March was a busy month at TOPS! There were so many interesting and happy events to enrich our students’ lives. The diversity of these activities is breathtaking!

The Taste of TOPS was a smashing success. Many thanks go to Karen Stuhldreher, Lynne Goodrich, Nancy Bacon, and their committees. It was fun to see so many TOPS families enjoying the evening, and sharing their cultures and talents. Great food, great people, and great learning created a special event for all involved. We had a great talent show that highlighted the many talents of TOPS students. It was coordinated by Sheri Toussaint. We all know more about China thanks to Taste of TOPS. Many thanks also go to the Chinese students from the University of Washington who visited classes and made presentations to students.

Thanks are also in order to Susan Welch and her committee who coordinated and implemented the Book Fair. It’s always wonderful to see so much energy about books and reading, especially when the books are of such high quality.

We also enjoyed a beautiful presentation by students from Madison Middle School. Twenty-five students performed a variety of dances from Asian cultures. It was perfect timing for Taste of TOPS this year. The Madison students did a terrific job, and our students were fortunate to see and understand the importance of dance in Asian cultures.

The Auction is a month away and our goal is to raise $110,000 to fund the programs few of us would want our kids to do without. RSVP for the Auction before April 8 and receive a $5 discount on your ticket price!

There’s a tremendous amount to look forward to – an evening of uninterrupted conversation with your friends, great food, the raffle prize, a huge variety of silent auction items, the class projects, and the Golden Raffle! Too excited to wait for auction night? You can now view the auction catalog online at the TOPS Auction web site – http://tops.maestroweb.com/. In the meantime:

Reserve a table and dine in style with nine of your closest friends for a mere $100 (in addition to the ticket price). Enjoy great food and a chance at the best dessert. Tables with the highest bid in the Dessert Dash get first choice from a table full of fabulous desserts.

Wield your mighty pen during the silent

MAY TOPSNews Deadline

Wednesday, April 8 • Submissions to topsnewsletter@gmail.com
About the Outrageous Publishing Service

Welcome to the eighth newsletter of the 2008-09 school year. Jamie Flaxman and Ann Simonson edit, Paul Loovis handles photos, design, and layout, and Jane Summerfield, Peggy Maraghe, and Roxanne Robinson get it mailed off to you. Don Zemke provides many of our photos. G & H Printing prints the newsletter.

We need your submissions: calendar additions, classroom news and news from the larger community, faculty notes, committee reports, opinions, profiles, compliments, congratulations, children’s art, photos, and anything else significant to the TOPS community.

Submit your contributions by email to topsnewsletter@gmail.com or to the newsletter box in the main office. Please send photos to javabrain@msn.com. The deadline for the May issue is April 8. Would you like to edit or otherwise help with our newsletter? Newcomers welcome. Please contact Jamie and Ann at topsnewsletter@gmail.com.

From the Known to the UNCERTAIN
Three days and two nights of service

By Lori Eickelberg, Middle School Language Arts Teacher

“First of all,” he said [Atticus], “if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you’ll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view—"

“Sir?”

“—until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.”

—To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

On February 10, fifty-four TOPS eighth graders left the known and moved into the uncertain to engage in an immersion service learning project. We climbed into someone else’s skin and walked around. We spent three days and two nights doing service at city agencies that serve the homeless and the urban poor. We walked and took buses to the agencies, and at the end of the day, we went to churches or office buildings to spend the night. This experience lasted until Thursday, February 12 when we returned to school and our homes.

Students were divided into eight groups of between six to eight students per group. Don Zemke, Marianne Clarke, Mark Ellis, Debbie Bermet, Sarah Marks, Lori Eickelberg, Edmund Trangen, and Steve Haines guided their students by foot and by bus around the city of Seattle to volunteer at agencies. We made and served lunches and dinners, learned to play cards, stacked and sorted food at food banks, compiled packets for Youth Advocacy Day, scrubbed mats, and visited with clients at the agencies and at Nickelsville. At the end of the three days we were tired but happy, and glad to be home.

PLANTING THE SEEDS would not have been possible without the generous contribution from Friends of TOPS and the support and help from the TOPS community. Elizabeth Dickinson deserves the TOPS Nobel Prize for the hours she spent arranging agency visits, delivering cookies and supplies to groups, checking in with each of us along the way, and along with Susan Welch and Andrea Akita, coordinating the volunteers. Sheri Toussaint arranged all of the places where we slept, made over 500 hundred lunches and dinners, and delivered them to the groups in time for breakfast and dinner. She also collected all the sleeping bags and brought them to where we would be spending the night. Over forty-two parents, from throughout the TOPS community, made cookies, helped at agencies, and spent the night with students and teachers. Thank you all.

The impact on those of us who participated in the experience and to the TOPS community as a whole is to be determined, but we have touched the uncertain and are changed. The fact that change has occurred is reflected by one student who writes “With utter sincerity, I can say that this experience has brought me closer to understanding the feeling of confusion, fear, and yet somehow resolution and determinedness that no one but people who have actually been homeless can fully understand. I admire many of the homeless people who I met through Planting the Seeds, and it’s their courage that inspires me to remember that I only get to live once, and I need to make the best of the only life I’ll ever be given.”

Photo by Lori Eickelberg
The Planting the Seeds experience was less and more of what I expected it to be. During this trip I had much more to be proud of than just being away from my cell phone and helping the homeless and needy. I saw that some of my other personal goals were completed, and I am sure that is why this trip will stick in my memory like grease from a head in need of washing.

"On this trip I was completely pushed out of my comfort zone, and I must admit, I have never been happier to give in and get over my own fears."

I am not a kid who likes sleeping over and not knowing some sort of a schedule involving my activities and next meals. I like to plan out my time and be prepared for what lays around the corner. On the trip I spent four days not knowing a thing about my future and the things lying ahead. On this trip I was completely pushed out of my comfort zone, and I must admit, I have never been happier to give in and get over my own fears. I think about the people, just like me, but who have been pushed into a hole, and who have to go through this every night and who might not even have a meal, let alone a bed.

I hardly had time to think about my losses, because of the satisfaction I was gaining just by giving a hand to someone who lived behind the curtain of glamour and glory. They practically lived on a different planet called Survival Land with a whole culture and practices I could not even begin to imagine.

If I were rating how intense the level of poverty was that we were living in for four days, I would rate it a G, out of G, PG, PG-13, etc. I had not a clue of the horrors facing some kids on the streets, but I never had to worry about bad dreams because I knew that during the trip, someone was probably thinking that there was hope and that not all people were as mean as the people that had put them in the position to sleep on the streets.

When I was working at Cherry St. Food Bank, I experienced one of the most satisfying feelings. We were given these really nice waterproof bags to hand out to the customers. Every time I offered a person a bag, they gave me a huge smile and said something along the lines of “Thank you so much,” to “I am going to be the coolest one in the park.” With just this small act of kindness, I felt as if I just wanted to take all the many bags I never use and bring them to the needy. I could have watched those smiles forever.

This trip pushed me to be the best humanitarian and helper I could be. I was unaware of the hardships homeless people have to face and the dangers that they must fight off daily. Now I am a true active believer that it takes not one person but a community to take part in filling the deep hole these people are in so that we can all live as equals and nobody’s dignity will be put at stake.

I enjoyed the Planting the Seeds trip. Helping out at some of the facilities was a very rewarding experience for me. I have never done anything like Planting the Seeds before in my life.

“I know the trip wasn’t for us to “play homeless,” but we did have an experience that helped us understand just some of what less fortunate people have to go through everyday to survive.”

I think my most embarrassing moment was when I couldn’t scoop the lasagna fast enough at the Outdoor Meal Center, and Don had to take over scooping. It was embarrassing because I was supposed to be serving these long lines of people, and I couldn’t keep up.

I was happy I was able to help in other ways. I really liked the trip because I learned a lot from this trip about people in need and how we can help them. I really hope that future classes get to have this experience because it is educational and rewarding.

It also is a bonding experience with your group. You and your group spend three days together and really get to know each other better. I also thought our group learned more about the city of Seattle because we had to find our way around the city by walking and using the bus.

Continued next page
I know the trip wasn’t for us to “play homeless,” but we did have an experience that helped us understand just some of what less fortunate people have to go through everyday to survive. I think my teacher who led us, Don, did a good job of letting us make our own decisions but still made sure we followed the guidelines of the trip. He encouraged us to wonder how someone less fortunate would act or see something differently than we would in a similar situation. This opened our eyes to a new point of view. Thank you for planning this trip; it has changed my outlook on homelessness.

By Jane Markman, Grade 8

In Planting the Seeds I got to see what it was like to not know what was coming next, what time it was, when I was going to eat, or how I was getting to a place that I had a time frame to get there in. In the snow, rain and cold, I had to brace the weather with a heavy bag to get to my next destination.

“...the one thing I will remember most is that it takes a very strong person, both physically and emotionally, to be homeless.”

On the first day of this experience, our group walked from school to south downtown, by Safeco Field, in the snow. We went to an all men’s shelter that allows around 200 men to sleep every night. We had to wash mattresses solidly, for four hours with two five minute breaks. It was the worst thing I have ever done in my life. This was the most memorable thing for me because I had to keep pushing hard when I was tired. After we were done cleaning the mattresses, we had to plan a route to get to our next destination which was completely across town, in the U district, and it was raining. We knew that we each only had two bus rides. We decided to use a bus ride, but we knew that this meant definitely not using another bus ride till the last day.

This experience taught me many things, but the one thing I will remember most is that it takes a very strong person, both physically and emotionally, to be homeless.

They have to get up every morning when they have nothing, plan where they are going and when they want to get there. They always have to think about protection and what is going to keep them alive. I know that no matter what happened I, for one, am not emotionally strong enough to be homeless.

Now when I see someone on the streets, I think about many more things than just that they are unlucky. I think of what made them get on the streets; how they have enough will to not let themselves die. I want to give back to the people who are, and always will be, a stronger person than I am.

By Sylvie Nemeth, Grade 8

I was surprised by a lot of things about Planting the Seeds. I was surprised by how much work we had to do, I was surprised by a lot of the attitudes of the homeless people whom we interacted with, and I was surprised at how much fun I had. I was more apprehensive than I would admit to my friends about how it would go (three days without a shower or my cell phone?) but I’m actually really glad we had that experience.

All the work that we did for the agencies made me think about how working homeless people might feel. I knew we were going to be volunteering in various agencies, but I never really grasped the idea that we were going to be walking so far and having to do so much work on a nearly empty stomach. Now, I know that my group (Debbie’s group) walked less than some others because we almost never got lost. We were lucky enough to be assigned to agencies which were mostly in Capitol Hill and downtown, which is my neighborhood, so I knew where to go. I think the place where we worked the hardest was one of the food banks—it’s unfortunate, but I can’t remember the name of the one I’m thinking of. We volunteered at two food banks actually; one of them was the Downtown Food Bank and the other one is the one I can’t remember the name of. At the downtown one, we didn’t have to do as much work, just essentially hand the food out. However, at the other one, we bagged so many fruits, boxed so many bags of chocolate, and stacked so many heavy bins that my arms were sore later. What made it difficult was that we were starving. That made me think about how homeless people have to walk around everywhere with near-empty stomachs, and the working ones probably are having some trouble because they’re not getting all the nutrients they need.

When I say I was surprised by the attitudes of the homeless people, I’m mostly referring to how cheerful most of them seemed. Granted, there were some people I saw passing through the lines at the food banks who looked like their life had taken one too many wrong turns, but there were also a lot of people who seemed genuinely happy. I remember one man who spoke to Jack and me when we were handing him oranges. He said “God bless you” to me and I responded with something like “Thank you,” which I think he misheard as “You too” because he said “Oh, God blesses me! I’m fifty-four years old, and I’ve been living like this for years. Do you think I’d still be around if God weren’t watching over me?” And then he picked up an apple and grinned as he put it back down, displaying his rotted off teeth and saying “I don’t think I could eat this, do you?” I was surprised at how cheerful he could be, even when his life was obviously in such a bad state.

Although I was nervous about going on this trip at first, I’m really glad I got to have the chance to do it and I ended up having lots of fun in the end. I was in a group with Jack M., Walker, Maya D., Tuuli, Alaina, and Aretha—most of them aren’t really good friends of mine, so I was a little worried at first, but we ended up having a great time. I think that these three days actually brought me closer to all of those people (which is exactly what my mom...
I want to hear, but it isn’t meant to be. With utter sincerity, I can say that this experience has brought me closer to understanding the feeling of confusion, fear, and yet somehow resolution and determinedness that no one but people who have actually been homeless can fully understand. I admire many of the homeless people who I met through Planting the Seeds, and it’s their courage that inspires me to remember that I only get to live once, and I need to make the best of the only life I’ll ever be given.

said it would do and I denied—annoying, right?) so I’m sort of glad I wasn’t with my close friends. We played cards together, did each others’ makeup, and played Never Have I Ever at nighttime, just as if it were a sleepover with my best friends.

In utter truthfulness, I am really thankful that I had the chance to participate in Planting the Seeds. I’m worried that this essay may sound like a cookie cutter essay which I wrote because I had only one night and wanted to tell the teachers what they want to hear, but it isn’t meant to be. With utter sincerity, I can say that this experience has brought me closer to understanding the feeling of confusion, fear, and yet somehow resolution and determinedness that no one but people who have actually been homeless can fully understand. I admire many of the homeless people who I met through Planting the Seeds, and it’s their courage that inspires me to remember that I only get to live once, and I need to make the best of the only life I’ll ever be given.

**NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY AND BEYOND**

*By Steve Haines, Librarian*

“Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.”

- Richard Steele

**PLANTING THE SEEDS**

“I can’t sleep!” “Hey, what time is it?” “Are we there yet?” “I’m hungry” “I can’t believe we did that much work.” These exclamations and many more were uttered by the 8th graders during our recent intensive three day service learning experience. We are certainly fortunate at TOPS to be afforded so many challenging and rewarding activities thanks to The Friends of TOPS.

For our “maiden voyage” we broke into eight groups and followed a schedule that had us plying the city streets, much of it on foot, in search of social service agencies that work with the homeless community. We were supervised in such activities as preparing meals, sorting clothes, separating and repackaging food, and serving meals.

For me it was a humbling experience. To be out of your “comfort zone” certainly puts things into perspective. The people that work in these helping agencies are doing a fantastic job, and it was very rewarding working next to them during these three days. It certainly opened my eyes and gave me a greater appreciation for the world around me and where the priorities should lie. What a trip. I am looking forward to taking it again.

Speaking of the great support that our community gives the students at TOPS, another example is the 1st/2nd grade Reading Block. Students are in small groups and concentrate on reading skills. The groups are facilitated by TOPS staff members.

Andrea Hugill is one such teacher who works with a group of 1st graders. They are reading the Kenyan tale, *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain*, from the Pegasus reading program. She is making it very exciting for the students by having them “travel to Kenya” to construct their own understanding about the culture and geography through engaging research projects.

How exciting can it get when the group was visited by Kitty and Roger as they shared their experiences having lived for 4 years in Tanzania as librarians. The students were absorbed in a photo slide show of a game reserve, clothing, and art. They even had a chance to learn a song in Swahili. Ah, the development of life long learners.

Speaking of becoming life long readers and learners, how stimulating can it be when an author comes to TOPS for a visit. Patrick Carman, author of the *Land of Elyon* series has written a new book, *Skeleton Creek*. He shared with the 4th and 5th graders his writing journal and entertained them with stories of childhood pranks.

This new book is completely different because it uses the printed word and online videos to create a story. This was a massive undertaking because not only was there writing involved but a website to create and videos to produce. It is a mystery, horror, and friendship story all in one. After reading a passage the reader is directed to go to a website, enter a password, and view a video that helps tie the story together. The only problem I found was that you need to read the book and have Internet access readily available. Well the first book certainly left me hanging, with the next installment due in August. Check it out!
Fifth graders’ commitment to the lunchroom composting program has continued to be a success. We have maintained the reduced garbage output achieved last year, reducing garbage by 35 percent since fall 2008.

At a recent meeting, 5th graders commented on how their compost monitoring helps them connect to their vision of environmental action. Many of them have taken the message home and are helping parents learn the ins and outs of garbage reduction. They had the following comments about their work in a recent meeting:

Simon Angell: “Because we’re doing this, we’re not filling up the landfills.”

Spencer Cook: “It makes you feel better that you’re helping the earth instead of destroying it.”

Nicole Godbout: “My older sister usually throws everything in the trash, but now she looks through it because of me—I’m always talking about composting!”

Lucy Kolpa: “Now we’ve started composting at home. We’re putting leftover food in our yard waste bin, not just leaves.”

Riley Calcagno: “We were already composting at home, but now my mom asks me about what can go in.”

Atticus Pennylegion-Hurley: “After you switch to composting, you feel better about the earth!”

Allie Hamilton: “I think it’s great that people can help the environment even a little bit. It’s not big, like if we stopped driving cars, but every little bit goes a long way.”

**As a parent of a TOPS student, YOU can help further this vision by:**

1. Put your own food waste in your green can! As of March 30, all Seattle residents will be able to compost just like we do at TOPS. That means any food, including meat/bones, grease, dairy, and dirty cardboard, can go into the green can. If you have questions, your child is probably a great resource—after all, they do this every day at school!

2. Re-useable containers for school parties and potlucks are hip! Be sure to put your name on the bottom.

3. BAN plastic baggies from your child’s packed lunch! At lunch, students are always disappointed when they have to put those in the trash. If you use wax paper bags, your student gets the joy of putting it in the compost bin!

4. When purchasing paper plates, cups, etc. for home or school, buy biodegradables. Some guidance: at Costco, get Chinet paper plates and WAXED Dixie cups (5 oz size). At Target, get Chinet or the plain white UNCOATED paper plates and waxed Dixie cups.

Cedar Grove, our composting company, now carries “greenware” for sale on its website—everything from bowls to straws to forks can be purchased in a biodegradable form and it’s guaranteed to be accepted in your yard waste/food waste can.

**TOPS Composters Help the Earth at School and Home**

**Summer Camp at TOPS!**

Come to Kids Co. here at TOPS over the summer. We have a really exciting summer lined up with themed weeks such as: Inventions, Magic, Cooking, and Superheroes! Our scheduling is very flexible: you can register for one week at a time or even reserve a couple of days per week! Our amazing staff will almost all return from the year, so don’t miss out! Contact Aaron Norikane at Kids Co. at 709-8487 for more info!!!
Celebrate Earth Day at TOPS
Saturday, April 18 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. TOPS Spring Landscape Family Work Party
by Any Paige

Has everyone noticed the respect that TOPS kids show toward their school and the surrounding property? Many of our children have taken time during their day to learn the value of caring for their school grounds by planting bulbs, pulling weeds, and picking up litter. You can see the proud and satisfied looks on their faces as they pick up even the tiniest bits of trash. In the spirit of Earth Day, the Stewardship Committee has planned a family work party for April 18 to help them care for the schoolyard. We will be weeding and heavily mulching the grounds of TOPS to break the cycle of weed germination, and to help with water retention for our resilient but sometimes trampled plants.

Come on over any time between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Stay for an hour or for the whole morning. It is a great way to log in volunteer hours, to meet other TOPS families, and to enjoy being outside. Everyone, K - 8 and graduate, is needed and welcomed. If you have high school students who need community service hours, we will be providing forms for documentation to take back to their schools.

The School District will be supplying some tools, gloves, mulch, clean green bags, and even a district gardener! However, if you have your own tools and gloves that fit well, please bring them (be sure to label them with your name). Weeds and shovels are especially useful to bring. We can also always use LOTS of wheelbarrows. As part of the weed suppression exercise, we will be laying newspaper down before putting 4” to 5” of mulch over the top. PLEASE BRING LOTS OF NEWSPAPER WITH YOU FOR THIS JOB. START SAVING YOUR STACK NOW!

We’ll have coffee and some treats, but plan to bring a water bottle. We will have access to the bathrooms in the school.

We hope to see all of you at this fun, community building event!

Please RSVP via email to one of us to let us know your timeframe and number of family members attending:
- Amy Paige ........................................ amycpaige@gmail.com
- Kathy Schmid ................................. schlemans@comcast.net
- Jennifer Wise-MacColl ................... sjmaccol@comcast.net
- Sandy Shettler ..................... sssettler@msn.com
- Molly LaPatra ......................... lapatra@comcast.net

Brought to you by the Stewardship Committee. Thanks in advance for volunteering to take care of our great school!!

Message from the Principal continued from page 1

Volleyball and soccer are in full swing. After school practices and games are full of excitement and good effort. Track and Ultimate Frisbee are coming up later this spring. These are all very good opportunities for students to live in healthy balance between academics and physical activity.

We finished our school tours – four in all. We drew an enthusiastic crowd every time. Approximately 400 (yes, 400!) families toured TOPS. Kindergarten through middle school parents delighted in hearing from our students as they spoke about their TOPS experiences.

We’re getting close to the home stretch, but the focus is still on academics this spring. Elementary report cards went out in March.

Middle school students received progress reports. The WASL window is April 13 through May 1. We ask that you make every effort to get your students to school on time. Please avoid making doctor and dentist appointments if at all possible. There isn’t a lot of make-up testing time, and I believe students are usually most comfortable taking the assessments with their peers.

As we head into the last portion of the school year, remember to help your student stay focused on learning and school. We aren’t finished yet, and the end of the race is often the most important part!

Cheers!
~ Clara
SITE COUNCIL REPORT
Taken from minutes by Betsy Wells, from the December and January meetings

12/10/08

ASB REPORT
Magnum Gaeever reported on the dance from last Friday (Times Square Affair), food drive, and all-school spirit week (Magnum passed around photos). ASB is brainstorming an outreach effort for January, February. Kudos from Ms. Eick to Magnus for doing such a great job!

SCHOOL CLOSURES AND ASSIGNMENT PLAN
Susan, Marlies, and Duncan have attended several different meetings since the closure plan came out. The closure plan did not have any immediate impact on TOPS. However, TOPS community members have been attending meetings in order to monitor the situation and offer support to other schools. Marlies attended one meeting hosted by the district. Duncan attended an alternative school meeting.

One of the meetings was specifically organized by and for alternative schools. This is a group that grew out of the original Alternative Schools coalition. The meeting was very unstructured. They read through the district policy on alternative schools (available at http://www.seattleschools.org/area/policies/c/C54.00.pdf). Duncan read from the policy. The policy represents a model of pick-up at a corner near the student’s home. Ms. Scott will try to get the time frame for the alternative school status.

A Site Council discussion followed these reports. What’s the difference between a really good alternative school and best practices? It was suggested that Site Council convene a separate meeting to discuss our alternative school status. Ms. Scott noted differences among alternative schools that sometimes make it difficult to work together. The data-driven nature of the district at this point makes it important to assess or collect data on student progress in standard ways. Ms. Scott hears a strong commitment to alternative schools from the district, but believes they will have to adhere to more of the state and federal requirements to survive. Transportation costs for alternative schools may be an issue. Closure is going to come first before Assignment, but the two really have combined impacts on the district’s budget. Ms. Scott notes that new transportation models are being considered to cut costs, e.g., having more gathering points where students are picked up rather than current model of pick-up at a corner near the student’s home. Ms. Scott will try to get information about our transportation costs.

Principal’s Report:
Ms. Scott reported on recent events. The music celebration was on 12/9, and the new music teachers are doing a great job! Penny Harvest was really successful. Winter Wishes program is off and running. Thanks to families that have stopped by and picked up families off the board. 8th graders have contributed 390 items to the food drive. Ms. Scott went to ACT theatre where four TOPS playwrights were honored for their plays. Today TOPS received academic improvement awards for achievement in reading, writing, and math, and also received a Shared Savings Award for reduction in energy and water usage.

Ms. Scott made a report on expenditure of the special auction item from last year. She distributed a list of what has been done and what is pending. The items that are pending haven’t been charged to Friends of TOPS because we have not been given a cost by the district. She is hoping to get most of these done and have an idea of the money by January.

NO BAKE COMMITTEE:
Marlies van Bergeijk reported that the No-Bake is going great. Over $46,000 at this point. Next push is letters to alumni families.

BUILDING LEADERSHIP TEAM (BLT) REPORT:
Jeanne Kuban reported on Writers Workshop professional development activities that occurred this week. They brought in subs for full days to cover teachers who went to watch one of the teachers teach a writing workshop lesson. Observers were in same grade band team. Jacque (the writing coach) met with teachers before the observation, had the observation, and then had a debrief. They did the same thing in the afternoon with a different teacher teaching. This occurred all day Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday morning. Leslie N. reported it was a bit nerve-wracking being observed but extremely valuable. Kristina S. noted it is not often teachers get an opportunity to see each other teach and that it was great to watch the second graders work. She also mentioned feeling respected as a professional to have time to sit with colleagues to plan and discuss a lesson. Having the observation was extremely valuable.

Treasurer’s Report
Cliff Shettler reported that a proposal had been made for FoT to fund a lunchroom assistant, since complications with the district funding for this position were keeping it from happening. We are going to defer on funding a lunchroom assistant. Not able to make a resolution at this point. If the district hires the assistant they have to be available to go to other schools, is here about 90 minutes a day and gets paid $11/hour. The school has the possibility of hiring a specific person who did not want to work for the district, but he is not actually available. The time frame for the

Continued on next page
work is 11:30-1:00 plus free lunch. Parent volunteers have been filling in. We need to clarify with the district what the situation is and need to advocate with the district to make this position workable.

**Miscellaneous**

Lori asked how the new conference scheduling (three full days prior to Thanksgiving) worked. Parents and teachers had positive things to say, as did Aaron (Kids Co.). Lori mentioned not all parents seemed aware of the change in schedule, so it was not as efficient as it could have been.

**Workgroup Reports**

Financial resources: Betsy distributed goals to workgroup members (Cliff, Jean, and Marlies) and is waiting for feedback. It was pointed out that we need to identify a treasurer for next year to take over from Cliff.

**Items for Follow-up**

- Meeting after the first of the year should be convened to talk about TOPS as an alternative school.
- Duncan will stay connected with alternative schools group.
- Members should write letters to Olympia about funding for education.
- Maureen will talk to Annie about the lunchroom assistant position, write up the lunch room assistant job description, and put it in the Eastlake newsletter, and give to Aaron.
- Kristina will do a survey monkey survey about new conference scheduling.

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**1/14/09**

**Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) and English Language Learning (ELL) Programs**

Eva Masumoto presented information about TOPS ELL program. This school year (2008-09) TOPS has 94 students with a home language other than English. Forty-five are qualified for bilingual services. Eleven kindergarten students are qualified for ELL services. Eva provides these services with the help of two Instructional Assistants, Andrew Wong and Xiao Yu Jackson. IAs are centrally hired and assigned to schools based on numbers of children with a given language. Our IAs were both teachers in China (math and science). The bilingual program is a support program for kids learning English. For students whose primary language is not English, it takes them two years for basic and five to seven years for academic language to be fully mastered. The main ELL function is to provide a language bridge to the classroom but also to help make the social connection to the family. The ELL staff does translations and provides academic support, depending on the classroom and the needs of the children. They run a homework club for 1st-3rd graders in the a.m. Debbie Bermet (math specialist) helps with the homework club. How do students enter and exit? – If families say their home language is other than English they are referred to the Bilingual Family Center where the child takes a test to qualify for services. Kids new to the U.S. go to the Bilingual Orientation Center for school and stay there for half a year. At semester change they are mainstreamed into regular schools. Students exit the program by taking the WA Language Proficiency Test (reading, writing, and speaking). Last year 16 TOPS students exited through WLPT. Have 20 kids in homework club. All the schools have ELL programs. The basis for ELL was a lawsuit in 80's against the district saying kids weren't getting equal access to education.

Liz Hayden presented information on TOPS' two DHH classrooms. Liz teaches the nine K-5 students in an English DHH classroom which uses sign language that follows English and is taught at TOPS primarily for students who are hard of hearing. The other classroom, taught by Cindy Beck, uses ASL (American Sign Language). ASL does not follow English grammatical structure and is easier for students who don’t have access to sound. Students in the DHH classroom are exposed to the curriculum that everyone else is getting using sign language. Language development, which lags behind that of hearing peers, is emphasized. Unlike an ESL student, DHH students don't necessarily come to school with a fully functioning language. In Liz’s classroom, they work on speech, hearing, and phonics. There are several assistants in the classroom and one interpreter who goes out to work with a student who is mainstreamed most of the day. Mainstreaming works differently for different children. It takes a lot of support. It is hard to get everything done in the DHH classroom if the staff is supporting a lot of mainstreaming. A lot of the DHH families are also ELL. Some don't have transportation. DHH students go to Eckstein in 6th grade, and the two programs (ASL and English sign language) are under one teacher in middle school.

**Discussion:** Translations of materials going out to ELL families need lead time for IAs to be able to do them. Room reps from grades of regular kids should be informing DHH kids of activities. Only two of nine parents in Liz’s classroom have email.

**Site Council Discussion of School Closures and Assignment Plan:**

- Lobbying Olympia re funds for education – We will be seeking advice from TOPS parent and former legislator, Kip Tokuda.
- Transportation plan – We will be monitoring how this will affect TOPS and giving input as possible.
- Audit of alternative education – We will also be monitoring this and how definition of “Alternative” will affect us.
- Parents are monitoring the closures and possible effect on TOPS.

**Principal's Report**

Ms. Scott reported the MLK assembly had to be rescheduled because of remodeling going on in the gym (Special Auction Project dollars at work). Congratulations to students in Our Town, the middle school play performed December 12 and 13. Discussion is going on about the Speech Tournament which is not being held this year and may be reorganized for next year. Thanks to all parents for participation.

*Continued on next page*
in holiday gift program. The December snows made delivery of gifts as well as Food Lifeline donations challenging but it was accomplished. A TOPS student has been diagnosed with Leukemia and the staff has organized a stair climb for him, participating in the Columbia Tower event, March 22 to raise funds for Leukemia. The first tour was held yesterday attended by approximately 60 people. One for the middle school is coming up. Middle school students will watch the Inauguration in classrooms and discuss the events. Elementary students will view a delayed taping of the event.

**Building Leadership Team (BLT) Report:**

Jeanne Kuban reported the Writers Workshop sessions have been taking place. Later in the month K-5 teachers will go to Madrona School for a session on math. Math parent “nights” are happening (one in morning, one after school, and one in evening) January 30. Debbie Bermet will be running these sessions. The Safety Committee has been meeting and is determined to articulate an emergency response plan. Joanne Jordan from City of Seattle did a training for the committee. She recommended having a parent meeting in which she would join us and talk about emergency response. We will try to time it to coincide with an Eastlake Community Council meeting, possibly in March or April. Barbara suggests keeping the school community informed about the developing plan through the newsletter, etc. The plan will be aligned with the City of Seattle plan. Leslie noticed parents who are volunteering in class don’t know the emergency procedures.

**Auction Report**

Janet Morrison reported the theme for this year’s auction is “Spring for TOPS.” The goal is the same as last year ($110,000). Last year brought in $93,000. Site Council needs to decide the special auction item (“Fund an Item”) by the end of February. Last year was “complete a classroom.” Kristina will submit an article for the newsletter about the success of that item. We will have testimonials in the March newsletter and fund an item for this year in April newsletter. The Auction date is May 2. Someone has donated a large supply of greeting cards to TOPS, so many that selling them at the Auction will make a small dent in them. Cliff will look at what the possibilities are in the charter, given the limit on fundraisers, to sell these cards, e.g., Art Fest, Book Fair, Auction, etc.

**List of Possible “Fund an Item” Projects**

- Replacing the Mac Lab (need price and plan)
- Teacher Excellence Fund
- Rain prevents kids going outside. Many schools have a rain cover so kids can play outside on rainy days. (need plan and pricing)
- Students with special needs – to promote inclusion for students in special needs classroom – community-building

**Coalition for Social Justice**

Karen Stuhldreher reported this Friday will be CSJ Topics for K-5 and will include ten topics, e.g., songs of freedom, Brazil and the cycle of poverty, homelessness, hunger issues, international human rights, community kitchen volunteering, propaganda – branding & logos, stuff they have and what kids around the world have, economic distribution and disparity in U.S., lunar new year and celebration food. January 30 is TOPS movie night showing Kids on the Ave. and other movies the 8th graders are watching. Gathering at 6:00, and the movie is at 6:30. Ski bus waiters will hang out together afterward. Karen says CSJ is doing Sentenced Home for February movie night. Taste of TOPS will be in March, and China is the culture of focus.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Cliff Shettler reported the Friends of TOPS is in good shape financially. Cliff is working on the tax return and 1099s. Need to find a treasurer to take over from Cliff next year.

**Items for follow-up**

- Lori will price out the Mac lab – new computers
- Kristina will follow up on the outdoor shelter idea
- Betsy will send out lists of possible auction projects from last year.
- Betsy will email Karen about Tracy Harachi’s work with youth sentenced home to Cambodia
- Kristina and Barbara have ideas of potential treasurers
- Kristina will do Survey Monkey about conference schedule.
- Cliff will work with Susan on restrictions about raising funds using the greeting cards.
Have An Idea? Want Money?  

*RFP=Request For Proposal* (IT’S TIME TO DO IT AGAIN)

*By Maureen Germani (Finance Committee Member)*

Budget season is here! It is time for Friends of TOPS (the Site Council acting as a nonprofit organization) to allocate money raised from the TOPS community through the No-Bake and Auction fundraisers. Friends of TOPS money helps fund curriculum enhancements (e.g., science equipment, art, music, drama) and community-building programs like the directory and this newsletter. This year, more than $150,000 will be allocated through the RFP process. If you have a new idea you would like to have funded or a current program you’d like continued next year, submit your proposal and it will be considered. Please complete a project proposal form (Request for Proposal, or RFP) and submit it to the Finance Committee. This form is available on the TOPS web site under [www.topsk8.org/sitecouncil/budget.shtml](http://www.topsk8.org/sitecouncil/budget.shtml) or from Maureen Germani at 545-1771 or mwgermani@seattleschools.org. The current Friends of TOPS budget is posted on the website at [www.topsk8.org/sitecouncil/sc08-09/2008-2009_FOT_Budget.pdf](http://www.topsk8.org/sitecouncil/sc08-09/2008-2009_FOT_Budget.pdf).

Some of the criteria used to evaluate a proposal are: how well it reflects our mission and supports the goals of our transformation plan; how many children it serves; how economical and sustainable the program is likely to be; and the enrichment value of the program. All proposals must list a program manager who accepts primary responsibility for the project. Anyone submitting RFPs must have the support of at least one staff member.

TOPS community members will be given the opportunity to help evaluate existing programs. Keep your eyes open for notices in the Go-Home and room rep emails that will direct you to an online survey about all programs funded by Friends of TOPS in 2008-2009. The Finance Committee will use your input in evaluating which programs to fund for 2009-2010.

**Electronic copies of RFPs must be emailed to Friends of TOPS Treasurer Cliff Shettler by Monday, April 20** (note there is no longer a hard copy option). You can contact Maureen Germani at 545-1771 if this is a problem. If you have questions or comments, please contact Cliff Shettler at sshettler@msn.com or 525-0067.

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Mark your Calendars! ArtFest 2009

This year’s Artfest will take place on May 15th, 2009 from 5:30 P.M. to 9 P.M. in the school Library. Stop by before attending the TOPS Elementary Play, “The Moral of the Story is...... Four Classic Aesop’s Fables.”

Here is a chance to see a school wide presentation of wonderful art created by TOPS students with the help of art teachers Cynthia Livak and Luzita Roll.

Volunteers Needed!! This monumental task needs lots of volunteers and if you are interested in helping, please contact Nancy Hom at skallywag@comcast.net

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Erin Wolf, Grade 6
TOPS Music - Something for Everyone

By Johnny Calcagno

TOPS students have a rich and diverse array of musical opportunities before, during, and after school, and performance opportunities throughout the school year give them a chance to show off if they choose to.

Because singing is accessible to everyone, and provides a great range of interesting material, TOPS has a vocal singing option for every student at every grade level. Starting in Kindergarten and continuing through second grade, longtime TOPS music teacher Sari Breznau leads each classroom in a weekly song session. This year, our Kindergartners have been particularly lucky to have even more chances to sing along as PEAK teacher Michael Adam’s great collection of folk songs are joyfully woven into the school day.

After second grade, students participate in either Hummingbird Choir (for third and fourth graders), or the Inspire Choir (for fifth through eighth grades). This year TOPS has a new Choir Director, Camila Recchi, a member of Pat Wright’s nationally famous Total Experience Gospel Choir. Kids have enjoyed Camila’s youthful energy and warmth, and have been blown away by her amazing American Idol-like singing voice. In addition to her TOPS teaching this year, she recently toured Japan with Total Experience, and performed in Black Nativity at Intiman Theater.

Instrumental music instruction is available starting in fourth grade, with students getting weekly instruction in one of several different instrument families, including woodwinds, brass, and strings. For the third year in a row, Mark Oesterle has been teaching these classes, and this year there is a very large group of kids getting instruction, particularly in strings. Mark also teaches at Salmon Bay, so he is comfortable with TOPS’ alternative setting. He is also apparently quite relieved that most of the nineteen violin players are tuned up when they arrive for Friday morning’s class!

The TOPS Orchestra and TOPS Band are groups of older kids (fifth grade and above) who have played for a year or longer, can sight read well, and are committed to practicing on their own. We have new directors this year for both ensembles. Valerie Coon is a graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and enjoys playing and teaching classical as well as popular music. Valerie brings amazing energy to the 7:45 Wednesday morning practice, and has booked the orchestra for public performances at Seattle Center’s Winterfest and Whirligig celebrations. The stage director at Winterfest sent a note to TOPS Principal Clara Scott saying she had never heard a middle school orchestra sound so good and in tune. Hard work paid off!

The TOPS Band is led by Alaskan native and University of Idaho Music School graduate Ed Littlefield. Ed is a multi-instrumentalist perfectly capable and at ease teaching trumpet, clarinet, saxophone, and even a stray violin or two. During the TOPS Ice Cream Social in the fall, Ed had a group of kids doing body percussion and crazy poly-rhythms.

There are two hidden gems in the TOPS music offerings. The TOPS Guitar Program is new this year, offered three times a week during the noon hour by local guitar whiz Ryan Hoffman. It’s a hidden gem because classes are held in a windowless attic room above the gym filled with rock posters, a drum set, PA, and guitar amplifiers. The TOPS Pianoforte program has been led for years by Peter Stevens, and it gets its hidden gem status because classes are one-on-one after school, when the building is nearly empty. Kids and parents love Peter, and Peter loves the grand piano that was donated to TOPS last year.

Finally, the musical offerings at TOPS are rounded out by the Elementary Play, which is always a musical. In the past we have featured 101 Dalmatians, Jungle Book, and Odysseus, with many singing roles for kids throughout the elementary grades.
TOPS Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS
1 Kindergarten teacher
2 Office secretary
8 Clara Scott
9 Lunchroom manager
11 Anagram of school name
12 The other half
13 Area outside 3rd/4th grade classrooms
15 TOPS' counselor
17 Taking care of the earth and school grounds
18 Reading specialist
19 Showcase of student creative work in May

DOWN
1 Kindergarten teacher
3 Parent taught workshops
4 School leadership group
5 Middle school science favorite
6 New Assistant Principal
7 After school hub
10 Name of playfield
14 ASB
16 Half of P.E. team extraordinaire

Solution on page 19
Riding a...

By Amira Jessie, Grade 7

My favorite thing to do in P.E. is ride a Ripstick, because Ripsticks are really fun and cool to learn how to ride. I started off falling when I first tried to ride one, then each day I improved my skills by practicing over and over again. Soon I noticed that I was starting to get the hang of it, and I didn’t need the wall that much anymore. When I first learned how to do it, I learned that in order to pick up speed I had to wiggle my left foot back and forth and keep balance. It was scary learning how to ride it at first, but once I kept practicing it, I got better and better each day, so now that I’ve learned how to ride it I can start to try doing tricks on it to improve my skills even more. I like riding the Ripstick because it’s good for your foot work, and it’s really cool body movement when I’m on it. Now, I like to ride the Ripstick so much I had to get one of my own. I now have one, at my house.

Middle School TOPIC Day

Crystal Mountain Ski Trip

Jack Baba, Grade 8

45 half awake middle school students got onto a motor coach at 7:15 in the morning last Friday. As the two hour bus ride went on each one slowly woke up; when the bus finally arrived the skiers and snowboarders were greeted by heavenly conditions and clear skies. Over a foot of fresh powder made this day like no other. Like kids in a candy shop, groups of students split off to explore all reaches of Washington’s biggest ski resort.

A group of friends and I started out on the Green Valley lift and had fun in the powder before moving over to Rainer and Northway, the new back side lift. The best part of our day was when six of us skied into an uncharted tree glade. We didn’t know where we would end up but we got to make fresh tracks in deep powder before the return trip on which we watched The Dark Knight, my favorite movie.

PoEtry

By Demitrious Anderson, Grade 7

I love P.E., it’s the class for me
It’s like summer
Everyday we play
But we also exercise, and hang out with the guys
But people that don’t pay attention need to keep their eyes on the prize
We hang out with our friends, laugh and have good times
In class with my friends, that’s how I came up with these rhymes!

Everyone does right to get the good grade
Thinking about P.E. pumps me up like Gatorade!
Although in P.E. we have our ups and downs
When I leave P.E., I never have a frown
People can be who they want to be
And that’s why I love P.E.!
We want to say a huge THANK YOU to the Staff and parents who helped to make TASTE of TOPS a great success! A special thanks to TOPS parents Lynne Goodrich and Suzanne Oelke and to staff members Carla Fetterley, Julie Gillett, Leslie Nilan, Nina Binder, and Cynthia Livak who did a great job coordinating the event. There will be more thank yous in the next newsletter.

**April: Organizing Retreat**—Watch the Go-Homes and your email for an announcement about a one day retreat to reorganize and plan for next year. The Coalition for Social Justice needs more input and renewed leadership for the coming year. What would you like to see from CSJ? More Movie Nights? Speakers? Monthly Meetings? Study Circles and Book Groups? How do you want to see the Coalition for Social Justice work to promote and support the alternative mission and vision of TOPS?

Please watch for the date and location of this Retreat and join us to help with the future planning of CSJ events!

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.
Auction continued from page 1

**Auction.** Come early to check out the great items and then bid often on your favorites. You can look forward to restaurant gift certificates, tickets to sporting events, theater tickets, signed art pieces, and spa gifts.

Join in the action of the **live auction** and bid for your child’s irresistible class project. In years past, the class projects have brought in nearly 50% of our live auction proceeds. These beautiful, unique items have been created in part by each child in the classroom. Among the wonderful past class projects are hand-stitched quilts, mosaic tiled mirrors, framed prints or etchings, hand-painted furniture, and much more!

Take your pick of the live auction items or guarantee you’re the winner of your child’s class art project. Buy a **Golden Raffle ticket** for only $25 and be entered in a drawing to win the live auction item of your choice. With only 100 Golden Raffle tickets available, those are great odds - *especially* if you buy more than one ticket. Golden Raffle tickets are available only during check-in and the silent auction. When the live auction begins, we’ll draw for the winner of the Golden Raffle, who will then be invited onstage to choose his or her prize.

Have the kids been begging for an **iPod Touch**? Or perhaps you want one yourself. Here’s your chance to get one for just $5! The raffle prize this year is for the hottest piece of technology on the market, Apple’s newest iPod, the Touch. You don’t even have to attend the auction to buy raffle tickets and win, as they’ll be on sale after school on selected days in April, just watch the go-home and emails for announcements of which days. Want to increase your chances of winning, buy more than one raffle ticket! And raffle tickets will be on sale the night of the auction as well, but watch out, with this hot prize, they may sell out before the silent auction is over.

And, please remember the other great ways to pitch in and enjoy the evening:

**Procure items worth $50 or more** – talk to local businesses or inventory your own talents or resources. Please be aware that the procurement deadline is right AFTER spring break. Fill out the donation forms **fully and completely**, and then turn them into the TOPS office by **4 p.m. April 8**. More forms are available in the office and at [www.topsk8.org](http://www.topsk8.org). Don’t forget, you can always make a donation online at the TOPS Auction website - [http://tops.maestroweb.com/](http://tops.maestroweb.com/).

Continued on next page
Dear Friends of TOPS,

Did anyone walk into the office in the last few months and wonder, “Is it brighter in here?” The fact is, it IS brighter because with the money raised at the auction last year, we were able to remove the top half of a center wall. Now, the office feels more cheery because more natural light flows from the windows all the way to the front entrance. Thank you for your generosity.

Sincerely,
Kristina Stoneberg

Dear Friends of TOPS,

I would like to thank you for your generous donation to the 2008 Special Auction Item. This money has enhanced the middle school classrooms in a variety of ways.

Each classroom is equipped with a sound system which allows students to hear the teachers more clearly. This system also enhances student presentations. Now everyone can hear the presentation, not just the students sitting in the front of the room.

Another improvement made possible by this money is in the computer lab. We now have shades on the windows which makes it possible to see the computer screens on bright sunny days.

The storage room on the third floor has shelves. These shelves allowed us to get everything out of boxes, which have been there since we moved back after the remodel. Now we can see what we have, and have a lot more available storage space.

Thank you, Thank you!

Lori Eickelberg
FROM THE BUILDING LEADERSHIP TEAM

By Jeanne Kuban, Assistant Principal

The TOPS Staff engaged in mid-year reflections about our progress towards increased student learning of all kinds. Last month, we revisited our C-SIP (Comprehensive School Improvement Plan) to see if we are on track and aligned with its goals for math, writing, science, and social-emotional development. After a quick review of the plan, teachers created charts that contained both “Successes” and “Lingering Questions” regarding our student and teacher progress as an aligned school. We took a few minutes to read all of the posted charts. It’s really important for our school staff to understand each other’s work and perspectives, and these public charts were a great way to accomplish that.

Next we looked at a rubric (rating chart with specific criteria) and thoughtfully assessed ourselves in the areas of using data, knowledge/application of the C-SIP, mathematics implementation, balanced literacy, and high quality instruction. Our next step will be compiling the collected information so we can further our professional dialogue regarding alignment and common understanding of the continuum of learning at TOPS.

On another note, the WASL is upon us, beginning April 13 and continuing through and including May 1. I know that Mrs. Scott has spoken to the importance of student attendance during this time. There is additional information that can be most useful to prepare your student for the most formal assessment they take. First of all, it’s important to remember that the WASL is a criteria-referenced assessment. This means that the students are assessed against an identified set of standards. It is the individual student performance that is key to the WASL, not student performance against peers. All states administer a WASL-like assessment. Our WASL is a way for the state to take a snapshot of student performance.

If your student is going to be absent, it is really important that he/she make up the tests. All scores become a part of the TOPS larger scores, so every student’s involvement is important.

Remember to make sure your child gets enough rest and eats a healthy and adequate breakfast. Snacks and water will be provided. Make sure you tell your student that he/she has been preparing for the WASL since the first day of school. They need to “show what they know.” We’ve all experienced a bit of anxiety before big tests and sometimes the WASL is no different. A little energy can be a good thing toward high quality performance, and TOPS students are, without a doubt, ready for the challenge!

Please Join Us for an EMERGENCY RESPONSE MEETING

April 15, 6-7 p.m. in the TOPS Library

The TOPS Safety Committee invites all parents and families to a special meeting that will describe the Emergency Response plans we are currently creating. Joanne Jordan, an educator from Seattle Emergency Response, will be on hand to answer questions. Eastlake Community Council representatives will also be on hand.

Our goal is to coordinate efforts between our school, families, and the surrounding community to ensure the safety of our students and teachers should we encounter a real emergency.

2008 - 2009 TOPS CALENDAR

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APRIL</th>
<th>MAY</th>
<th>JUNE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 (W-F) ...Spring Break; no school</td>
<td>1 (F) ...WASL testing</td>
<td>2-5 (T-F) ...8th grade Camp, Deception Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (W) ...Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m., TOPS library</td>
<td>2 (S) ...TOPS Auction, 5 p.m.</td>
<td>2-5 (T-F) ...ASB Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (F) ...End of third quarter</td>
<td>6 (W) ...Grade 1 and DHH to SCT</td>
<td>4-5 (Th-F) ...3rd and 4th grades to Camp Arnold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (F) ...2nd Friday of the Month Club, 4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>8 (F) ...TOPICS, Earth Day theme, 1-3 p.m.</td>
<td>9(T) ...K, 1st &amp; 2nd grades to Camp Arnold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-30 ...WASL testing</td>
<td>8 (F) ...3rd and 4th grades to Camp Arnold</td>
<td>12 (F) ...8th grade Passage, 7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 (Sa) ...Landscaping Work Party</td>
<td>15 (F) ...TopICS, Cultures of the World theme, 1-3 p.m.</td>
<td>15 (M) ...Elementary school Field Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 (F) ...TOPICS, Cultures of the World theme, 1-3 p.m.</td>
<td>13-15 (W-F) ...7th grade Camp, Mt. St. Helens</td>
<td>15 (M) ...Middle school to Wild Waves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13 (W) ...Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m., TOPS library</td>
<td>19 (F) ...Last student day, 2:20 p.m. dismissal</td>
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The Moral of the Story Is . . .
TOPS Elementary Play Arrives This Spring

By Madalyn Corbit

Preparations are underway for another fabulous TOPS Elementary Drama Presentation. This year our talented TOPS actors will be presenting The Moral of the Story Is . . . Four Adapted Fables from Aesop, a TOPS original adaptation of Aesop’s fables.

We are delighted to have longtime drama educator and Actor’s Equity Association actor/dancer/singer Shanna Palmer as our Creative Director and our very own TOPS Choir Director Camila Landrum-Recchi as Musical Director.

Performances are at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, May 15 and Saturday, May 16 in the auditorium. Admission is $4.00 per adult, $2.00 per student with a $20.00 family pass available for families attending both performances. Please note that all students attending evening performances need to be accompanied by an adult for the duration of the play.

Families with students taking part in this year’s production are reminded to ask for any paperwork that may be sent home and to look for any emails with “TOPS Drama” in the subject line.

Solution to puzzle on page 13

TOPS Crossword Puzzle

Submitted by Debbie Bermet,
Math Specialist

Juan has 3 pitchers. The first pitcher holds 8 ounces and it is filled with a refreshing drink. The other two pitchers are empty. One can holds 5 ounces and the 3rd pitcher can hold 3 ounces. Juan would like to share half (4 ounces) of his drink with his friend Theresa. How can he accurately do this?

Hint: He will need to do this in a series of steps. Drawing a picture and/or making a table will help.

See the May edition of TOPS News for the answer.
You can now view the auction catalog or make a donation online at the TOPS Auction web site - http://tops.maestroweb.com/
RSVP before April 8 to receive a $5 discount off your ticket price!
Please turn in your donation forms to the TOPS office by April 8.

For more information go to the TOPS auction web page at topsk8.org/helping/auction or email Janet Morrison at janetm@blarg.net.

Auction 2009
Saturday, May 2, 2009
Asian Resource Center
doors open at 5 p.m.

Thanks to G & H Printing, 2370 Eastlake E. 329-9888

The Seattle School District is an Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action employer and employs individuals without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, marital status, handicap/disability or sexual orientation. The Seattle School District provides Equal Education Opportunity without regard to race, creed color, nation origin, sex, mental states, handicap/disability or sexual orientation. The 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.