

# TOPS NEWS

## PLEDGE FUNDS TO SUPPORT KEY POSITIONS

By Principal Gary Tubbs

What a wonderful opening to the school year! Thank you for sending your beautiful children to us—happy, friendly, respectful, and hard-working!

Although I have never been motivated by money, I am compelled to bring a money issue to the TOPS family as it directly impacts the loving spirit of this school. We are at risk of losing two of our most critical staff members, Clara Scott, Assistant Principal, and Jennifer Murray, Counselor, should we not raise additional funds. Below I explain the circumstances affecting each position, as well as the reasons why the TOPS budget cannot stretch further to cover these expenses.

The bottom line: This year, our No Bake Bake Sale must raise \$90,000! It is very important that each of us pledge what we can. I will pledge \$1000. This is not an easy thing for me, but I want you to know how important it is that we “save” these key staff without cutting back on the many fine enrichment programs we currently enjoy.

My DREAM is that we achieve this \$90,000 goal with pledges according to the following pyramid

- One pledge of \$10,000
- Five pledges of \$5,000
- 15 of \$1000
- 30 of \$500
- 60 of \$250
- 100 of \$100
- 100 of \$50
- 100 of \$20

*Why do we need funds for Clara Scott's position as Assistant Principal?*

Clara is a beautiful spirit and rare talent. She is ready to be a principal, and the Superintendent wants her to take a school of her own. In fact, he tried to entice her away this year! To keep her beyond this year, I submitted a proposal to Superintendent Olchefske for Co-Principals at TOPS beginning next year. He loved the idea as he wants a model for other schools to replicate in the future. However, for us to be Co-Principals, we must raise an additional \$10,000. We can do this!



TOPS at Seward  
2500 Franklin Avenue East  
Seattle, WA 98102

Phone: (206) 252-3510  
Fax: (206) 252-3511

**Principal:**  
Gary Tubbs

**Site Council Chair:**  
Betsy Scott

### NEWSLETTER ONLINE

The TOPS newsletters are available online in PDF format, usually before the printed copy arrives in your mailbox! From the TOPS home page (<http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/tops>), click on Hot News Spots, then TOPS Newsletters.

## CHANGE THAT BOOKMARK!

TOPS web address has changed . . . again! Finally, something easy to remember at <http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/tops>.

Fifth grade teacher Kevin Crozier has taken on the job of TOPS Webmaster, so send your suggestions and additions to him at [kcrozier@halcyon.com](mailto:kcrozier@halcyon.com). And many thanks to Jack Lee for his long service at the Webmaster's keyboard.

*Why do we need funds for Jennifer Murray's position as School Counselor?*

We “purchased” a counselor position last year and again this year using carry-over dollars that had been saved over several years. These funds “dry up” in June. Without additional funds, we will have to cut back. In my opinion, K-8 schools do not have an adequate funding foundation. I have put myself on the District's Weighted Student Formula Committee in an attempt to

address this issue, but I face serious challenges. Jennifer works so beautifully with the children, parents, and staff. We simply cannot have a school of nearly 600 and not have a counselor—particularly a school with 200 adolescents! Cost: \$50,000

*Why can't the TOPS budget adjust to cover basic staff?*

Each school in Seattle is funded according to the particular children they serve. This is called the Weighted Student Formula. Different factors determine

*continued on page 2*



# MR. TUBBS AND Ms. SCOTT SHARE DUTIES

By Principal Gary Tubbs

## ABOUT THE OUTRAGEOUS PUBLISHING SERVICE

Welcome to the second monthly newsletter of the 2000-2001 school year, edited by Julie Pickering, Jim Wells, and Sandi Kurtz. Cindy Suzumura handles layout. Bruce Pulmano maintains the mailing list and gets the newsletter out to you.

We need your contributions—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](mailto:jpick@halcyon.com) or by snail mail at 2624 East Olive Street, Seattle 98122-3144).

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINES FOR 2000-2001

October 12, November 9,  
December 15, January 12,  
February 16, March 15,  
April 20, May 11, June 29

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

Clara Scott, Assistant Principal, and I have coordinated our schedules this year to improve instructional leadership opportunities. We do this to further support our teaching staff and students. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

On Mondays and Wednesdays, I will be the administrator in charge. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Ms. Scott will serve in that role. Fridays will be "normal" and a day to debrief, catch up, and tie up loose ends.

The administrator in charge will:

- ◆ take appointments
- ◆ schedule meetings
- ◆ handle "drop ins"
- ◆ take phone calls
- ◆ return phone calls
- ◆ handle discipline issues
- ◆ extinguish "brush fires" :)
- ◆ have decision-making authority (although we like to bounce issues off each other, so some decisions will wait until we can confer).

*Pledge Funds continued from page 1*

the "weighted" dollars, e.g., poverty, limited English, and special education requirements. Because of our student demographics, TOPS' budget is quite bare bones. By the time we pay for the basics, we have very few options left. At right I provide a summary of our expenditures. I do not blame our challenges on the Seattle School District. We can only fund our local schools given the dollars from the state and federal governments. I hope I live to see the day when our society invests in its children as a top priority. In the meantime, consider this budget and offer your support for these two important positions. Thank you!

The administrator "off duty" will:

- ◆ visit classrooms
- ◆ help teachers
- ◆ connect with children, encourage, "cheerlead," and guide
- ◆ provide support, ideas, and feedback regarding instruction
- ◆ cover classrooms, so teachers can observe each other teaching
- ◆ meet with teachers
- ◆ meet with students
- ◆ play and have fun.

We believe this schedule will help provide the balance and support required to nurture and nourish the soul (climate) and spirit (goodness) of the school and each human within its walls. We don't know how it's going to go, but we're determined to give our best shot. Your feedback as we take this leadership "risk" will be most helpful. Thanks!

## Outline of TOPS \$1.9M budget

66 percent ..... Classroom Teachers  
16 percent ..... Support Staff (Library, Family Support Worker, Instructional Assistants, etc.)  
1 percent ..... Stipends, Consultant Services, and Staff Extra Time  
9 percent ..... Administration  
6 percent ..... Office Staff  
<2 percent ..... Books, Printing, and Supplies  
<1 percent ..... Equipment and Technology

# TOPS NO BAKE FUNDRAISER LAUNCHES

By Laurie Black and Elaine Moberly

Want to sell pizza, gift wrap, or candy for six months every year? Does sending your kids out to the front of stores badgering friends, relatives, neighbors, and coworkers sound like fun? Friends of TOPS say, "NO!" Selling gift wrap or candy eats up 40 percent of the profits. At TOPS, our philosophy is to limit ourselves to two All-School fundraisers each year: The No Bake Bake Sale and the Spring Auction.

The No Bake Bake Sale delivers 99 percent of all donations directly to school programs. What does the No Bake fund? The Friends of TOPS—the nonprofit fundraising arm of the Site Council. This organization allocates No Bake funds for enhancements to our school program, which can't be paid for out of the building's budget. In the past, enhancements have included: hiring an art teacher for the elementary classes; upgrading computers; supporting an all-school drama program; purchasing classroom supplies; and, for 2001-02,

possibly helping to fund a Co-Principalship, thus keeping two able administrators in our building (see page 1). The money is also used to match grant funds.

We hope for 100 percent participation in the No Bake this year. No gift is too small. Our goal is \$90,000, more than double last year. If every family participates, that means approximately \$200 a family. Please consider this average donation or any amount that fits your budget. We have a lot of great programs to fund for 2001. We need your support in the classroom and we need your \$\$\$!

If you didn't donate at the State of the School meeting September 20, don't worry! You will receive all of the information you need to make a donation in the mail. We need everyone's support to keep the TOPS program as good and as varied as it is.

Questions? Please call Laurie Black at 285-7079.

## SITE COUNCIL CORRECTION

Newly inaugurated Site Council Treasurer and Parent Rep for grades 3-5 Peggy Riehle has reminded us how to spell her surname and updated us on her family's e-mail address (peggynben@home.com). Please make a note of it and take this opportunity to help Peggy and other Site Council members with the many projects that make TOPS so great.

---

## GREETINGS FROM ADMINISTRATIVE INTERN: THALIA NAWI



Hello all TOPS parents and students!

This term I will be working as an intern with your amazing administrative team, Mr. Tubbs and Ms. Scott. I am currently in the Danforth Educational Leadership Program at the University of Washington, and along with my administrative certification, I am working on a M.Ed. in leadership and Policy Studies.

I recently completed two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in The Gambia, West Africa. While there, I conducted trainings for elementary school teachers. That was a great experience. I certainly gained an appreciation for American schools and how much we have to offer our students. Prior to the Peace Corps, I taught in California, grades 6 and K. I miss the classroom and California, but I am appreciating the challenges of administration and the beauty of Washington State.

I'll be here at TOPS through December, four days a week. I enjoy seeing TOPS students and parents in action and look forward to getting to know you all better.

# JULIE TROUT RESURFACES!

After a summer in the "baby vortex," former sixth grade teacher Julie Trout has come up for air, teaching Middle School art part-time (40 percent hours) to fifth and sixth graders. (Luzita Roll is teaching art at 60 percent to the seventh and eighth graders.)

Julie reports that life is good with her happy baby boy, Javon Nicola Arnone, who was ably ushered into this world last spring by midwife and TOPS parent, Michelle Sarju. Kudos to all, including those lucky Middle Schoolers who benefit from such a great art program.



# 2000-2001 TOPS CALENDAR

## AUGUST

31 (M) ..... Staff Development Days

## SEPTEMBER

4 (M) ..... Labor Day. No school

6 (W) ..... First student day

13 (W) ..... Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.

## OCTOBER

4 (W) ..... Curriculum Night

11 (W) ..... Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.

13 (F) ..... Teacher workshop. No school

## NOVEMBER

3 (F) ..... End of 1<sup>st</sup> quarter (Middle School grades)

8 (W) ..... Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.

10 (F) ..... Veterans Day. No school

18 (S) ..... Taste of TOPS

22 (W) ..... One hour early dismissal for Thanksgiving

23-24 (Th-F) .... Thanksgiving vacation

## DECEMBER

13 (W) ..... Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.

15,16 (F, S) ..... Middle School play

22 (F) ..... Winter break begins

## JANUARY

2 (T) ..... School starts again

10 (W) ..... Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.

15 (M) ..... Martin Luther King Day. No school

29 (F) ..... End of semester (Middle School)

29 (M) ..... Learning Improvement Day (teacher workshops). No school

## FEBRUARY

14 (W) ..... Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.

19-23 (M-F) ..... Mid-winter break. No school

## MARCH

16 (F) ..... Teacher workshops. No school

14 (W) ..... Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.

## APRIL

11 (W) ..... Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.

9-13 (M-F) ..... Spring break

## MAY

9 (W) ..... Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.

18 (F) ..... Teacher workshops. No school

28 (M) ..... Memorial Day. No school

## JUNE

13 (W) ..... Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.

17 (S) ..... Site Council Retreat

20 (F) ..... Last student day

21 (M) ..... Last teacher day

## VOLUNTEER HOURS = MATCHING FUNDS

**PLEASE REPORT YOUR HOURS!**

With a note in the Volunteer Coordinator mailbox, on the Volunteer Hours clipboard in the Main Office, or with a monthly e-mail or phone call to Marlies van Bergeijk (328-3064, paul-marlies@worldnet.att.net).

# WASL SCORES: LOOKING GOOD

The results are in on the Spring 2000 Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), and TOPS' scores continue to improve. Great work by students and teachers! Congratulate your fifth and eighth graders who inspire all of us with their success.

## GRADE 4

	LISTENING	READING	WRITING	MATHEMATICS
1998	61.4% (69.8)	61.4% (53.8)	16% (40.2)	40% (36.1)
1999	91.9% (67.1)	87.1% (56.6)	64.5% (39)	69.4% (36.2)
2000	92.2%	87.5%	71.9%	76.6%

## GRADE 7

	LISTENING	READING	WRITING	MATHEMATICS
1998	91.5% (69.2)	54.2% (33.6)	27.1% (30.5)	32.2% (21.6)
1999	95.2% (84.8)	79% (40.9)	53.2% (37)	53.2% (27.4)
2000	95.2%	82.3%	69.4%	64.5%

(% indicates total percentage of students who meet or exceed the standard. District scores are indicated by figures in parentheses when available.)

*What do you think of the WASL? Send your comments and questions, or even an article to the newsletter (via the Newsletter mailbox in the office or [jpick@halcyon.com](mailto:jpick@halcyon.com)). Tell the community what you think. Ask questions of staff and administrators. It's an important topic!*

## YOUR ROOM REPS

(as of 9/19/2000)

Grade	Teacher	Room Rep
K	Joan	Kay and Martin Zerr (784-1510) August Drake-Ericson (324-0541)
K	Joby	Maggie McDonald Molly LaPatra (789-7169)
1	Carla	Randi Niemer (784-5287) LeaAnn Miyagawa (784-3559) Grace Killorin (545-1106)
1	Tabitha	Casey White (325-4868) Maureen Germani (545-1771)
2	Louise	Barbara Stannard (633-2609) Molly LaPatra (789-7169)
2	Willie	Volunteer today!
3	Tracy	Debra Zawada (783-3646) Gretchen Chambers (632-0651)
3	Katie	Andrea Chin (324-4004) Laura Hopkins (706-9075) Heather Worthley (783-6092)
4	Joe	Mark Morales (325-4079) Patty Seales (722-5133)
4	Mary	Shirley Bossier (323-7717) Sandra Welsh (285-6254)
5	Kevin Crozier	Cheryl Pappy (725-0577) Bonnie Morita (325-3677)
5	Tal Troy	Terry Sperling (632-0796)
6	Marianne Trangen	Maggi Lubov (323-4965) Linda Downing (367-0615)
6	Lana Fuller	Volunteer today!
7	Luzita Roll	Virginia Powers (285-1691)
7	David Wilhelm	Laurie Black (285-7079)
8	Mark Ellis	Janet Moore (283-7284) Mary Connors (325-6708)
8	Lori Eickelberg	Volunteer today!

## SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE 2000-01

Grab your calendars and jot down these dates—to get a post-performance review from your family's theater critic or to volunteer to drive to one or more of these great events! Eight drivers/adults are needed for each class. Parent-drivers need to purchase a ticket, as do siblings who can come on a space-available basis. Contact your teacher or room rep to volunteer.

### Animal Farm

Wed., Oct. 25, Grades 4-6  
(Grades 2-3 waitlisted at this time)

### The Red Balloon

Thurs. Nov. 9, BOC  
Fri. Dec. 8, Grades K-3

### Prince Brat and the Whipping Boy

Fri., Jan. 5, Grades 3-4  
Wed., Jan. 10, Grades 1 or 2  
Fri. Jan. 12, Grades 1 or 2

### Mask of the Unicorn Warrior

Fri., Mar. 2, Grades 2-4

### Winnie-the-Pooh

Thurs., Apr. 26, BOC  
Thurs., May 3, Grades K-3

### Sideways Stories from Wayside School

Wed., June 6, Grades 1-5  
  
(Student scholarships are available.  
All performances are scheduled for  
10:30 a.m.)

# AN INTRODUCTION FROM MARIANNE TRANGEN, TOPS' NEW 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TEACHER

The more I think about what to include in this article, the more difficult it becomes to choose. I received my undergraduate degree in Russian literature from Stanford University. The study of foreign language first became a passion for me in high school when I started studying French. In fact, I can still remember the short story by Albert Camus that forever changed my view of literature. His novel *The Stranger*, along with Jean-Paul Sartre's play *No Exit*, opened my eyes to a world much larger than the one I could see around me as a Southern California teen.



I continued with French and began studying Spanish at Stanford. I spent part of my sophomore year at the Stanford campus in Tours, France, and traveled throughout Europe the following summer. As much as I enjoyed the opportunity to use my French and Spanish, the biggest thrill for me was living with a family in Greece for a few weeks. Equipped with nothing but a phrase book, I picked up quite a bit of modern Greek during my stay. As a result, I decided that I should use my final two years as an undergraduate to get a good start on a third foreign language.

At that point, I decided to pursue a goal that I had developed in high school. I wanted to read

Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky in the original Russian. Though Russian was the only language that I had found genuinely difficult to master, its beauty and complexity enchanted me. I majored in Russian and have continued to study it off and on over the next 10-15 years. I spent the summer of 1982 in St. Petersburg (then Leningrad) on an exchange program at Leningrad State University and returned to Russia for a semester of study in 1983. For me, it was like a dream come true to walk the streets of all my favorite characters from literature.

After two years in a graduate program at UCLA for the study of Slavic linguistics, I felt that I needed to try something completely different. I was offered a job as an at-sea company representative by a Soviet-American joint venture fishing company based in Seattle. That position required that I live and work on Russian processor ships for months at a time in order to coordinate (through translation and diplomacy) the joint operations between Russian factory boats and American catcher boats. My three years with Marine Resources Company, International provided invaluable practice in speaking and working in Russian. Since the company was based in Seattle, I chose to move here permanently in 1985.

When the American interest of MRCI opened a travel agency called Troika, exclusively for travel to Russia, they hired me to accompany various professional groups and coordinate counterpart meetings for all of our travelers. The Americans I accompanied ranged from high school students, farmers, and Vietnam veterans to chess players,

building contractors, and chamber musicians. The amount of common ground shared by Soviets and Americans of the same profession never ceased to amaze and delight me. While working at Troika, I traveled frequently to several of the republics, which have now become independent states. Not surprisingly, my travel abroad came to a screeching halt when I started having children.

My son, Edmund, will start 6th grade at Washington Middle School this fall, and my daughter, Leah, will continue at Lowell Elementary, where she will begin 3rd grade. It was during my years at home with my children that I began to consider teaching as a career. I had taught ESL to adults when I first graduated from college and the experience was extremely rewarding.

When I started with the Seattle Schools, I worked as a Bilingual Instructional Assistant at Eckstein Middle School. For the most part, I worked with Russian-speaking students from the former USSR. From the beginning, I felt an affinity for the students and the curriculum content in middle school. Over the years I worked at Bryant Elementary and Roosevelt High School, as well. Still, I felt most at home in middle school. Hence my decision to spend my time as a student teacher in a 7th grade classroom at McClure Middle School.

For the last three years, I have taught 2nd grade at Northgate Elementary. While the curriculum and the students in the primary grades have their own special charm, I missed the content of the curriculum and the passionate debate that I had enjoyed as a middle school teacher. That is why I was delighted to find an opportunity to teach 6th grade at TOPS. My friend and former colleague, Kevin Crozier, had told me how happy he was about his move here, so I decided to look for myself. I was pleasantly surprised to find another teacher, Loren Smith, at the BOC. I enjoyed working at Bryant with her very much. Tal Troy and I also met at McClure. The teachers, administrators, parents, and students I have met have extended me a warm welcome, so I feel very excited about the coming year.

Last, but certainly not least, I am enthused about curriculum. I especially look forward to working with students to develop their literary appreciation and experiment with different forms of writing. Some coursework I have completed over the last two years, which was developed by Romalda Spalding, maps out a simple and effective approach to helping students enhance their reading comprehension, precision in writing, and accuracy in spelling. I reread *Animal Farm* in anticipation of our trip to the Seattle Children's Theatre in the fall and cannot wait to research Orwell's study of Soviet history in class before we see the play. Our social studies text looks much richer and more colorful than the one I used for Eastern Civilization at Eckstein. All in all, this year promises to be an exhilarating one for me.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENTS BRIEFED ON THE NEW YEAR

By Julie Pickering

Just one week into the new school year, Principal Gary Tubbs and Assistant Principal Clara Scott gathered a large group of Middle School parents for a back-to-school briefing on TOPS Middle School life. At the September 12 meeting, the two administrators reviewed the first week of school (a rousing success), Middle School rules and responsibilities, extracurricular activities, the changing nature of parent involvement over the Middle School years, and activities funded by the Middle School Grant.

## Rules and Responsibilities

Mr. Tubbs and Ms. Scott underlined the importance of timeliness—to school in the morning and to each class during the day—reminding parents of their responsibility for getting kids to school on time. They also reviewed the dress code, Middle School dance policy, and off-campus rules.

School disciplinary policies were also discussed, with Mr. Tubbs assuring parents that harassment, bullying, and disrespect for authority are firmly addressed under TOPS' "zero tolerance" policy. Together with counselor Jennifer Murray, Mr. Tubbs explained the system of consequences, counseling, and other tools used to address disciplinary problems. All TOPS parents should

review the Staff, Parent, and Student Expectation booklet provided in their back-to-school information packet distributed the first week of school.

## Leadership and Extracurricular Activities

Outside the classroom, Middle Schoolers will be busy this year. Ms. Scott is planning an off-campus Leadership Forum (October 10) for all Middle Schoolers, designed to build self-esteem and leadership skills among. Mr. Tubbs also looks forward to enhanced student involvement through the Student Leadership Council, which was launched last year. Mr. Tubbs praised the students' handling of school dance policy last year and looks forward to working with this student-run group again this year.

Afterschool Middle School activities will include soccer, basketball, and track for girls and boys, girls' volleyball, crew for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, ski club, afterschool study table, chamber music, band, yearbook, and one or two additional activities, such as drama. These activities are funded in part by the District's Afterschool Activities Program (ASAP) targeting Middle Schools.

The Middle School Parent Forums for 2000-1 were also announced at the September meeting, with a brief introduction by Forum facilitator Victor Larson and Middle School Grant coordinator Carolyn Law. (See below)

## MATHEMATICS HOMEWORK HOTLINE

The Seattle School District's Mathematics Homework Hotline—729-3333—is up and running to provide support to students with their homework. The Hotline is staffed by Seattle teachers and is open on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

---

## MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT FORUMS

Following on the success of last year's gatherings funded by the Middle School Grant, a new round of Middle School Parent Forums is planned for 2000-2001. These forums provide an opportunity for parents to talk seriously among themselves and with trained professionals about issues facing their changing kids, peer group, and families; for parents and kids to come together and explore their concerns; and for kids to have their voices heard by an attentive parent group.

The Forums will be facilitated by Victor Larson, a former TOPS parent and counseling professional who works with adolescents and their families at University Prep and elsewhere. Pamela Hillard, program manager for Health Education at the Seattle School District, will help facilitate the first forum on adolescent development.

Like last year's forums, some of this year's events will include Middle Schoolers, as well as their parents. All Middle School families are urged to participate. Those who came last year can attest to the value of these gatherings. Victor Larson is also asking parents to join him in finding ways to attract more family involvement in these Forums. Please contact him at 522-5084 with your ideas.

Mark your calendar for the first round of Forums. All Forums are held in the Library 7-9 p.m.

September 28, Thursday .... Presentation on adolescent development for 6-8<sup>th</sup> grade parents  
October 17, Tuesday ..... 6<sup>th</sup> Grade parent meeting  
October 19, Thursday ..... 7<sup>th</sup> grade parent meeting  
October 24, Tuesday ..... 8<sup>th</sup> grade parent meeting

# WHAT WE LIKE AND DON'T LIKE FROM LOUISE'S 2<sup>ND</sup> GRADERS

Hi my name is Deric. I like dominating in tether- ball. I don't like my Pesky big brother. I am a fast runner and I am an inventor. My family is not in the astronaut Program, but it seems like do everything else?

~ Deric

I like dogs. I don't like frogs I like Japanese foods and My favorite colors red, Blue and yellow. My family is the Best family in the world. My family has 5 people in it.

~ Maria

## NEED HELP ON A RESEARCH PROJECT?

From Steve Haines, Librarian

Check out this website:  
[http://www.ala.org/  
ICONN/kidsconn.html](http://www.ala.org/ICONN/kidsconn.html)

KidsConnect is a question-answering help service designed for K-12 students using the Internet. Through e-mail, students contact KidsConnect and ask for assistance from a volunteer library media specialist. The student receives an answer within two school days. According to the site, "The goal of the service is to help students access and use the information on the Internet effectively and efficiently." The site also features a link to their favorite websites for students.

I'm Art. I like popcorn, but I don't like corn. I like the moon. I like the sun. I like apples, but I don't like cherries. I like berries. I like to build legos. My family has dark hair.

~ Art

My favorite food is pasta. I'm eight years old. My Mom is a computer genius. My Dad is from Palistine on the other side of the earth. My favorite sport is soccer. I have two kittens one is clairisa the other one is Little kitty. I can speak Arabic its the language they speak in Palistine.

~ Ariana

Hi my name is Josh. i've ben to the Ripley's Believe it or not museum. I like to play Nintenbo. I Read Harr Potttr. I Like ouch BuBBle gum. I Do not Like Homework. I Do not Like rain. I Do not Like A.B.C. gum. I Do not Like to go Shopping. We woch TV. We play games. We play mario cart. me and my Family hav fun.

~ Joshua

My mom is Japanese and My dad is American. I can speek Japanese and English. But I was Born in seatal. I like curny and I dont like spini- ch. I like foot ball and I dont like homwerch.

~ Koji

Hi I,m samuel. I like sushi. I,m a good friend. I have a mom and dad and 2 sisters I have a hamster 2 parakeets and a fish and 2 snails.

~ Samuel

Hi my name is JALENA LUU. I'm 7 years old. I like to play with my baby cousin. my baby cousin is very cool because he can almost walk. I like to play video game and basketball I have a bike that I like to play in my back yard. I some time ride my bike. I can't ride my bike every day because I need to go to school and I need to do my homework after school.

~ Jalena

I Like piano Becaus its fun hearing all the sounds you cen make frum the kes. I like school Becaus its fun lurning. I dont like dandelions Becus they take over all the room in the gardin. I dont like morning glores. I am special Becus I am the oldest sisder. My family and I like gowing on Bikerides. We like to gave family concerts.

~ Madeline

My name is Quy seven years old. I study a primary school second garde in TOPS school MY Family have five people. My Parent, one brother and one sister. They go to school. Parent go to WORK. I like to play Basketball and ride bike. I DON'T like to wear glasses.

~Quy

(Thanks to transcriber Toni Hahn!)

# UNDERSTANDING JEWISH HOLIDAYS

By Susan Davis

Last year I spoke about my experience as a Jewish person at a meeting of the TOPS Diversity Issues Coalition and wrote up my talk for the newsletter (May 2000). At the time, I promised to offer a more detailed “roadmap” to the holidays that play such an important role in Jewish life.

Below I focus on the “High Holidays” that happen in early fall. Just as school starts and children’s activities begin, we are busy preparing for these holidays. Observant people have four holidays during the fall. (Chanukah is not considered a major holiday.)

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**Middle School Play**  
December 15 and 16

Holiday	Reason	Practice	When*	Symbols
<b>Rosh Ha-Shanah***</b> (High Holy Days or “Days of Awe”)	Considered the day God created the world. Also known as the Jewish New Year. (See Yom Kippur)	Go to synagogue. No work or school. Time of reflection of the past year and how to improve oneself, ethically and religiously as well as one’s environment—locally or globally in the upcoming year.	The evening** of September 29 and the day of Sept. 30. Some people celebrate a second day also.	Shofar (ram’s horn, used as an instrument) Apples and honey (for a sweet year).
<b>Yom Kippur***</b> (High Holy Days or “Days of Awe”)	Day of Atonement. Although Rosh Ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur are listed separately, they really operate in concert with each other and are considered the Holiest of Holidays.	On this day Jews fast and go to synagogue. No school or work. Even many “non-practicing” Jews take the time to observe both Rosh Ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur holidays.	The evening of October 8 and day of October 9	Self-reflection. After sundown on the 9 <sup>th</sup> , dinner is called the “break fast.”
<b>Sukkot</b> (Booths)	Sukkot is celebrated for two reasons: to remember the booths Jews lived in after the exodus from Egypt; and to celebrate the fall harvest in Israel and remember the farmers.	Erect and decorate a sukkah (temporary booth) for the week, in the backyard. People eat meals in the sukkah and may sleep in them (if the weather is good). It is customary to invite guests to your sukkah for a meal.	Begins the evening of October 14 and ends on the 21 <sup>st</sup> .	Sukkah (temporary booth commonly in the backyard or porch) Etrog (citron) Lulav (leaves from four different plants)
<b>Simchat Torah</b> (Rejoicing in the Law)	Celebrates the completion of the annual cycle of Torah readings and beginning again.	Studying and praying, singing, dancing, and partying. Usually celebrated by more observant Jews, in synagogue.	Evening of October 21 and the day of 22	Torah (Scrolls of the Jewish Bible. Considered the holiest book in Judaism.)

\*The Jewish calendar is based on a lunar system, so every year differs, according to our calendar. These holidays always happen in the fall.

\*\*The “Jewish day” begins at sunset.

\*\*\* More commonly observed than Sukkot or Simchat Torah. Less observant Jews may not attend a synagogue service, but will find some other way to celebrate the holidays, either with friends and family, or alone.

(Susan Davis is the director of Kadima and has a son in the 2nd grade.)

# PE KICKS OFF A NEW YEAR

*From Don Zenke and Eric Herndon*

The start of the school year has been wonderful! It's a treat to finally have such an awesome facility to teach in, for the first time ever!

The first week of school was spent on rules and regulations, procedures, cooperative games, and other team-building exercises with an emphasis on working together and respecting one another.

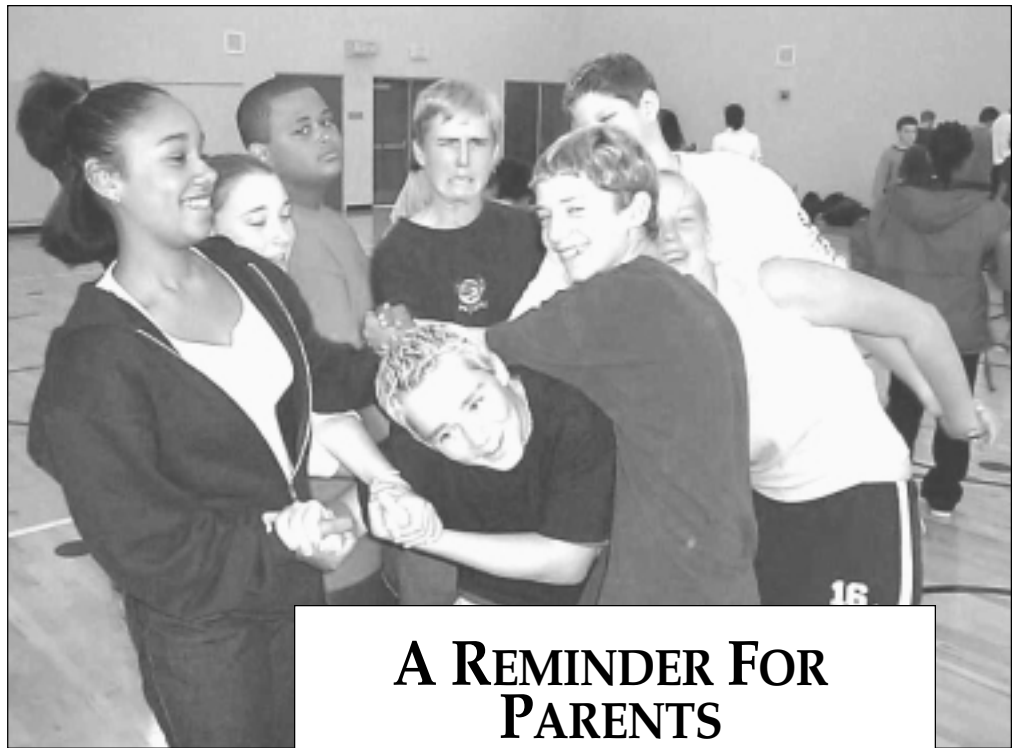
Week Two focused on teaching and pre-testing the Presidents Physical Fitness Test. The information that we record will be used to set individual baselines and goals, and help make it possible to monitor progress. These baselines and goals will then be used in each student's PE portfolio and in PE progress reports in place of the traditional report card, which didn't give parents much information.

On September 18<sup>th</sup>, we began teaching two-week units, beginning with the TOPS Olympic Games. Be sure and ask your child about some of the special skills they learned, such as the hammer throw, shotput, and high jump, to name a few.

After-school sports also began on September 18<sup>th</sup>. After-school sports are open to anybody who wants to participate. Each participant should turn in an after-school sports permission slip, which can be obtained in the Main Office or the gym office.

To start the year, Mondays will be volleyball for grades 5-8. Tuesdays will be Double Dutch, including all ages, girls Middle School soccer team practices on Wednesday, Thursday is basketball for grades 5-8, and Friday will be alternative sports and games for all ages.

There has been a very positive response from students and parents to the idea of acquiring a horizontal traverse climbing wall for the gym. Don, Eric, and the students are putting their heads together to try to figure out the best location for the wall, the best design, and how to come up with the \$4,500 to purchase and install it.



## A REMINDER FOR PARENTS

Part of each student's grade is based on participation. You can make it easy for your child to participate by making sure that they are dressed appropriately and have tennis shoes for gym class. Thanks from Don and Eric!

# HEY KIDS! LET'S GO SURFING!

By Jennifer Murray, TOPS Counselor

Surfing the Net, I mean. But before you go, there are some important safety rules you should know about surfing, privacy, and your personal information. Just as your parents may tell you to be wary of strangers you meet in person, you need to be aware that people online are not always who they say they are, and that online information is not necessarily private.

So, here are a few rules to keep in mind:

1. Never give out your last or family name, your home address, or your phone number in chat rooms, on bulletin boards, or to online pen pals.
2. Don't tell other kids your screen name, user ID, or password.
3. Look at a website's Privacy Policy to see how the site uses the information you give them. (A link to the Privacy Policy is usually located on the bottom of the homepage. Think about it when you *don't* see a Privacy Policy.)

4. Surf the Internet with your parents. If they aren't available, talk to them about the sites you are visiting.
5. Talk about the site's Privacy Policy with your parents so that you and your parents will know what information that site collects about you and what it does with the information.
6. Websites must get your parent's permission before they collect many kinds of information from you.
7. If a website has information about you that you and your parents don't want it to have, your parents can ask to see the information—and they can ask the website to delete or erase the information.
8. Sites are not supposed to collect more information than they need about you for the activity you want to participate in. You should be able to participate in many activities online without having to give any information about yourself.
9. If a site makes you uncomfortable or asks for more information than you want to share, leave the site.

## HOW DOES YOUR FAMILY HANDLE INTERNET USE?

Share your suggestions and concerns in the November newsletter.

Deadline: Thursday, October 12 via the Newsletter mailbox in the office or by e-mail to [jpick@halcyon.com](mailto:jpick@halcyon.com)

---

## PICTURE WALL

Isn't it great how our school really feels like home? There's only one thing missing . . . family photos! We propose a solution. Bring a framed family photo, and we'll round out our front hallway for those who call TOPS home.

Any framed family photo (professional shots preferred but not required), 5" by 7" or smaller, is welcome. If you don't have a photo and are interested in a family photo night, please contact Thalia Nawi, our administrative intern (252-3541).

A volunteer is needed to help this vision become a reality. Please contact Volunteer Coordinator Marlies van Bergeijk (328-3064) if you are interested!

Thank you, and welcome home!

## APPRECIATING OUR STAFF

By Janet Moore

The Staff Appreciation Committee hosted a back-to-school breakfast for the teachers August 28<sup>th</sup> with coffee and various homemade items and fruit. Many parents helped by baking treats for the staff as they busied themselves in their classrooms and offices. I would like to thank Julie Braybrooks and Kay Chapman for baking great treats. I am also looking for more volunteers for this committee. It is really important to do nice things for the ALL the staff at TOPS. For more information and to volunteer, contact me at 283-7284 or at [d.j.moore@worldnet.att.net](mailto:d.j.moore@worldnet.att.net).

## ATTENDANCE PLEASE!

Remember: TOPS has a new attendance number—252-3518. messages regarding attendance can be left at that number after school hours as well. Thanks!

