1ST PLACE IN DISTRICT MATH OLYMPIAD

By Mark Ellis, 7th and 8th Grade Math

The District Middle School Math Olympiad happens once a year. It is a math contest where students work on various kinds of problems as a team. This year the team from TOPS Middle School took 1st place overall in the District. The sixth graders placed second in their grade level. The seventh graders placed first in their grade level. The eighth graders placed second at their level.

The students were chosen by their classmates as the best students to represent them at a math contest. Lana Fuller (6th grade math and science) and I accompanied the students to the contest at the University of Washington HUB Ballroom.

Our goal each year is to have fun. I believe fun is the most important part of mathematics. Congratulations to these students. They did an excellent job of representing our school.

6th Grade
Erica Badgeley
Ali Haruta
Spencer Houck
Kelly Palmer-McCarty
David Ringold
Nat Schacht

7th Grade
Karlin Castor-Peck
Calder Fong
Claire Frost
Katrina Nelson
Nikalai Olson
Bree Robinson

8th Grade
Lillie Cohn
Noah Goldberg
Devon Hale
Chris Kaimmer
Cam Moore
Sarah Tachibana

VOLUNTEER HOURS = MATCHING FUNDS
PLEASE REPORT YOUR HOURS!

With a note in the Volunteer Coordinator mailbox or a monthly e-mail to Marlies at paul-marlies@worldnet.att.net.

DO IT TODAY!

Tal and Sorraya sample the food.

The food selection at the Taste of TOPS reflected the diversity of our school.
SITE COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 4, 2001

ABOUT THE OUTRAGEOUS PUBLISHING SERVICE

Welcome to the ninth monthly newsletter of the 2000-2001 school year, edited by Julie Pickering. Cindy Suzumura handles the layout and design. Don Zemke always provides great photos, and Gretchen Chambers has been supplying informative news for the last two years. Bruce Pulmano maintains the mailing list and gets the newsletter out to you. We thank you for your contributions and welcome more—news from the classrooms, faculty, committees, and the larger community, opinions, profiles, compliments, congratulations, kids’ art, photographs, additions to the calendar, and 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 2001

May 11 and June 29.

Anyone interested in working on the newsletter should contact Julie at 720-4552 or next year’s editor, Annie Gage, at 632-2618.

By Gretchen Chambers

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

Mr. Tubbs remarked that field trip season was making school very busy. He was very pleased to report that the Middle School won 1st place in the citywide Math Olympiad. He also reported that the District approved our proposed school operations budget with new provisions for Co-Principal and School Counselor and the purchase of empty seats to reduce class size.

Counselor Jennifer Murray took five students to Youth Involvement Day, an event for middle and high school students who want to provide input on youth issues.

Louise Retiring, Carla Looping

Mr. Tubbs announced that TOPS original, Louise Chacartegui, will be retiring next year. Discussion followed about how we will mark this bittersweet event. Carla Fetterly will move into Louise’s second grade spot and take her first graders with her to provide them with the proven benefits of looping.

TOPICS

Site Council Chair Betsy Scott posed the question “How do you think TOPICS is going?” Ensuing discussion affirmed that the kids still love it, that sometimes not enough parents sign up, that AmeriCorps members Maria and Poppy have been doing a great job coordinating, and that all in all, it is still a viable and valuable program at TOPS. Suggestions included providing a general TOPICS fund that could be used for impromptu opportunities, such as the recent drumming instruction; a regular listing of recently held topics in the newsletter; and an archive of TOPICS kits to be checked out and replenished by TOPICS leaders.

NO FIELD FOR RECESS NEXT YEAR

Been There, Done That

Recalling that we managed pretty well without a field for most of 1999-2000, Site Council members saw no major needs associated with next year’s renovation of Roger’s Field. It was noted that the swings and tennis courts would remain open. Emergency evacuation procedures will need some reworking. Otherwise, faculty members felt the gym, Commons, courtyard, and library will be able to absorb the full recess loads.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Treasurer Peggy Riehle reviewed the status of the Site Council/Friends of TOPS Budget as of March 31, 2001. A request was made to list Taste of Tops as a separate item since it generates its own income through cookbook sales. Discussion of the Facilities budget noted that the lighting in Katie’s and Willie’s rooms would be completed over Spring Break.

DRAMA COMMITTEE

Funding School Plays and Next Year’s 3rd and 7th Grade Productions

Linda Korbus reported that currently, combined production costs for the Middle School and elementary school plays total $7,000, and that about $4,500 of that is covered by ticket sales. Friends of TOPS provides the remaining $2,500. Linda presented these figures to help the Site Council determine how much money we will have beyond ongoing commitments, such as the plays or Artists in Residence, to spend on new RFPs. Linda also reported that next year, the Drama Committee will fund direction for plays in both classes of the 3rd and 7th grades.

DIVERSITY ISSUES COALITION

37 Join Study Groups!

Garry Owens said that 37 parents had requested participation in the study groups scheduled through April addressing academic disproportionality. The Coalition is thrilled with this response. They had anticipated attracting 10 to 15. Garry said roughly one-third of the respondents are of color, and one-third are Middle School parents.

COMMUNICATIONS

Keep up the Good Work Reporting Volunteer Hours!

Marlies van Bergeijk, Volunteer Coordinator, reported that next year’s funding for the volunteer coordinator position from a city and school district grant was still uncertain. She reminded parents to keep reporting their volunteer hours, commenting that she had a huge number of hours for March. She invited parents to either call or e-mail her. Marlies reported that she and Junne Park, TOPS Family Support Worker, are working on an RFP for interpretation services to improve communication with limited-English speaking parents. She said even $2.00 or more per minute for translator-assisted phone conversations would be money well spent.

Marlies also reminded everyone that all camp chaperones need background checks on record.

E-Mail Take-homes?

Before adjourning, the members briefly discussed the plan for next year to offer parents the choice of hard copy take-homes or e-mailed take-homes.
TOPS CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES
(ELEMENTARY GRADES)

April 2001

1. Before leaving for summer vacation, teachers work together to form two balanced class lists—without teachers’ names—and submit these lists to the principals.* Teachers are not involved in assigning a teacher to each class list. This is the principals’ responsibility.

2. Teachers list separately those students who require special considerations. The principals work directly with staff in placing these students. Consensus regarding placement is the goal. Should consensus not occur, the principals make the final decision.

3. Parents who believe they have a compelling educational reason that should be considered during the classroom assignment process, submit a letter directly to the principals by June 15. The principals work directly with the staff, as a team, to consider parent input and make a decision.

4. If a teacher moves to a higher grade level, parents may request their child be assigned/not assigned to this teacher for a second year—assuming the child was previously assigned to this teacher’s class. Having the same teacher for two consecutive years is often of educational benefit to the student. (Staffing changes generally occur in the spring, although changes over the summer are not unusual. Families will be informed of changes as they occur, via the TOPS’ Web site (http://www.ssd.k12.wa.us/schools/tops), bulletins, newsletter, and/or letters mailed home.)

5. Class lists (first name and last initial only) are posted on the Web site and front doors of the school ten days prior to the first day of school.** Parents or students may call the school for class list information after Labor Day.

6. Parents may appeal a classroom assignment by writing a letter to the principal outlining the educational rationale for the requested change. The principals confer with the elementary staff and make a decision.

* Ms. Scott and Mr. Tubbs will serve as Co-Principals next year.
** There will be an attempt to post information on the web site as early as July 1.

MAY ASSEMBLIES!

Unicycles (K-5 and BOC), Friday, May 4, 10:30 a.m.
Honor Roll (Grades 5-8) Friday, May 4, 2:30 p.m.
(Luncheon, 11:30 a.m., Cafeteria, for Gr. 6-8 Honor Roll)
(5th grade is invited to this Middle School event to motivate them for next year!)
Juan Barco Trio (K-8 and BOC), Friday, May 11
Grades K-4/BOC 1:00–1:45 p.m.
Grades 5-8 2:30 p.m.
Special feature: 1:50-2:20 All Spanish-speaking children and staff are invited to meet personally with the artists in Linda Orante’s classroom!

Juan Barco grew up in a family that worked the fields and followed the crops. Now he holds a Masters in Social Work and is an official with the State of Washington. He is also an award-winning songwriter, guitarist and master of the bajo sexto, a 12-string bass guitar.

Juan’s program uses music and stories to paint a picture of the migrant experience and growing up Chicano. “Success does not mean forgetting your past or turning your back on your family.”

TOPS COOKBOOKS ARE HERE!

For those of you who have not yet purchased your Taste of TOPS cookbook, they are on sale for only $10 in the main office, and they are wonderful. Please pick up your copy today and begin trying the delicious recipes tonight!

SPRING STATE OF THE SCHOOL

After the June Site Council meeting
June 13, 7:00-9:00, in the cafeteria

To review the year, look forward to next year and the shared principal position, and answer your questions!

KEVIN IN NORWAY?

Spring is in the air, and fifth grade teacher Kevin Crozier has hit the road for Bergen, Norway. Keep up to date his zany (?) antics at http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/tops/kevin_in_bergen_norway.htm

We at the newsletter expect a full report as soon as he gets back! What will we do without him?
TOPICS Rocks

TOPS elementary students continue to enjoy TOPICS on Thursday and Friday afternoons, where they gather in small groups to meet with parents, teachers, student teachers, and other volunteers to learn about a specific topic. On April 5 and 6, these students were learning knitting from a parent and bookmaking with Tricia Popp, Katie Water’s intern.
FRIENDSHIP DOLL FOR TOPS

By Gordon Loop, 3rd grade

On March 1, I went to Spokane with my grandmother Anna Maria Malkoç, my mom, Eden Malkoç, and Hiromi Pingry, a TOPS kindergarten teacher. We went to Mukogawa Fort Write Institute to attend the Doll Ceremony and to receive a Japanese Friendship Doll for TOPS.

The doll was made by a Japanese master doll maker. The doll’s name is Miss. Yuri. She’s wearing a red and gold kimono and she is elegant. She is not a toy doll; she is a “silent ambassador of friendship and goodwill.” She will stay in a glass case near the office. She came with a little play doll friend, Hanna, who is soft and cuddly and was made by a Mukogawa student. Hanna can be played with and can visit the TOPS classes.

Our trip was really fun because we took back these dolls for TOPS school–and there was snow there!

2001 TOPS CALENDAR

MAY
1 (T) ................. Double Dutch Tournament at Chief Sealth High School, 3:45-7 p.m.
3 (TH) ............. Class Group Pictures (free of charge)
5 (S) ................. TOPS Auction, Asian Resource Center
9 (W) ............... Site Council meeting, Library, 5-7 p.m.
18 (F) ............... Teacher workshops. No school
23 (W) ............. Middle School Parent Forum, 7-9 p.m.
28 (M) ............. Memorial Day. No school

JUNE
8 (F) ................. TOPS Art Fair, 5:30-8:30 p.m.
8-9 (F-S) .......... Elementary School Play
12 (T) ............... Instrumental Music Concert, 7 p.m.
13 (W) ............. Site Council meeting, Library, 5-7 p.m.
19 (T) ............... 8th Grade Passage
TBA ................. Middle School Wild Waves
22 (Th) ............ Last student day
25 (M) ............. Last teacher day
24 (S) ............. Site Council Retreat

Katie’s intern, Tricia Popp, teaches bookmaking.
MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MIDDLE SCHOOL TARDIES ARE ON THE DECLINE

By Clara Scott

Thanks to the support of parents, the determination of students, and the patience of the "Running Club" supervisor, Mr. Bloedel, our tardies have decreased this year, students are in class on time, and teachers can begin the daily instruction on time with minimal distractions. Keep up the good work, and thanks again for your support and encouragement!

HIGH SCHOOL REGISTRATION, MAY 15

On May 15, high school counselors from the Seattle Public Schools will be at TOPS to assist students in signing up for 9th grade high school classes. We are also expecting representation from the private schools for 8th graders who will be attending private schools. If you have questions, please contact Ms. Scott (252-3510).

CAREER FAIR, MAY 24

9:15-11:30 a.m. Middle School Students will have an opportunity to interact with professionals representing over 25 different professionals. If you would like to participate in Career Day, please contact Joni Marts (632-9741) or Clara Scott (252-3510).

EXPERIENCE MUSIC PROJECT FIELD TRIP

The 8th graders will take a field trip to the Experience Music Project at the Seattle Center on May 10, from 9:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Please make sure that your student has turned in his/her permission slip and money to Ms. Eick.

SIXTH GRADE NEWS

Sixth grade classes spent two days at Cleveland Memorial Forrest. This quarter the class has been studying ecology as part of the science curriculum.

Art in Residence

Julie Trout and our sixth grade recently completed a project with Artist-in-Residence Melanie Burgess. The project, funded by the King County Arts Commission and TOPS Site Council, provided each student with hands-on instruction to design, construct, and paint scenery set pieces for use on the new TOPS stage. This incredible stage set will be unveiled during the Honor Roll Assembly on May 4, at 2:30 p.m.

SEVENTH GRADE NEWS

David Wilhelm and 7th graders are coordinating the Common Cents Campaign, raising funds for the homeless children of Seattle. There are donation containers in various locations in the school, including the office. Encourage all TOPS students to participate. Bring pennies, larger coins, or bills! April 18-May 9.

EIGHTH GRADE PASSAGE EVENTS

Tuesday, June 19: Passage Ceremony at ~6:30 p.m. The ceremony will be held in TOPS gym and will last about one and a half hours. The ceremony will be followed by a short reception. There is talk of a dance or some event for 8th graders after the reception. To be announced.

Date to be announced: Middle School Wild Waves

Friday, June 22: Last day of school. The Passage Committee is exploring options for 8th grade activities and will be discussing these options with the kids.

If you are interested in helping with any Passage-related activities, feel free to attend our next Passage meeting Friday, May 11 at 6:00 at Penny Bolton’s house, 2507 East Helen Street. For more information, contact Mary (AKA Frisky) Connors, 325-6708.
By Alex Ford and Chris Kaimmer, 8th grade

The TOPS boys soccer team is composed of a total of 21 players in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. So far we are off to a 2 win-1 loss season. The 6th and 7th graders switch off every week for games, while the 8th graders always play. We practice every Tuesday and Thursday from 4 to 5:30. Our head coach is Patrice Demombynes, and our co-coach is Adrian Fox. Patrice is the father of one of our players, Roland Demombynes, who is in the 7th grade.

Everyone is welcome to come to our games, which are every Saturday. Ask an 8th grader for the date, time, and place. We encourage you to support your school’s soccer team.

**THE ROSTER**

**8th graders**
- Jason Boyd
- Alex Ford
- Noah Goldberg
- Chris Kaimmer
- Cam Moore
- Ian McKinley
- Evan Pickering
- Nathan Weinstock

**7th graders**
- Roland Demombynes
- Nick Galvin
- Peter Griswold
- Harry Jamieson
- Soren Kounts
- Seiji Pulmano
- Gregory Smart
- Steven Tobin

**6th graders**
- Kirill Biliashov
- Luke Cotner
- Erik Dodd
- Graham Downing
- Matt Lubov
- Nick Sarver
- Douglas White

By Harry Jamieson

The TOPS Boys Soccer team is coached by Patrice Demombynes and Adrian Fox. The team practices on Tuesdays and Thursdays for two hours and has a game every Saturday against other middle schools. So far the TOPS team has won two games, and lost one.

During practices, the team works on basic fundamentals, such as simple passing, dribbling, and shooting drills, along with soccer techniques. So far the team has been putting the tips from Patrice and Adrian to good use. There will be four more games in the season. We’re all anxious to see how it goes.

Our 8th graders have been very supportive of our younger players. I really enjoy how Ian McKinley and Jason Boyd have taken Karill under their wing and taught him how to avoid getting too many red cards.

So far, Alex FORD is our most consistent model . . . Gregory has been playing very SMART . . . Soren is soaring to new heights . . . Jason has been aBOYDING contact . . . Evan has been PICKERING his nose too much . . . Nick Galvin scored just in the NICK of time while Nick Sarver had one just NICK off the goal post . . . Graham always CRACKS me up . . . I’ve noticed that my armpit is getting kind of HARRY . . . At the end of the game, Peter is petered out . . . Nathan Weinstein’s too much sometimes . . . Cam is always trying to get MOORE dates . . . and Roland is on a roll . . .

At the rate, we’re going who knows what might happen when the play-offs come ROLAND around . . .
APRIL IS POETRY MONTH

INTERESTED IN HOSTING A JAPANESE STUDENT?

Host families are needed for Japanese university students. The students stay anywhere from two weeks to two months. Host families provide a room, meals, and an environment for the students to improve their English. It’s a great way for families to learn about another culture. For more information, contact Cindy Suzumura at 632-9116 or Emiko Brower at (425) 788-1735.

By Steve Haines

Dust off the Shakespeare, “rev-up” with Shel Silverstein, because this is the time of year to recognize and immerse yourselves in the wonder of poetry.

Our 8th graders did just that as well-known poet Janet Wong came and discussed poetry with them early in April. Ms Wong spent an hour talking about poetry, reading poetry, and challenging students to write poems. Her message: Write about what you know.

Janet was brought to us with the help of Amy Walter, Young Adult Librarian at the Seattle Public Library. Janet, the author of five poetry books for young people, is making six appearances at Seattle schools this spring. She is a former lawyer who always wanted to try her hand at writing poetry for a living. She loves to share her successes with others. During her visit, she urged students to write a poem about a family member.

Here is an example that was turned in the next day:

MY SISTER

My sister is like a time bomb, cut the right wire she’s normal, but say the wrong thing the bomb has been set on. Tick, tick, tick goes my sister ready to burst, she can be cool sometimes, but other times she’s the worst.

Say the right thing so say this and she won’t blow, but if you say the wrong thing she’ll let you know. I’ve had my fair share of her blowing up at me. If you don’t think I’m serious go see for yourself then you’ll see.

~ Joseph Jessie
8th grade

To read other great poems from our 8th graders, visit the Henry Branch of the Seattle Public Library where they are on display. Also of interest is Janet Wong’s Web site, http://www.janetwong.com.
STAFF-STUDENT B-BALL CHALLENGE

The staff beat the 8th graders in a closely contested battle in mid-April. Spirits were high, and fashion sense went out the window. Go team!
TOPS STUDENTS SHINE IN BYE BYE BIRDIE

In April, sixth graders Justin Savage and Brendan Griffin hit the boards at Hamilton Middle School in Broadway Bound’s production of *Bye Bye Birdie*. Broadway Bound is a nonprofit theater for kids based in Fremont. For more information on the group, contact 206-679-3561.

TOPS KINDERGARTEN CELEBRATES THE ALPHABET

Kindergarten students entertained parents, sampled ABC snacks, and had a great time searching for letters in an ABC scavenger hunt.

Alison finds a match!
**TINIKLING**

*By Berlin Menage, 7th grade*

Honored as the national dance of the Philippines, Tinikling is a favorite of the Visayan Island and especially on the island of the Leyte. The dance imitates the movement of the Tinikling bird, weaving in and out of the grass stems, dodging bamboo traps set by farmers, or running over the tree branches.

Dancers imitate the bird’s legendary grace and speed by skillfully maneuvering between large bamboo poles. The music they play along with the dance is to help the poles stay on beat. However, the new music has several different beats and is used mainly for the audience entertainment.

The way the dancers have it set up is a young man escorts a young lady. In one hand, the lady holds a sun umbrella or fan; in the other, she holds the man’s hand. She lets go of his hand when they are no longer facing each or are too far apart. Usually the dancers perform barefooted to get a better grip on the ground and be light on their feet, just like the bird.

In the background, they have ladies dancing with fans, waiting for their turn to dance. The men keep the poles on beat while waiting for their turn to dance with one of the ladies.

At the end of the dance, the dancers finish first and wait until the music has stopped along with the people on the poles. Then they all stand together and bow.

**LATEST DANCE CRAZE**

*By Don Zenke*

TOPS P.E. students Alison King, Kaley Wilson, Josephine Jardine, and Luz Garcia, led by Berlin and Peter Menage, presented a dance workshop on the Philippine national dance, Tinikling. The presentation included geography, cultural history, dance demonstrations, and small group dance instruction.

Since the presentation, Tinikling has become one of the students’ favorite choice-time activities. Many thanks to our student leaders and TOPS parent Doug Lewis from Bamboo Hardwoods for donating the bamboo poles used for Tinikling.

**VIEWING RACE**

A TOPS parent recommends the Viewing Race Web site, which provides a guide to using films and videos to stimulate race discussion. The site features a search engine for films and videos, and includes essays that raise awareness about how to use the materials to facilitate race dialogues. It also includes a comprehensive listing of organizations, media links, bibliography, and lots more. Check it out at http://www.viewingrace.org
A BIG THANKS TO ALL AUCTION VOLUNTEERS, DONORS, AND PARTICIPANTS

As this issue of the TOPS newsletter goes to print, the Auction Committee is applying the finishing touches to Auction 2001. We’re expecting another wonderful evening of fun and community, and bringing in money for the school.

The success of our auction is made possible by the active support and participation of not only you TOPS parents, kids, staff, and teachers, but also the members of our larger communities who have been so generous with their donations. Please take time to thank the merchants who gave. A little note and a drawing by your child will be proudly displayed in a business and becomes good publicity for both the merchant and the school.

A special thanks to all you parents, teachers, and kids who worked so hard on the class art projects . . . just wait ‘til you see them!

Hope you have a great time at the auction. We’ll be back in next month’s issue with the results!

TOPS AUCTION:
MAY 5, 6:30 P.M.
ASIAN RESOURCE CENTER,
1025 SOUTH KING STREET

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