will be listed as a donor, and you can also include a small display for their item or business cards. It’s great advertising for them. Most items are placed in the “silent” auction, where you just write in your bid as you walk around, but the big money makers and class projects (and desserts!) go fast and furious in the exciting and mostly hilarious live auction that begins after dinner. We have a professional auctioneer running the event. It’s a very enjoyable evening and a great cause—our kids!

Long before the auction night itself, each class creates an art project to be auctioned off to competing parents and friends. A parent volunteer in each classroom coordinates the project, working with other parents and the kids to create something wonderful. We’ve had quilts, hand-painted and decorated furniture, ceramics, a garden fountain, floor coverings and a fabulous painted dragon.

The kids are always very proud of their projects and that they’re raising money for their school. Ask any auction veteran—these projects raise a ton of money! Last year we also collected theme baskets from each class made up of items donated by families that were very creative and fun to work on. We had all kinds of themes; chocolate, garden, baby supplies, ethnic foods, and entertainment were among the most memorable.

So, please mark your calendar for the biggest social and fundraising event on the TOPS calendar—May 5, 2001. Let’s all get to work!
**ABOUT THE OUTRAGEOUS PUBLISHING SERVICE**

Welcome to the fourth monthly newsletter of the 2000-2001 school year, edited by Julie Pickering. Cindy Suzumura handles the layout and design. Coach Don Zemke and Dan Bloedel always provide great photos, and Gretchen Chambers is supplying informative news. Bruce Pulmano maintains the mailing list and gets the newsletter out to you.

We welcome your contributions—news from the classrooms, faculty, committees, and the larger community, opinions, profiles, compliments, congratulations, kids’ art, photographs, additions to the calendar, anything else that needs to “get out there.”

Submit your contributions to the newsletter box in the Main Office or to Julie Pickering (by e-mail at jpick@halcyon.com or by snail mail at 2624 East Olive Street, Seattle 98122-3144).

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINES FOR 2000-2001**

- December 15, January 12, February 16, March 15, April 20, May 11, and June 29.

Anyone interested in working on the newsletter should contact Julie at 720-4552.

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**SITE COUNCIL MEETING, NOVEMBER 7**

By Gretchen Chambers

**PRINCIPAL REPORT**

**Help on the Way:** Administrative Intern Thalia Nawi reported that the principals and staff submitted a hiring recommendation for the 0.6 certified teaching position, which the District authorized for providing support in overburdened classes. She also reported that Bryce Huber, one of our AmeriCorps volunteers, had to move out of state unexpectedly, and that another volunteer, Poppy Milliken, would be starting in mid-November.

**Tutoring for Middle Schoolers:** Assistant Principal Clara Scott reported that a meeting regarding the unsatisfactory academic performance of some Middle Schoolers had produced a plan for Middle School tutoring. The plan would include peer tutoring for 6th graders and tutoring by parents and other volunteers for the 7th and 8th graders. The plan would carry on some of the mentoring work performed by Bryce Huber, who helped students organize their notebooks and plan homework. Poppy Milliken will be taking on this task.

**Leadership Team Report – Teachers Learning from Teachers:** Willie Jones said leadership staff were finishing a plan and schedule permitting TOPS teachers to take time from their own classes to observe the teaching of their colleagues. Willie said observation releases will be a great learning opportunity for the staff. “Guest teachers” will cover for those out observing.

**Student Leadership Council Report:** Eighth grade rep Clare Gallagher said the Student Leadership Council was interested in fundraising, such as a talent show and another bake sale like last year’s. The first meeting for the MS newspaper was planned for mid-November. Kindergarten parent Annie Gage has volunteered to help the Middle Schoolers produce the bi-monthly newspaper.

**Eighth grade rep Anika Steig reported that the November 3 dance was very successful with only one or two small and short-lived moshes [moshings, moshpits?]. Approximately 120 students attended. She noted that only 10 to 15 non-TOPS students attended, and that attendance rules were adhered to. Spirit Week was also a big success. The student leaders expressed sympathy for their elementary siblings who felt cheated for having Hat Day instead Cross Dress Day.**

Clare also reported that she had spoken with Jennifer Murray about developing a peer counseling program and training for interested students.

**School Security:** Mr. Tubbs briefly discussed the assault incident and his home-visit with the victim’s family, along with counselor Jennifer Murray. He stated that he would be sending a letter home to all TOPS families.

Site Council members then discussed how to improve security at the school, touching on the need for locked doors, better signage, vigilant use of volunteer badges, and staff and parents addressing “visitors” they do not recognize. A suggestion for a welcoming table and greeter at the front entrance where parents and volunteers could get badges was enthusiastically received. Volunteers at this post could also work on teacher projects.

**EASTLAKE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Kindergarten seats set aside for Eastlake:** Jules James presented a letter addressed to the Seattle School Board asking for two TOPS kindergarten seats to be reserved, i.e., removed from the city-wide lottery process, for children from the Eastlake neighborhood. He asked for the Site Council’s endorsement of the letter.

Ensuing discussion highlighted a number of points: Mr. Tubbs noted that presently one-third of the 56 kindergarten spots goes to siblings, and 8 to 9 are set aside for ESL students. Applicants now have a 20 percent chance of getting in; two additional reserved spots for Eastlake youngsters would reduce the chance to 18 percent.

Jules and others suggested that the kindergarten set-asides for neighborhood families are critical to a positive relationship with the community. According to Willie Jones, all the 1st and 2nd grade teachers are in favor of two set asides. A motion to endorse the Eastlake letter to the School Board passed 18 to 2, with 3 abstaining.

On another issue, Jules proposed that the Site Council bylaws be changed to allow the Eastlake Community Representative to be a TOPS parent. The current rule, prohibiting a TOPS parent from representing the Eastlake Community Council, dates from the era when building renovations were being planned and there were concerns about a possible conflict of interest. The Site Council decided to table this issue until the members had a chance to review the bylaws.

**FUND DEVELOPMENT**

Fund Development Committee member Jennifer Shaw reported that the No Bake Bake Sale had already brought in $19,000, even though the first mailing had not yet gone out. The Auction date has been set for May 5th, Cinco de Mayo! The gym acoustical improvements, including curtains, stage extension, and window coverings were expected to be in place for the MS play, December 8-9.

**TECHNOLOGY**

Chair Kevin Crozier said the Technology Committee has decided to wait for the “Tech Levy” in February, which will provide money for a new laptop for every teacher, rather than to purchase refurbished computers for
LESSONS LEARNED

By Principal Gary Tubbs

What are the lessons learned when a terrible thing happens to an innocent child?

We learn that denial accomplishes nothing.
We learn to deal with the fact that no matter how carefully we teach our children or how safe a place seems, something terrible is still possible.
We learn that blame only creates greater negative energy and further damage.
We learn to deal with fear that cuts deep into gut and bone.
We learn to accept that we may never know why some things happen.

And if we go deeper . . .

We learn of the pain and shattered spirit of someone who could victimize a child.
We learn the importance of a spiritual revolution commensurate to the technological revolution if humankind is going to survive.
We learn compassion for a child of the universe and her family whose world is forever altered.

Most of all . . .

It is imperative we learn to see this child in our hearts as whole, healthy, perfect, and at peace so that this becomes her reality.

And if we go beyond ourselves . . .

We learn to face the reality that we, as humans, ultimately control nothing.
We learn to treasure even more our life and our loved ones.
We learn to live in the moment with a high level of consciousness.

And if we go deeper . . .

We invited other parents to join in the discussion.
Their next meeting is December 7 at 5:30 in the Library.

COMMUNICATIONS

Volunteer Coordinator and Communications Chair Marlies van Bergeijk said that now that the Family Directory is out, she is turning her attention to other matters, such as a system for volunteer background checks and meeting with the room reps. She reported that the school’s increased concern about security was causing many volunteers to sign in at the office, and, as a side benefit, many more volunteer hours are being recorded.

DIVERSITY ISSUES COALITION

Reporting for Garry Owens, Gary Luke said the Coalition’s Library Committee had met with Steve Haines to discuss the purchase of multicultural resources funded in last year’s Auction. Committee members are developing a syllabus of books with input from teachers and parents.
THANK YOU, TOPS SUPPORTERS!

The No Bake is succeeding already! As of November 6, our mailing was just going out, but we already had donations from 88 families, staff, and friends totaling $23,000! Thank you to those who have sent in your donation.

Our goal is $90,000 and 100 percent participation. No donation is too small. The Site Council and the school will use your tax-deductible donations to support and strengthen our great program. The State and the School District can’t fund the enrichments or the support staff we want our children to have, so please consider a donation. There are plenty of No Bake forms in the office and on the two posters by the library that show you how far we’ve come. We are trying to reach our goal by the winter break so send it on in!

Our tax id number is 501(c) (3) 94-3142402. If you make a United Way donation please copy the form and send it to school with your No Bake Form.

Below is a list of donors as of November 6—If you donated by that date and don’t see your name, let us know at pennyb@windermere.com and we’ll get you on the list for next month. Thanks!

Mike Holub
Amy Hagopian & Steve Ludwig
Jules James
Janis Jones
George & Linda Keylon
Stephen Kovnat
Grace & Ken Kubota
John LaCoste
Jack Lee & Pm Weizenbaum
Rosemarie & Norman LeMoine
The Lovell Family
Gary Luke* & Beth Wheeler
Tammy Luthy & Jeff Heft
Ouri Malliris & Scott Barnhart
Jon & Ellen Markman
Jim McDonald
Kirk McKinley & Sarah Meeker
Kimberly McRae
Paul Mocha
Doug & Janet Moore
The Merrill-Dickinson Family
Michael Nailen & Tilman Smith
Alan Ness & Margaret Bergmann-Ness
Chris O’Leary
Onouye Family
Chris Pfohl & Rebecca Sadinsky
Charles Pickel & Shirley Bossier
Mark & Catherine Remijan*
Peggy Riehle * & Ben Low
The Roth Family

Paul & Diana Abson
Laurie Black & Stafford Mays
The Bolton Family
The Braybooks/Simon Family
Richard Cassell
Steve & Nani Castor-Peck
Ed & Kay Chapin
Gretchen Chambers & William Ames
Virginia & Roger Chambers
Mary Chao*
Doug Chapman & Karol King
The Chin/Martin Family
Judy & Sarah Cohen
Piyale Comert
Robin Cox
Phil Czosnyka & Kathy Cox-Czosnyka
The Demombynes Family
Shabae Diquan
Paul Framson & Marlies Van Bergeijk*
Signe Gilson & John Kounts
Kim Gittere-Abson & Michael Scupine
Kirk & Carla Griswold*
Garcia/Grossman Family
Sandy & Jim Green
Barbara Green/Anne Gage
Toni & Michael Hahn
Randy Hall
Pat & Mike Helgren
Robert Heller & Rebecca Fox
Roshua Holub

Jill Rullkoetter & William Hurley
Jan Rockas
Karen Rice
The Schott/Haggerty Family
Stephen Schwartz
Betsy* & Bruce Scott
Clara Scott*
Patty & Charles Seales
Richard Seroussi & Louisa Turner
The Shure Family
The Stevens Family
Holly Townes
Gary Tubbs*
Glen Tamura
Pat Vernie
Jim & Rudy Vernie
Mavis VonTorme
Debra Walker & Dan Baldner
Winifred Weiner
David & Carol White
Eileen Young
Olga Zawada
Six anonymous families

TOPS LIBRARY PATRONS COULD USE . . .

Pencils: Yes, those pesky little writing implements seem to have legs. They are always on the move. We’re not talking the brand new variety of pencil. No, those tired, chewed-up, stubby models will do just fine.

Games: Before you recycle those old board games, cards, or dominoes, remember that the students could use them during recesses in the library. Games that don’t take too long and don’t have “a million” pieces would be useful.

Scrap art paper: any size.

Thanks from Steve Haines.

* Site Council member
NEW AMERICORPS MEMBER

By Lianne Sheppard

By the time this newsletter reaches you, sadly TOPS will have already said good-bye to AmeriCorps members Neesa Sonoquie and Bryce Huber.

Neesa completed her full year of service at TOPS. She is returning to her home community of Chester California. (See below) Bryce Huber had an unexpected change in circumstances and has moved away from the area.

WELCOME POPPY MILLIKEN

TOPS is very fortunate to be welcoming Poppy Milliken as a new AmeriCorps member volunteer. Also generously sponsored by Washington Service Corps and Friends of TOPS, Poppy’s arrival will allow TOPS to continue to have two AmeriCorps members this school year as planned.

Poppy comes to us from Portland, Oregon, thanks to the initiative of first grade parent Sharon Mentyka and her family. Poppy has great things to say about TOPS. In her own words, “What attracted me to TOPS was, from the beginning, the positive attitude about the school from both of the parents and the student I knew. After talking with you (Lianne) and Mr. Tubbs, I knew that feeling was shared by the TOPS community in general.”

GOODBYE TOPS!

By Neesa Sonoquie

Well, my eleven-month stay at TOPS as an AmeriCorps Volunteer has come to its inevitable close. I simply can’t believe how fast the time has flown. It seems like only yesterday that I drove into Seattle, arriving promptly the next morning at the McDonald building, only to find that I had come to the wrong school.

Moving to an unfamiliar city and starting a new job while leaving most of my family and friends behind in California, could have been a rough and lonely transition. While I admit it was lonely at times, thanks to TOPS, my time here has more than exceeded my highest hopes. I was welcomed (once I figured out where TOPS was actually located) with such warmth and appreciation that I immediately felt at home. The staff, students, and parents were so friendly that I couldn’t help but feel that I belonged. I knew then that I had just embarked on an exciting new adventure, but I couldn’t yet grasp the lasting effect that working at TOPS would have upon me.

It is amazing how life arranges itself to allow for so many opportunities and surprises, if you just open yourself up to them. When I chose Seattle and TOPS, it was almost at random. I actually had another AmeriCorps position in mind, but when Mr. Tubbs offered me the job, I felt that maybe it was meant to be. Now, looking back, I feel that it was. I was searching for guidance and purpose, and a place to be inspired.

Working at TOPS gave me each of those gifts and more. It showed me not to fear the unknown, and that by taking risks I am allowing myself to grow, learn, and change. I have been truly inspired by the talented and compassionate people who teach here.

I never knew that school could be a place not just for academic learning, but for emotional and creative support as well. The word self-esteem was simply not mentioned in any of the schools I attended. The students here are so fortunate to be given every opportunity to fulfill their potential and attain their highest goals. The time and effort the staff puts into this school and the community has proven to me that we can each make a difference in this world, and I feel compelled to go out and try my best to do the same.

So, I want to thank you all for waking me up. My soul has been energized, and I am heading back into my old life a newer, more positive, hopeful person. I feel I have gained direction toward my own purpose in life, and I look forward to applying all that I have learned.

Thank you staff for your inspiration and friendship. Thank you parents for your smiles and appreciation. Last, but not least, I thank the kids, who gave me so much love each day that I thought I would burst. I truly think that TOPS has the most remarkable, sweet-hearted, talented students in the entire world. I will miss you all, but I know that wherever my path may lead, TOPS will always be with me.
INTERVIEW: TOPS 6TH GRADER STARS IN THE NUTCRACKER

By Clara Elliott, 6th grade

TOPS 6th grader Erica Badgeley has been cast as Clara in Pacific Northwest Ballet’s December performance of The Nutcracker. Here’s what she has to say about the experience.

Have you been in the Nutcracker before?
Yes. Twice before. Last year and three years ago.

How old were you when you started ballet?
Eight years old.

How many hours a week do you spend on ballet?
I go five days a week for a total of about eight-and-a-half hours.

What do you enjoy about ballet?
Everything.

What do you dislike about it?
I don’t like the really hard stuff.

Why did you decide to do ballet?
I had to give up gymnastics to focus on ballet. I had been doing both but couldn’t keep doing both. I decided I wanted the stage more than the competition.

Do you want to be a professional dancer when you grow up?
Maybe. Sometimes I want to but then I think how hard it is sometimes.

Do you ever have a conflict between friends/personal life and ballet?
Sometimes.

Are there times when you wish you had never started ballet?
No! I have never regretted it.

What were your feelings when you were picked to be Clara in the Nutcracker?
I screamed! I got nervous, happy, but not as happy as I thought I would be. I was expecting it. Then I felt ecstatic.

Kenmore Junior High. He looks forward enthusiastically to working with the TOPS Middle School band.

All 6th, 7th, and 8th graders who play an instrument are welcome to participate in the band, which meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 5 p.m. on the top floor of the Middle School building. Come check it out!

There is no charge, but you must provide your own instrument. For more information, contact Karin Krumm at 547-6216 or akrumm@fred.fhcrc.org.

JOIN MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND!

By Rebecca Fox

The Middle School band is up and running. For students who play an instrument, this is a great opportunity to make music with other kids and have fun too!

Andrew Ehli leads this year’s band. Mr. Ehli is majoring in Music Education with an instrumental emphasis at Seattle Pacific University. Since January 1999, he has worked as a music education paraprofessional at
TOPS STUDENTS NOT UNDECIDED – IT’S GORE FOR PRESIDENT!

By Dana Carey-Twight

On November 7, 69 TOPS Students voted in the General Election, along with 602 Eastlake neighbors in precincts 2000, 2001, 2004 and 2005. Inspector and TOPS parent Sue Wardle provided a slightly modified ballot to the students who made it into the library during polling hours to cast a vote. (Thanks to Helen in the office for the photocopying assistance.)

Out of the ballots cast for President, Democratic candidate Al Gore received 55 votes, Republican George W. Bush received two votes, and Green Party candidate Ralph Nader received eight votes. President Bill Clinton received one write-in vote, as did Regis Philbin. Seven TOPS students used the write-in section to vote for themselves or classmates. Unlike Florida, only one TOPS ballot had to be discarded due to multiple votes for President!

Other results tabulated from the student ballots were Maria Cantwell, easily winning the Senate race over incumbent Slade Gorton. In a surprising result, Green Party candidate Joe Szwaja narrowly lost to incumbent Congressman Jim McDermott by one vote! McDermott received 21 votes, Szwaja (a Seattle Public Schools teacher) received 20 votes, and Libertarian Joel Grus came in third with five votes.

Governor Gary Locke easily won reelection, with 88 percent of the votes cast. Republican challenger John Carlson trailed with 7.6 percent, followed by Libertarian candidate Steve W. LePage with less than 4 percent. Due to time constraints, other votes cast for initiatives were not tabulated by press time.

TOPS parents Dana Carey-Twight and Sue Wardle were two of the five workers at the polling stations set up in the library on Election Day. They were on-site from 6 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Sue Wardle, serving in her third election as Inspector, was proud of the fact that everyone who came in was served. “I only turned away two people,” she said. “They told me that they hadn’t voted in 12 years, and I said, ‘I’m sorry, you can’t vote.’”

BOC teacher Linda Orantes also brought in her class to hear Sue give a short lesson on voting in America. Sue said the students were most surprised by the use of a secret ballot.

Thanks to the students who voted and their parents and teachers for discussing the election with them! And thanks to Andrea Carey for helping her mom conduct the presidential vote recount.

By Kevin Crozier

The Internet is a great source for information. Written text, pictures, sounds, movies, etc. (both good and bad) are scattered all over the Web, much like leaves blown about over a field. But often I ask myself, “Where are the really good and useful sites,” and “How can I access them?”

What is good or useful is all a matter of opinion. You, no doubt, have your favorites, and I’ve started my own collection of sites focusing on classroom subjects, teacher help, and technology; they are now linked to the TOPS web page (http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/tops). Go to the Homepage, then “Elsewhere on the Web” and “Curriculum Resources”). This collection is based on teacher recommendations I’ve gotten from different teacher list serves over the last few years.

The advantage of a link list on a web site over bookmarks in my browser is that I will never lose the list in a computer crash, and I can share the links with others. Please note that any button on the list labeled “portal” is a site full of many other links to various subjects.

Suggestions?
If you have sites that may be useful to teachers, students, and/or other parents, please e-mail them to my school address (kcrozier@aa.net), and I will upload and share them with the public. Please keep in mind that I prefer sites without advertising because advertising distracts students and visiting a site with advertising translates into support for the product advertised there.

Also, if you have time, check out the web sites created by other teachers and districts. If they generate ideas that you would like to see on our TOPS web site, e-mail me those suggestions as well.
MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCE IN NOVEMBER

By Nicki Sewell, 8th grade

The dance on November 3 was a total blast. After we helped them along a little, even the sixth graders were out on the dance floor, having fun! It was their first dance.

We had a pretty good DJ, although he should have played a little more variety. At one point, a bunch of teachers came out, including Mr. Tubbs, and showed us all how to do the electric slide. It was also pretty funny when Claire and Tim were swing dancing and they actually fell over!! Of course, we like to have Don take pictures of everyone to remember the good time we had.

The only downside is that it gets really hot in there, but overall it was a great dance and we want more of them!
THANKS TO DON ZEMKE
FOR THE GREAT MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCE PHOTOS.
ELEMENTARY ART

By Elaine Moberly

Have you ever said, “I wish I could draw a bird or a horse or a person?” or maybe “I wish that I was more creative?” Luckily our kids are getting the chance to develop these art skills. For the last two years, we have had a wonderful elementary art teacher, Cynthia Livak, along with Middle School art teacher, Luzita Roll.

Cynthia has been teaching three days a week at TOPS, working with our 1st through 4th graders for one hour per class each week. She enjoys many forms of art and has had her art displayed at galleries and shows in Seattle and Bellevue since 1981. Her work includes a variety of genres, including Raiku fire sculpture, jewelry, and mixed media.

LEARNING FOR A MASTER

This year she is focusing on Leonardo da Vinci’s still life paintings and illustrated notebooks, hoping to use this art master’s work to illustrate some of art concepts. The art history combined with the “hands-on” work seems to be quite effective. This year some of the projects will include self-portraits with a background, realistic drawings, pottery, paper collages, illustrated journals of nature, and bas-relief sculpture panels.

Cynthia enjoys working with all of our children. She would be pleased to have any old calendars or posters with reprints of paintings that your family no longer uses to share with the children.

SUPPORT THE ARTS AT TOPS

Funding for the position of elementary art comes totally from us, The Friends of TOPS. The funds are generated from the No Bake Bake Sale and the auction. This year’s goal for the No Bake is $90,000. Please contribute to support vital TOPS programs and staff, including art, drama, our school counselor, and co-principal. Without these funds, some of these positions and programs will be reduced or eliminated.

TOPS STUDENTS PARTICIPATE ON THE KIDSPEAK STAGE

By Steve Haines

The Setting: Kidspeak Stage at Northwest Bookfest
The Date: Sunday, October 22, 2000
The Main Characters: Genna White, Christine Remijan, Megan Flood, Benji Oh, Sasha and Zoe Barker-Aderem, Naomi, Eliana, and Miriam Schwartz
The Story: After they were introduced by Carole Lexa-Schaefer, author of “The Copper Tin Cup,” each student read something that they had written. Everything from the story of an orange to Pokemon was enjoyed by a large audience of TOPS students and their families.

The Conclusion: Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves especially when Carole introduced her books and told the children about the process of writing them.

A Footnote: Our school won a $200 gift certificate to the University Bookstore. We will be making a visit soon to select some books.
**KIDS MARATHON!!!!!**

*By Janet Moore*

The goal of the Kids Marathon was to log 25 miles before Thanksgiving weekend in preparation for running the last mile of the Seattle Marathon, November 26.

Wow! By November 10, the kids had logged in 680 miles around Rogers Field during their lunch break! The kids have been really busy running. They ran their final mile on Rogers Field November 22nd and had a celebration.

As of November 10, several students had already completed the 25 miles (Some even more!).

**5th grade:** Jon-Erik Jardine, Eli VanderBilt, Molly Moore, Erin Jones, Catherine Means, Noah Cohn

**3rd grade:** Kevin Weiss, Eliza Cohn

Another bunch of kids were well on their way to 25 miles.

**5th grade:** Erin Tobin, Jane Frost, Samantha Nutter, Genna White, Isaiah Sarju, Adlai Pappy, Clayton Dewey-Valentine, Alex Marts, Veronica Galvin

**4th grade:** Zackary Porras-Foye

**3rd grade:** Georgia Jamieson, Marja Scott, Emma Framson, Jesse Bengtsson, Paul Croft

**2nd grade:** Jack Yates, Deric Nelson

**1st grade:** Sean Gallagher, Mitchell Porras-Foye, Seth Palmer, Tedros Alemayehu, Ariana Bengtsson, Marie Leadon

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**2000-2001 TOPS CALENDAR**

**DECEMBER**
8-9 (F-S) ........... Middle School Play
13 (W) ............. Site Council meeting, Library, 5-7 p.m.
22 (F) ............. Winter break begins

**JANUARY**
8 (T) ............... School starts again
10 (W) ............. Site Council meeting, Library, 5-7 p.m.
15 (M) ............. Martin Luther King Day. No school
19 (F) ............. Skate King
29 (F) ............. End of semester (Middle School)
29 (M) ............. Learning Improvement Day (teacher workshops). No school

**FEBRUARY**
14 (W) ............. Site Council meeting, Library, 5-7 p.m.
19-23 (M-F) .... Mid-winter break. No school

**MARCH**
14 (W) ............. Site Council meeting, Library, 5-7 p.m.
16 (F) ............. Teacher workshops. No school

**APRIL**
4 (W) ............. Site Council meeting, Library, 5-7 p.m.
9-13 (M-F) ...... Spring break
23-May 11 ...... WASL

**MAY**
5 (S) ............. TOPS Auction, Asian Resource Center
9 (W) ............. Site Council meeting, Library, 5-7 p.m.
18 (F) ............. Teacher workshops. No school
28 (M) ............. Memorial Day. No school

**JUNE**
8 (F) ............. TOPS Art Festival
8-9 (F-S) ........ Elementary School Play
13 (W) ............. Site Council meeting, Library, 5-7 p.m.
20 (F) ............. Last student day
21 (M) ............. Last teacher day
24 (S) ............. Site Council Retreat

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*Mr. Tubbs inspires the kids.*
CEDAR RIVER FIELD TRIP

By Tal Troy

On October 30, the kindergartners and 5th graders journeyed to Renton where they watched salmon spawning on the Cedar River. The students, teachers, and parent chaperones arrived at the river about a half-mile downstream from the Renton Public Library. From there, they walked upstream and observed the dramatic scene of hundreds of colorful salmon reaching the ultimate moment of their lives when they spawn and then die of exhaustion.

LESSONS ON SALMON LIFE CYCLE

Many of the fish were pairing up in two or three feet of clear water; others had not found a mate and were being chased away by competitors. Scores of dead and dying fish were drifting in the current or resting on the gravel, becoming a buffet for chubby gulls. In the middle of an urban environment, the river provides lessons on food chains, habitats, and the life cycle of salmon.

Meanwhile, the kids were fascinated, especially the kindergartners who clung to their 5th grader buddies’ hands, at the sight of the strong currents and the procession of determined fish. At the end of the walk, they enjoyed sack lunches and played in the park until the buses took them back to TOPS.

Two buddies hard at work.

Students get a real life lesson on the stages in the life cycle of salmon.

5th grade and kindergarten buddies, teachers and parents view salmon at the Cedar River.
YEAR-LONG BUDDIES

The trip was one of many activities that the 5th graders and kindergartners will share as part of their yearlong partnership. In September, each kindergartner was matched up with a 5th grade “buddy.” The 5th graders help the younger children with projects, mentor them, and share celebrations.

The initial focus of their time together is the Salmon in the Classroom program, sponsored by Seattle Utility, which provides resources, curriculum, and field trips for 5th grade classrooms. On November 22, for example, the 5th graders visited the fish hatchery at the University of Washington where they collected about 300 salmon eggs and a jar of milt with which to fertilize the eggs. The students placed the fertilized eggs in the 50-gallon aquarium kept in the hallway outside the lunchroom at TOPS.

Over the next few months, the 5th graders and their kindergarten buddies will study the eggs as they develop into fry. In the spring, they will release the tiny fish into a local stream. From there, the life cycle continues.
FUND DEVELOPMENT NEWS

By Penny Bolton

Grantwriting: The Fund Development Committee is working on identifying grantors and sending out letters of inquiry to see if our program needs fit their giving goals. As we get further into this, we will need more help on writing grants. Contact Penny Bolton (325-5074, pennyb@windermere.com) if you want to be involved or are involved with any granting sources that we should pursue.

Auction: The date is set — May 5, 2001, Cinco de Mayo, at the Asian Resource Center. Contact Rhian Lombard (325-5395) to volunteer.

No Bake Bake Sale: See page 4 for the good news, and remember to send your dough.

GYM/PERFORMANCE SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

By Penny Bolton

The Gym/Performance Space Improvement project is moving ahead. Project Committee members Julie and Todd Jamieson, Linda Korbus, Linda Downing, and Jeanne Spurlock expects curtains and acoustic treatments will have been installed by or around the Thanksgiving weekend. Lights and bleachers may also happen at that time. We are aiming for as many improvements as possible by the Middle School play, December 8-9. Come to the play and “hear” the improvements.

We’ll need TOPS volunteers to provide $8,500 worth of “in-kind” labor to match our portion of the grant from the Neighborhood Matching Fund. The in-kind labor will be calculated at $10 an hour (unless a carpenter or engineer does work that is their usual job . . . then we get credit for their usual hourly rate.) Student work gets equal credit as long as it’s done outside school hours.

That work should take place in January-April. The Site Council is also providing $14,500 in cash to match $22,800 from the NMF.

Volunteer tasks include:

- Design and make frames to plug into small windows in back of stage and on side of gym.
- Work with students and community volunteers to create artwork for the window coverings.
- Design and make “curtains” for big windows on back of stage. Include student artwork.
- Construct stage extensions.
- Put together and install bleachers.
- Work with lighting and sound designer to pick final extra stuff and install. Install pipes on side of stage to hang lights on.
- Learn how to run lights and sound.

GIRLS SOCCER MEETS THE PARENTS

By Nicki Sewell

On November 4, the TOPS girls soccer team was all geared up and ready to play at 9 a.m. We warmed up for a half-hour on the field at Denny, and still no opposing team. It was a good 15 minutes after game time when we decided we had to do something!

We got all the parents up, and the kids scrimmaged with the parents. Mark Morales, our coach, scored the only goal for the adults.

It was pretty funny! All the parents were pretty sore after the game! (Editor’s note: We were not!!)

It turns out that the other team went to the wrong field and so did the ref. It was an automatic win for our team! Our final record was 5 wins and 1 loss. In the division playoffs November 14, we lost to a powerhouse team from Eckstein. On November 18, we lost 3-0 in a tough game with Whitman to finish fourth in the city. It’s been a great season. Go Falcons!
NEW PLAYGROUND GROWING IN ROGERS PLAYFIELD

From Friends of Rogers Playfield

A new playground in Rogers Playfield is moving ever closer to a reality. With the new playground slated to open in September 2001, the fundraising stage is now in full swing. Everyone has an opportunity to be part of the playground by making a tax-deductible contribution and receiving recognition with a personalized glass leaf.

Designed and created by local glass artist Jerry Newcomb, these unique leaves will be imbedded in attention-grabbing entry pillars designed by TOPS dad and landscape architect, Randy Allworth.

The leaves come in two sizes, small ($60) and large ($200). Brochures with all the details will be in the late November take-home packet. They will also be available in the school office and many Eastlake retailers.

The Friends of Rogers Playground applied for a Department of Neighborhoods Matching Grant in September and recently received word that an award of $115,000 has been recommended to Mayor Schell and the City Council. Such recommendations are very reliable indicators of actual funding. The entire project budget is over $280,000, so individual contributions are an essential element to the playground’s success.

BACKGROUND

The Eastlake neighborhood is without a preschool play equipment for the first time in 90 years. The play equipment located adjacent to the kindergarten classrooms on school property is too physically challenging for most preschoolers. And it lacks those all-important slides.

As Eastlake residents were coming to terms with this situation, parents and staff at TOPS were addressing the complete lack of playscape equipment for older kids. Last autumn, the Friends of Rogers Playground Steering Committee was created to meet both needs for the Eastlake and TOPS communities. Leadership includes TOPS Facilities Chairperson Rebecca Sadinsky, Eastlake parent and Committee Chair Laurie Stusser-McNeil, and TOPS Site Council member/Eastlake resident Jules James.

HISTORY

About 90 years ago, Rogers Playfield was one of the first four public parks outfitted by the City with playground equipment. Teeter-totters, a sandbox, climbing bars, and swings were located in the northeast quadrant of the park. A wide array of play equipment was maintained in this location until the mid-1970s.

In the 1970s, the Eastlake neighborhood funded and built a playscape in the middle of Franklin Avenue while the swing sets remained in Rogers Playfield. In 1992, Eastlake and TOPS teamed up to replace the then-dilapidated Franklin Avenue playscape. In 1998, as part of the Seward School renovation project, this playscape was demolished, and plans were made for a new playscape on school property shared by school and community. During construction, a temporary playscape was installed near the swings in the park.

The temporary playscape proved an overwhelming success. Siblings of the sports leagues at Rogers and neighborhood kids swarmed over the play structure from the day it was built until the day it was brought up to school property and extended into its present configuration. The Friends of Rogers Playground will be bringing back playground equipment into its historic location.

THE DESIGN

The conceptual design for the new play area came out of three public meetings, a 4th grade class project led by TOPS teacher Mary Chow, and input gathered by survey and informal discussion. Barker Landscape Architects facilitated the process and developed a site plan unique to Eastlake, keeping in mind the primary interest named by the TOPS students: REPLAY VALUE!

Design elements include two large climbing structures designed to stimulate and accommodate many children at once, as well as a designated toddler area with a sandbox, climbing logs, and small tugboat. Lake Union provides the background for all these structures, including a one-of-a-kind climb-on floatplane. The large swings are retained, and an ADA-accessible ramp meanders through the site to the tennis courts.

For more information about the playground and volunteer opportunities, contact Rebecca Sadinsky (H 723-7378 /W 684-0462) or Jules James (H 329-1885).
DRAMA, EXCITEMENT, AND GREAT NEW ACOUSTICS IN TOPS THEATER

TOPS Middle School presents

The World Premiere of

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN, ANYWAY?

By Avi

Directed by Shana Bestock

Starring TOPS Middle School students

Join us for the first production in the new and improved TOPS Theater!
Acoustic panels and curtains have been installed, so now we can see and hear TOPS’ talented thespians.

Friday, December 8 at 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, December 9 at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
TOPS gym, 2500 Franklin Avenue East

General Admission $5
Seniors (over 65) and children (under 12) $3

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