MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

HAPPY HOLIDAYS! As we prepare to spend time with family and friends to celebrate this magical season, please be mindful as you always are of the TOPS families who are in need. The food drive and Winter Wishes are in progress. Please send canned food and non-perishable food items to school with your son/daughter. You can also drop them off in the front office. The Winter Wishes board with gift tags is located in the foyer. Gift cards are accepted as well. When you take a tag, please fill out the information on the clipboard in the office. Last year, we were able to serve 25 families. If you have questions, please contact Alesia Jessie or Catrice Dennis.

Jennifer, Marianne, and I attended the International Bully Prevention Workshop conference in Atlanta. One of the perks of our trip was that we were able to have dinner with the Pappy family. Many of the TOPS families were well acquainted with the Pappys. Adlai and Camille are doing very well. Adlai is a swimmer, president of his class, and busy looking for colleges. Camille continues to be a good student and loves volleyball. Cheryl is a high school math teacher.

We all attended some dynamic workshops. One that I attended was “How to Build a Positive School Work Community.” We were challenged to think about all of the adults in our school community, staff, parents, and community volunteers, and to answer the question—“do we model the kind of behavior that we want to see in the students?” If we want to improve our school climate at TOPS, it requires a comprehensive, coordinated, and sustained effort.

The goals that we must demonstrate to achieve a positive school climate are:

◆ Positive relationships among students, staff, and parents
◆ Inclusiveness for all students, new parents, staff, and community volunteers
◆ A consistent school-wide response to bullying, harassing, and cyber-bullying by adults and students

Continued on page 5

TOPS SKIING
By Teresa Nemeth

It’s raining as I write this mid-November, and it has been raining as long as we can all remember, but I am trusting that by the time this newsletter is printed, our light, bright winter getaways will be in perfect shape. Are we worried about El Nino? One TOPS skier tells me that Mt. Baker’s record snowfall year happened during an El Nino. (This same skier located the exact best snowy path down Summit Central one icy Friday evening last year, so maybe he knows his stuff.)

On the afternoons of January 5, 12, 19, and 26, and on the morning of February 2, the ski bus will depart TOPS and head to Snoqualmie Pass, where middle schoolers from around the city will meet to ski, snowboard, and play in the snow. The bus ride may be half the fun. This year we’ll try to remember to turn on the video switch, so conveniently located OUTSIDE the bus, before we pull away from the curb.

Molly LaPatra has organized the program this year, and she ably took parents and students through the somewhat mind-boggling sign-up process at a meeting in early November. Students have the option of taking lessons at a special group rate with other TOPS students at the same ability level. Parent chaperones will ride with each bus and remain available on the mountain to help with gear, cold fingers, finding food, or whatever is needed. Thanks to the generosity of a number of TOPS families, scholarships are available to those in need.

Continued on page 4

TOPS at Seward
2500 Franklin Avenue East
Seattle, WA 98102
Phone: (206) 252-3510
Fax: (206) 252-3511

Principal: Clara Scott
Assistant Principal: Gerrit Kischner
Site Council Chair: Glen Tamura

NEWSLETTER ONLINE
The TOPS newsletters are available online in PDF format before the printed copy arrives in your mailbox! From the TOPS home page, http://www.topsk8.org, click on Latest Newsletter in the Quick Links section.

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FEBRUARY TOPSNEWS DEADLINE
Friday, January 12. Submissions to topsnewsletter@gmail.com
Why Donate to the TOPS No-Bake Annual Fund Drive?

By Team No-Bake

Every child at TOPS benefits from the generosity of our NO-BAKE fund drive. Each school day, your child is supported academically, artistically, and socially by the funds raised during the NO-BAKE.

The list of programs provided through the generosity of the families is ASTOUNDING. Please take a moment to reflect on the following list and recognize the many ways YOUR child is strengthened and supported by our NO-BAKE funded enrichment.

We are entering our final month of the TOPS NO-BAKE annual fund drive. Our goal is to raise $82,000 and to receive a donation from every TOPS family before December 31.

Whether your family can give $10 or $1000, please join in this effort to raise funds for the fabulous programs provided to our children. The average donation last year was just over $200 per family.

Please mail your NO-BAKE check today.

The Three Rs plus S

- Literacy block
- Junior great books
- Tutoring
- Elementary school science
- Science materials K-8
- Classroom materials for every teacher
- Technology / computer integration
- Library books / supplies
- Multicultural books
- Writers in Schools
- Math enrichment – MS

Special TOPS Programs

- Camp for EVERY TOPS student
- Multicultural assemblies
- Kindergarten salmon program
- Middle school pizza topics
- Childcare for school meetings
- Mandarin and Spanish language
- Video production class
- ORAL HISTORY project
- Circus Arts
- 8th grade passage

Drama Program

- 3rd Grade play workshop
- Elementary play
- Middle School play
- ACT young playwrights program (YPP)
**No-Bake Contributors**

*As of November 12, 2006*

Kraig and Lana Abrams  
Gloria Albetta and Frank Fabens  
Rabha Al-Harazi and Samia Salon  
Michael Aycock and Jennifer Martinez  
Jean Bradbury  
Liz Bullard  
Gail and John Chase  
Ron Chew  
Andrea Chin and Vance Martin  
Michele Coad  
Judy and Sarah Cohen  
Keith Cohon and Yumi Hiraga  
Stephanie Colony  
Per and Karol Danielsson  
Colleen and Dan Dejneka  
Catherine Duva and Paul Shannon  
Beth Eagen and Dan Malone  
Arthur and Charlene Emlen  
Lisa Emlen and Robert Takahashi  
Joan Erickson and Tracy Wayman  
Erin Fairley and Bill Patz  
Jamie Flaxman  
Charlene and Tim Forslund  
Paul Framson and Marlies van Bergeijk  
Linda Furney and Carsten Stinn  
Joe and Maureen Germani  
Sinh Giap  
Lynne Goodrich and Dennis Yasukochi  
Jim and Sandy Green  
Kelly and Duncan Griffin  
Toni Hahn  
April and Bob Hale  
Robert Hardy and Susie McDonald  
Kate Harkins and Mats Myberg  
Steve Havas and Dinah Coops  
Carroll Haymon  
Minh Hoang  
Mark and Kimberly Hobbs  
Laura Hopkins and Brett Baba  
Vital Imbert and Maureen McCleery  
Jules James  
Alan Kahn  
Levin Karovsky  
Gerald and Terrie Kennedy  
Don Kneass  
Linda Korbus and Greg Flood  
Valerie Leadon  
Jin Lingappa and Catherine Staunton  
Pam Lowell  
De Han Ma and Xue Na Zhu  
Peg Maas and Steve Schwartz  
Steven and Naoko Magasis  
Michelle Moore  
Bob & Janet Morrison  
Teresa and George Nemeth  
Aican Nguyen  
Randi and Jim Niemer  
Davis Oldham and Julie Alexander  
Tamae Onaga  
Philip and Maresa Patterson  
Sally and Juan Perla  
Randy Price and Mary Harty  
Mark and Catherine Remijan  
David and Roxanne Robinson  
Rebecca Sadinsky and Chris Pfohl  
Dave and Michelle Sarju  
Linda and Peter Scott  
Don Setzer  
Cliff and Sandy Shettler  
Peter and Ann Simonson  
Mark and Jessica Son  
Jana Swett and Paul Loovis  
Anh Dung Ta and Ngoc Huong Dinh  
Cynthia and Sinclair Temple  
Greg Tuai and Ben-Ling Wong  
Valeri Vasioukhin and Olga Klezovitch  
Susan Welch  
Wickward Family  
Brad Wood  
Michael and Tracy Wrey  
Ying Quing Yang

If your name is missing from the contributors list or corrections need to be made, please contact Kris Johnston, No-Bake financial coordinator, at 285-0824 or kjohnston@columbiahospitality.com.

**Social / Psychology / Safety**

- Jennifer Murray, our school counselor  
- Oleweus Anti-Bullying program  
- Playground supervision

**Parent & Family Communication**

- Volunteer coordinator  
- Monthly newsletter  
- School directories  
- Language translation

**Visual Arts – K-8 Core Curriculum**

- Cynthia Livak, our elementary art teacher  
- Art supplies  
- K-8 Spring Art festival  
- Pottery instructor  
- Visiting artists

**Music Enrichment**

- Choir instructor and vocal music K-8  
- Band instructor  
- Strings orchestra instructor

*Photos by Don Zemke*
SITE COUNCIL REPORT

NOVEMBER 8, 2006

By Scott Winter

REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION CONFERENCE

Marianne Trangen and Clara Scott provided a brief summary of the Bullying Prevention Conference they attended, along with Jennifer Murray, in early November. Marianne noted that the conference took the perspective that bullying is a public health issue, and that it is a relationship problem that requires a relationship solution. Clara commented that a session on adult bullying stood out for her. The session looked at how adults bully each other as well as how adults bully children and the message this sends to the children. There will be an article on the conference included in the next newsletter.

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

Ms. Scott reviewed some of the upcoming events including parent/teacher conferences beginning the week of November 10, high school choices night on November 29, the State of the School event on December 6, and the beginning of basketball practices on November 27. She reported that a video production club for middle school students is meeting on Thursdays after school. Don Zemke is facilitating the club’s activities.

BUILDING LEADERSHIP TEAM

Gerrit Kischner took a moment to recognize that one-third of the middle school students participated on the Ultimate Frisbee teams this autumn. Gerrit also noted, with a smile, that research has identified a positive correlation between school quality and Ultimate Frisbee participation.

The BLT approved two additional Teacher Excellence Fund awards, one to Steve Haines to attend the Washington State Librarians Conference, and another to Carla Fetterly for linguistics remedies classes.

COALITION ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

Over 40 people attended the CSJ movie night held on November 2. The movie “People Like Us – Social Class in America” was viewed and an interesting discussion followed. Another movie night will be held on January 19. The movie is yet to be chosen.

CSJ will host a Teacher Spotlight event in December featuring 6th grade teacher Marianne Trangen.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

Marlies van Bergeijk reported that she and Sheri Toussaint have been nominated to participate on a new committee proposed by the District’s chief academic officer, Carla Santorno. The committee will be charged with advising Santorno on policies related to alternative schools. The new committee will build on the work done last year by a School Board advisory committee that developed a definition of alternative education. Sheri Toussaint was a member of last year’s committee.

The Site Council endorsed the nominations of Marlies and Sheri for the new alternative education advisory committee.

TOPS STATEMENT OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

One of the Site Council priorities for the year is to develop a statement of how TOPS provides an alternative education. An ad hoc Alternative Education committee was put together to draft the statement. Committee chair, Kathy Wickward, reported that an initial draft was developed and presented to the staff and the Building Leadership Team. Both the staff and the BLT had concerns about the direction of the draft statement. A program overview previously developed by the staff was suggested as a good starting point for the statement. The draft statement and the program overview were reviewed and briefly discussed. The Alternative Education committee will work with the staff and the BLT to develop the statement of alternative approach, hopefully in time for the State of the School meeting on December 6.

STATE OF THE SCHOOL AGENDA

The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing possible agenda items and logistics for the State of the School meeting.

Skiing continued from page 1

Skis and boards can be rented from the mountain or from shops down here, purchased new or used, or traded in swap programs. Ask around if you need help figuring out what to wear. Rule of thumb: no cotton. Snoqualmie Summit is at a wet 3,000 feet. Helmets are strongly recommended.

I’ll be coordinating the sixth-grade families this year, Joe Foye will coordinate the seventh-grade families, and Ellen Markman and Molly LaPatra will coordinate the eighth-grade families. Once again, Julie Braybrooks (who also organizes our now-legendary Mission Ridge trip) will be on hand in the mornings to load gear back into the storage rooms behind the lunchroom. Thanks also to Maggie McDonald for depositing all the checks, and to everyone in the office for helping us get all the forms together.

You can find good information about the ski program on the TOPS web site under “After School.” For now, I’ll sit through this rain and think of higher elevations. Oh—someone just told me it’s already snowing!
Stewardship in Action

By Laurie Stusser-McNeil

Stewards at TOPS come in a variety of ages and sizes—as do tools and gloves. As more and more classes are getting into the swing of their stewardship work, we want to ensure everyone has a quality experience. And we all know how much the right tool can make a difference.

When you’re cleaning out your own gardening tools, visiting your favorite garden store, or even hitting late season garage sales (!!), please keep an eye out for the following items to donate to the TOPS Stewardship Program. You can bring them to the office, and we’ll make sure they get stored properly with the rest of the supplies. Thank you!

**Stewardship Wish List**

- Kid-sized trowels, shovels and rakes
- Kid-sized garden gloves
- Full size tools
- Bulbs
- Bags of potting soil

Message from the Principal continued from page 1

- Empower bystanders to include parents, staff, and students
- Positive school tone at all times
- Mutual respect for all

The staff will work on all of the above during the school year, and we ask all of the adults to do their part to build a more positive climate!

We had our first TOPICS of the year. I would like to thank all the parents and staff who participated. This is one of the things our 1st-4th grade students love the most. I came home from my trip to find a gift in my office, a beautifully constructed bridge, made by Wilder Brannon. That was a reminder of how special TOPICS are.

Conferences went very well, and a very large percentage of our parents were able to meet with teachers. TOPS parents know how important it is to be a partner in their student’s education! We are grateful for our dedicated TOPS Staff as well.

November is the beginning of Middle School Basketball and our after-school sports activities in the gym. Our PE teachers and coaches work hard in providing these programs. Please keep your schedules handy and remember to pick your students up on time. The Ski Club is getting ready for January. Molly LaPatra has taken on the organization of Ski Club again this year.

Our Winter Concert is Tuesday, December 5 at 2:00 p.m. in the Gym. This will involve our instrumental music students and our choir. Don’t miss this special event!

State of the School is Wednesday, December 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the Lunchroom. This meeting is an opportunity to hear about our successes, goals, and other important information.

Cheers! ~ Clara

CSJ Corner

**Upcoming Events**

**December:**

*Teacher Spotlight, Thursday December 7th at 6:30 pm*

Sixth Grade Teacher Marianne Tranen will talk about the various ways in which the TOPS mission is carried out in her classroom and through the sixth grade curriculum. Marianne will also share what she learned at a recent international conference on bullying that she attended in Atlanta.

**January: TOPS Movie Night #2**

*Friday January 19 at 6:30 p.m.*

Join us for the second movie in this year’s film series. Titled *Just Black?*, this award winning film explores the experiences of people of mixed racial backgrounds. What “box” does a person check if his or her parents come from different racial backgrounds? Men and women of different ages and of various multi-racial identities talk candidly, and often with humor, about this dilemma and about their families, relationships, experiences in school, and even their hair.

Doors open at 6:00 pm and the film will show at 6:30. The movie runs one hour and will be followed by discussion. Sandwiches, snacks, and drinks will be provided.

There will also be age appropriate movies and pizza for children. Movie titles TBA. Childcare is available from 6:00-8:45 pm. Call 252-3510 to make a reservation for childcare.

Both of these events will be held in the TOPS Library. Childcare can be provided through Kids Co. Contact the office at 252-3510 to reserve childcare.

CSJ is a group of parents, staff, and administrators who work together in support of the stated mission and vision of TOPS. The purpose of our work is to educate ourselves and the school community about issues of academic equity, cultural diversity, and social justice as they affect our school and the broader community.
The first dance of the school year was just great. I think the 6th graders had the best time, since it was their first dance as middle schoolers. I know our grade did last year. The addition of pizza this year made everybody happier and less hungry. And thanks to Mark, our substitute P.E. teacher, the Halloween decorations were fantastic!
When I...discovered libraries, it was like having Christmas every day.” —Jean Fritzee

This fall has been full of surprises for me. Not since I was a 3rd grade teacher at TOPS have I been away from these four walls for any length of time. I had the pleasure on three separate occasions to go on good, old fashioned field trips. As reported in last month’s newsletter by Toby Harris in her column about TOPS history, the middle school is participating in twice a year TOPICS, called Student Exploration and Experience.

This fall, I was fortunate enough to accompany 12 middle school students, and the Spanish language teacher, maestra Rebecca Rabbitt, on a tour of Hispanic and Latin American shops at Pike Place Market. We tasted among other things pasta de guayaba, felt Peruvian alpaca wool, saw Mexican folk arts, and ate lunch at Puerco LLoron. The day was so organized and well thought out. It was a pleasure. It reminded me of the “City School” days.

The next trip involved a sick teacher. Joan in Kindergarten was ill for the trip to the Cedar River to view the returning salmon so I went in her place. The kindergarteners went with their 5th grade buddies. I had never been to this part of the river in downtown Renton. I was amazed at how prepared everyone was and how responsible the 5th graders were with their kindergarten friends.

The final trip involved the elementary one day TOPICS. Missy Chao (parent of Cyrus) had organized a tour of the University Bridge for eight students and needed a staff member to accompany them. I don’t know how many hundreds of times I have gone over that bridge and wondered who was up in the tower. After walking up Franklin searching for items in the neighborhood to mark off on a bingo sheet, we arrived for the tour. Mary from the Seattle Department of Transportation met us and told us all about the bridge. While four students and Cyrus’ dad, Ty, went into the tower first, I took the other four and measured the length of the bridge deck, (192’). The big thrill was the raising of the bridge by the senior bridge tender, Linnea. We returned via Eastlake and even made a stop at the Cheka-Looka Surf Shop. Of course the students loved the cookie they received from Louisa’s at the end of the trip. I think these types of trips are invigorating for everyone and well worth all of the hard work to “pull it off.” I still remember the several trips I went on in elementary school. I don’t think our students will soon forget these explorations.

The Seattle school libraries received money last year to be spent on English Language Learner materials. Nicole Titus, ELL teacher, and I spent time looking through catalogs and ordered some books. Now on the shelves are books in Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Vietnamese, and Somali.

Several upcoming events are worthy of note. On December 14, our Young Author’s Celebration involving students in 1st-5th grade occurs, when we divide the students into small multi-grade groups to read stories that they have written in class. The morning will be spent listening to local author Andrea Helman, who wrote O is for Orca, as she discusses her writing and tells Native American tales.

In January our annual Speech Tournament starts. This is for students in grades 3-8 and involves a series of speeches that are given before judges. The competition is optional but each student will be presenting at least one speech (storytelling, expository, oral interpretation, editorial commentary), before their peers in their class. If anyone knows someone in the Seattle community that would like to be a judge, please let me know.

Don’t forget our wish-list is on the TOPS web site under Academics/Library. Have your child donate a book, and

Continued on page 10
Thanks to the support of the administration and staff (Steve Haines agreed to be the staff sponsor for our trip), I was able to take a group of students on the middle school TOPICS off campus fall activity.

It used to be that there were only one or two stores where I could buy the products typical to Spain and Latin America. I wanted to share with the students that now in many places in Seattle and outlying areas you can experience Latin American and Spanish cultures. I chose downtown Seattle and had about 12 sites where we could experience the tastes, sights, sounds, and smells of Latin culture. While we only made about half of the sites, the trip was a big success and hopefully students will return with family and friends and continue to seek out multicultural experiences. We had an eclectic group of students, very energetic, keen and open-minded. One was a past advanced student of mine, who knew the answers to all the questions, one, whose family was from a country in Latin America, shared his views and knowledge. The parent who accompanied us was reminded of her childhood and shared her father’s experience of coming to the U.S. mainland from Puerto Rico, how he had to hide his culture and language and how his whole family was divided along “color” lines here. She also found the pinto beans she was used to eating growing up — in the Latin bodega we visited — beans different from the larger pintos sold in most stores in this area. My hope and I know hers is that our children and their children will not have to make the choices her father felt compelled to make.

If you are interested in knowing more about places to visit, including restaurants, galleries and stores, contact me at rabbitthutch@hotmail.com.

I’m sure many of you have been involved in the día de muertos activities around the city and seen the various altares in the school. When we put up the student altar in the library (my students made flores de muertos, papel picado and calaveritas), Steve cautioned me that some things might disappear from the altar. I hoped the children would respect the concept of the altar. They did. Even though many had to touch, they respected the idea that the altares were to show the love we have for our departed and I observed many of my present and past students lecturing others about the meaning of día de muertos and altares. Respect for other peoples’ cultures and cultural values, even while not agreeing with them, is important and the students at TOPS embodied that ideal with their respect of the altares.

---

**VOCABULARIO**

**Pinto** – literally means painted.

**Bodega** – term used in the Spanish speaking Caribbean for a store, similar to a deli.

**Día de muertos / día de los muertos** – day of dead / day of the dead celebrated around the world in different ways in different lands. True believers actually see it as a time when the veil between the living realm and the realm of the passed opens.

**Altar (es)** – altar, altares

Many cultures have altares, during día de muertos, these altares are specifically for those who have passed.

**Flor de muertos** – flowers that in Mexico are specifically for this time. The marigold or zempasúchil.

**Papel picado** – Made by artisans out of tissue paper, detailed, elegant, and often humorous scenes from life are depicted. These are hung during fiestas.

**Calaveritas** – little skulls – in Mexico these decorated candy skulls are made in bakeries, the name of the passed is placed on the forehead of the skull, which is placed on the altar.
**Translation Services Available at TOPS**

By Nicole Titus, ESL Teacher

Editor’s Note: In an effort to ensure that all TOPS families receive information on activities, school events, and important meetings, translation services are available at TOPS. This article, written by TOPS’ ESL Teacher, Nicole Titus, shares with you how to go about obtaining translation services.

**What's Available:**
- Written translation
- Phone calls made in first language
- Interpreters for events and conferences

**Who to Contact:**
- Please contact Nicole Titus, the English Language teacher, with translation requests. Put a note in Nicole’s box in the office, or email at nititus@seattleschools.org.
- Please alert classroom teachers or the staff member in charge of the event that you will be requesting the translation.

**Time Frame:**
- Depending on the language and the time of year, it may take up to four weeks to schedule an interpreter. Please contact Nicole as soon as possible with requests for an interpreter. However if you find that you can only provide short notice, please request anyway, and we will figure something out.
- Written translations may take up to two weeks, depending on the language and the number of translations ahead of your request.
- Bilingual phone calls generally take a few days due to the possibility of “phone tag” and differing work schedules. Please also allow time for follow up phone calls to answer questions.

**Documents & Communications to Consider for Translation:**
- Extra-curricular activities, such as sport events/programs, clubs, parent/family events, skiing...
- Class parties, picnics, special events...
- Volunteer opportunities
- Field trips
- Class letters home detailing projects or events
- and many more!

**Have a Need?**

Teachers and staff already handle many translations pertaining to academic life. However, we would love to translate documents that relate to the many activities and events that go on at our school. For more complete information about translation services, please pick up a description of the services in the TOPS front office, or contact Nicole Titus via email nititus@seattleschools.org, or put a note in her box in the office.

News from the Library continued from page 8

they will be able to process the book to put on the shelf. Lastly, don’t forget to access the Seattle Public Schools Online Student Resources Page. They keep adding sites to it. My favorite is Tumblebooks. You can even look for a library book from home. Once again check the TOPS web site under Academics/Library. Don’t forget some of the links need the password. This is a wonderful resource that we should take advantage of, especially when working on projects. Enjoy the winter vacation and curl up with a good book or three.
A MESSAGE FROM MR. DURAND
(former 6th grade teacher at TOPS)

Dear TOPS Community,

For all the wonderful people at TOPS who touched my life during the past two years, I’m filled with thanksgiving. Words cannot describe the amazing experience of working with Marianne and the rest of the TOPS staff.

Many of you may know that my family made a very tough decision late this summer to move closer to Eli and Zeke’s grandparents. The support of Nana and Papa has been wonderful in raising our boys. Eli is a very verbal two year old, and Zeke is eight months old and finding his own.

Please feel free to stay in touch. darin_durand@yahoo.com

SAVE THE DATE: MAY 5, 2007

By Kathy Wickward for the Auction Committee

Did you get a new calendar for the New Year? Well, flip those pages to May 5 and write AUCTION in big, bold letters.

Yes, the date for our annual soiree, our big “to-do,” the TOPS parade is set. If you are looking for an excuse to dress up in your fancy clothes for an evening of great grown-up fun, here it is. This is one of the two major sources of revenue for Friends of TOPS, the fund that makes it possible for our kids to enjoy fun stuff like art, music, and science.

Everyone pitches in to make the auction a successful event, because it is the marvelous creativity and resourcefulness of TOPS families that make it sparkle! Keep an eye out for your auction packet in the mail in February, but now is not too soon to start procuring auction items. If you can procure three new items or services worth over $50, you are ahead of the game! Hold on to them for now, donation forms will be available with your packets and in the office next month.

Another way to help is to become a member of Team Auction! We are looking for fresh faces! Want to help, but don’t know what to do? We have a variety of jobs ranging from behind-the-scenes planning to helping out on the night of the party, or a little of both! Contact Tammy Luthy at thejeffandtammyshow@comcast.net, or by telephone at 322-3784. She can match you with a job to fit your abilities and available time.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDY TABLE

By Marianne Trangen, 6th Grade Teacher

All middle school students are welcome to attend Study Table after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30-4:30. No reservation or prior notice is required unless students will use the bus that is provided to take students home at 5:00. To reserve a place on the bus, call the office 252-3510 one week in advance.

A snack and a quiet place to get homework done is available to anyone who chooses to participate. Study Table is held in Mark Ellis’s classroom B-404 on Tuesdays and in Marianne Trangen’s classroom B301 on Thursdays. Please join us!
Kindergarten and 5th grade buddies went to the Cedar River last month to learn about spawning salmon as part of their study of the salmon life cycle and habitat. Thanks to the teachers and all of the volunteers for making this annual event possible.

Photos by Nina Binder
REVIEWS OF A PLAY

ANIMAL FARM

By Clara LaPatra, Grade 6

I went to Animal Farm on Saturday at Holy Names. The play was very well done. I thought that the students did a very good job of portraying the animals in the real book by George Orwell. They were all casted well and everyone was into their part even if they did not have the largest role.

Now that I have seen the play it has come clear to me that Clover was the narrator because she was directing the play in a way that the other characters were not. She was also saying the quotes from the book that the narrator would have said.

The play reminded me of Book It Theater because the characters not only said their spoken lines but also recited quotes and text from the book. They also had hardly any set changes, like Book It, and did a great job, like Book It.

Overall Holy Names did an excellent job but I thought that some parts could have been stronger. When the rebellion happened in the book, George Orwell described that it happened very fast and the animals were not expecting it so soon. In the play they did not make it as dramatic as the book and made it happen too fast. I think that Squealer was the best because she did a very good job of being persuasive and making her voice go up in a sort of high pitch tone that sounded very persuasive to me. She did such a great job that she almost took away the evil that Napoleon held and made Napoleon seem less powerful and scary than in the book.

I really liked the set up of the barn and how it had the seven commandments hooked up on to the perimeter. It seemed an easy way to do set changes and fit the story perfectly. I think Holy Names did an excellent job and I can’t wait to see their play next year.

ANIMAL FARM

By Lily Chin-Martin, Grade 6

Animal Farm is a play based on the book by George Orwell. I recently attended a high school production of the play by Holy Names Academy, which is an all girls’ school. The play featured all girls and one boy from O’Dea. The book is based on what happened during the Russian Revolution but it takes place on a farm and the main characters are farm animals.

For the play they had very few props but they used them very well. For example, the windmill was made out of a ladder and a head of a windmill made out of wood. For the horse they used boxes covered in fabric strapped to them. The pigs just had pig noses and pink crutches to look like they had four legs. The chickens, hens, and ducks were puppet animals and the actors just held the puppet. Other animals were actors holding paper mache heads of the animal that they were.

The play and the book are the same because they have the same characters overall, the play stayed on the storyline of the book. They are different because the ending is different. Because in the book all the farmers and the pigs are playing poker and drinking when Napoleon and Pilkington both play an ace of spades and they get in a fight. Where in the play they are not playing any game but drinking and making toasts to each other. They are also different because the play leaves out some small details that are in the book.

I really liked the sets and costumes. I thought it was cool how they did not use a lot of props or costumes and let you concentrate on the acting and not what they were wearing or what they were holding. I really liked the acting job of the actor who played Napoleon. I thought that she was really into her character and really enjoyed being Napoleon in the play. One of my favorite scenes in the play was the last scene where Napoleon and the other pigs turned into humans because it was sort of creepy and weird but everyone was really into it. My least favorite scene was when Napoleon sends his dogs after Snowball and runs him out of the farm, because the girls who play the dogs were not into their part and they were not enthusiastic at all. Overall, I really liked the play and I thought the actors did a very good job!
**A MONTHLY CALENDAR OF HOLIDAYS**

**WHAT TOPS FAMILIES ARE CELEBRATING**
Compiled by Lynne Goodrich, CSJ member

---

**DECEMBER 2006 HOLIDAYS**

Dec. 8: Bodhi Day (Buddhist/Mahayana Branch) Day when Gautama Sakyamuni, or Prince Siddartha, became the Buddha after he attained enlightenment.

Dec. 15 - 22: Hannukah (Jewish) Festival of Lights and celebration of freedom. Menorah candles are lighted, one added every night for eight nights, to commemorate the victory of Jewish Maccabees over the Syrians and their refusal to be assimilated.

Dec. 16 – 24: Las Posadas (Mexico, USA) / Simbanag Gabi (Phillipines) Candlelight parades commemorate Joseph and Mary’s search for shelter in Bethlehem. Celebrants recreate the search and host parties.

Dec. 22: Winter Solstice Shortest day of the year for residents of the Northern Hemisphere; longest day of the year for people living in the Southern Hemisphere.

Dec. 23: Birth of Joseph Smith (1805) Founder and first president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Dec. 25: Christmas (Christian) Commemorates the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, upon whose life, crucifixion, and resurrection Christianity is based. Many customs from non-Christian festivals (Roman Saturnalia, Mithraic sun’s birthday, Teutonic Yule, Druic solstice).


Dec. 31: New Year’s Eve (USA, International) Last day of the calendar year in Gregorian calendar. Since much of the world uses this calendar, New Year’s Eve is celebrated around the world.

Dec. 31 – Jan. 1: New Year (Japanese/Japanese American) Traditional rituals observed to result in a more successful year – going back as far as the Edo period of the 17th century. Buckwheat noodles are eaten to ensure longevity and prosperity on Dec. 31 and family feasts are held on New Year’s Day.

---

**JANUARY 2007 HOLIDAYS**

Jan 1: New Year’s Day The first day in the year of the Gregorian calendar. In the Middle Ages, most European countries observed New Year’s Day on March 25. With the Gregorian calendar’s introduction in 1582, Roman Catholic countries began to celebrate New Year’s Day on January 1. In modern times, it’s an occasion for celebration and the making of personal resolutions.

Jan. 6: Epiphany (Christian) Also called Old Christmas Day and Twelfthtide. Celebration of the visit of the Magi.

Jan. 10: Eid al-adha (Muslim) Feast of Sacrifice is very important feast of the Muslim calendar. Commemorates Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son in obedience to G-d. It is part of the Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca).

Jan. 14: Makar Sankranti (India) Hindu holiday celebrating the sun’s changing position, infusing everyone with greater life and energy.

Jan. 15: World Religion Day Established by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’i faith. Dedicated to increasing interfaith understanding and cooperation.

Jan. 15: Martin Luther King Day (USA) Celebration of the birth of the great USA civil rights leader (Born Jan 15, 1929).

Jan 29: Tet Nguyen Dan (Vietnam) Marks the beginning of the lunar new year and arrival of spring. Tet is the most popular festival in Vietnam and has been celebrated since at least 500 B.C.E. The goal of Tet is to begin the year right and customs include paying off debts, resolving conflicts in relationships, and giving gifts.
BADMINTON? PING PONG?

By Naomi Walker, Grade 4

In our fourth grade gym class we were playing badminton and ping-pong. Girls thought badminton was better than ping-pong. Boys thought ping-pong was better than badminton. Girls also thought the boys got to play badminton more than they did. They thought the pattern was uneven. I tried to tell some of my friends that badminton is almost the same as ping-pong. I told them badminton was just a larger game of ping-pong. I said it had larger paddles that instead were woven a net in the middle and had a larger net to pass the ball over and the ball had a sort of tubed tail. They thought it was too many differences. Kids are thinking of asking Don, the gym teacher, if we could play badminton again sometime. I might even ask!

BADMINTON AND PING PONG IN P.E.

By Asha Graves and Ana Mesenberger, Grade 4

For the last couple weeks we’ve been doing Badminton and Ping-Pong in P.E. On one day all the girls are taught Badminton skills while the boys are taught Ping-Pong and then we switch the next day.

Badminton is a wonderful, energetic sport. It gets you fit and healthy. When you play Ping-Pong it helps your hand-eye coordination.

People should respect our Ping-Pong and Badminton equipment. We don’t like it when the racquets are used as fake weapons. Also, when racquets, balls and paddles get broken there are fewer to go around.

We think that badminton and Ping-Pong are really fun and I hope we get to do it again.
**Circus Arts**

*By Magnus Giaever, Grade 6*

For the first Quarter of the school year our two fabulous gym teachers, Don and Eric, have helped kids learn new skills in sports every Friday. Kids could choose from 5 different topics: weight lifting, racket sports, alternative sports, climbing wall, or swing dance. I ended up being the only person in my topic which was alternative sports.

The alternative sport category is mostly circus arts. Such as juggling (clubs, beanbags, or boxes), balancing large bamboo poles as high as ten feet, or the Diablo, a detached large yo-yo that runs on thin string and can be thrown up in the air and caught again on the string. I was lucky enough to try all of these and from my experience in a youth circus at the School of Acrobatics and New Circus Arts I knew what I had to do with this equipment.

Each Friday, a student would get to work on their topic for about 40 minutes. Most kids loved doing this. I for one had a blast. I feel like I learned so many new skills! Don and Eric were always there to help and watch your new achievement whether it was lifting 15 pounds, hitting the birdie over the net 20 times with your partner, climbing on your obstacle course across the wall, successfully dancing a song by Duke Ellington, or juggling three balls and catching it on the back of your neck. Thank you Don and Eric for helping us reach our sporting goals!
The City Schools concept officially began during the 1982-83 school year. Harper Welch and Lydia Christofides, TOPS teachers, wrote a project proposal to develop instructional materials addressing the rapid changes in family, institutional, and governmental roles in our society. The program, Citybound: Survival Skills for the Urban Environment, was designed to promote greater personal responsibility. Students would be given urban survival skills to foster their sense of control over the environment and themselves, improve their self-esteem, and encourage participation in society.

The State awarded TOPS Title IV-C funding in the amount of $1,500 to carry out their plans.

The proposal defined “urban survival skills” in eight areas:

1. Using transportation
2. Geographical information about areas of the city
3. Personal safety skills and services (traffic, police, fire, being lost, assault prevention)
4. Information access
5. Education/entertainment/recreation resources
6. Consumer skills (money, pricing, advertising, shopping)
7. Immediate physical needs (bathrooms, water, food, shelter)
8. Urban citizenship (working, servicing, decision-making, conserving)

The project was successfully carried out and thus began the ongoing City School focus at TOPS. Curriculum was developed and many field trips and visitors followed. A TOPS press release dated May 17, 1983, preceding a week of field trips downtown, states:

…this week [students] will put to practice months of study about the city and how to use and enjoy it in comfort and safety…But students have not come downtown simply to exercise their survival skills. These young citizens have come as urban consumers. They will develop criteria for evaluating to what degree the city is serving the needs of children. Armed with survey sheets they designed, they will determine the extent to which specific buildings or sites provide the kinds of services and amenities that assist children when they are downtown….By Friday, the students will be ready to pass out the “orchids and the onions.”

Here are some specific examples of what the students accomplished that year:

◆ 5th graders planned their own METRO route from home and met their teacher downtown.
◆ Memorized the names and sequence of downtown streets and other mapping exercises.
◆ Assertiveness techniques.
◆ Went to the City Council chambers to hear about governmental structure.
◆ Visited Seattle Public Library, Pike Place Market, Colman Dock, Ferry Terminal, Aquarium, commercial pier.
◆ Evaluated many downtown parks such as Waterfront, Myrtle Edwards, Freeway and more.
◆ Visited King County Women’s Programs.
◆ Toured Smith Tower.
◆ Swam at the Y.
◆ Studied the gold rush, Bon Marche history, and many downtown buildings.
◆ Heard a presentation on METRO.

Next month, City Schools continues…

---

DO YOU ENJOY READING ABOUT TOPS HISTORY?

DO YOU LIKE MESSING AROUND IN ARCHIVES?

THE TOPS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEEDS HELP.
THE ROLE OF TOPS PARENT WILL END FOR TOBY HARRIS WHEN HER DAUGHTER GOES TO HIGH SCHOOL NEXT YEAR!

WHO WOULD LIKE TO TAKE OVER AS CARETAKER OF THE TOPS ARCHIVES?

CALL OR EMAIL TOBY AT 634-3951 OR TOJJ@EARTHLINK.NET
### 2006-07 TOPS Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DECEMBER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (T)</td>
<td>Winter Concert, 2 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (W)</td>
<td>1st grade, DHH to SCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (W)</td>
<td>State of the School, 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (Th)</td>
<td>CSJ meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8 (Th-F)</td>
<td>TOPICS, grades 1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (T)</td>
<td>BLT meeting, 4 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (W)</td>
<td>Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (Th)</td>
<td>Young Authors Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 (F)</td>
<td>1-hour early dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-29 (M-F)</td>
<td>Winter break; no school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JANUARY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (M)</td>
<td>Winter break; no school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (T)</td>
<td>Classes resume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (F)</td>
<td>Middle school ski bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (T)</td>
<td>BLT Meeting, 4 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (W)</td>
<td>Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 (Th)</td>
<td>MLK Assembly, 10:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (F)</td>
<td>Middle school ski bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (F)</td>
<td>TOPICS, Social Justice theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 (M)</td>
<td>MLK Jr. Day; no school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 (T)</td>
<td>2nd &amp; 3rd grades to SCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 (F)</td>
<td>Middle school ski bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 (F)</td>
<td>Middle school ski bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 (T)</td>
<td>Kindergarten to SCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEBRUARY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Th)</td>
<td>End of semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (F)</td>
<td>Middle school ski bus – all day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (W)</td>
<td>Professional development day; 2-hour early dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8, 10 (Th, S)</td>
<td>Middle School play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (F)</td>
<td>Middle school dance, 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (T)</td>
<td>BLT meeting, 4 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (W)</td>
<td>Kindergarten 100 day celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (W)</td>
<td>Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 (M)</td>
<td>Presidents Day; no school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-23 (T-F)</td>
<td>Mid-winter break; no school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MARCH</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (W)</td>
<td>Professional development day; 2-hour early dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (W)</td>
<td>Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 (Th)</td>
<td>Taste of TOPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 (F)</td>
<td>Professional development day; no school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-23 (W-F)</td>
<td>5th grade to Camp Colman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 (F)</td>
<td>Middle school dance, 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APRIL</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 (T-W)</td>
<td>Poetry Festival, 1st and 2nd grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (W)</td>
<td>Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (F)</td>
<td>Kindergarten ABC party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-13 (M-F)</td>
<td>Spring break; no school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-30 (F)</td>
<td>WASL Testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 (F)</td>
<td>End of third quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MAY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4 (T-F)</td>
<td>WASL Testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (Sa)</td>
<td>TOPS Auction at the Asian Resource Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (W)</td>
<td>Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18 (W-F)</td>
<td>7th grade camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 (W)</td>
<td>Professional development day; 2-hour early dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19 (F-S)</td>
<td>ArtFest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19 (F-S)</td>
<td>Elementary play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 (M)</td>
<td>Memorial Day; no school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 (W)</td>
<td>Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JUNE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-8 (T-F)</td>
<td>8th grade camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8 (Th-F)</td>
<td>3rd and 4th grade camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (T)</td>
<td>6th and 7th grade Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 (F)</td>
<td>8th grade Passage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 (M)</td>
<td>5th grade Passage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 (T)</td>
<td>Field Day, elementary grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 (W)</td>
<td>Last student day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Send your events and dates to our webmaster, Jack Lee, at webmaster@topsk8.org. Please check Thursday Go-Homes and the web site for updates.

**Spirit Week**

Middle schoolers camp it up on during TOPS Spirit Week.

Photo by Don Zemke.
Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against in any of the District's employment or educational activities can file an internal discrimination complaint with the District's Affirmative Action Office.

The Seattle School District provides Equal Education Opportunity without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, mental state, handicap/disability or sexual orientation. The Seattle School District complies with all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations, including but not limited to Titles VI, VII, and IX of the Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), RCW 49.60, Law Against Discrimination, and RCW 28A.640 “Sex Equality,” and covers, but is not limited to, all District programs, courses activities (including extracurricular activities, service, access to facilities, etc. The Title IX officer and 504 coordinator with overall responsibility for monitoring and ensuring compliance is: Rick Takeuchi, Manager, Affirmative Action Office, W/MBE, 815 4th Ave. N., Seattle 98109. Phone (206)298-7175.

Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against in any of the District’s employment or educational activities can file an internal discrimination complaint with the District’s Affirmative Action Office.