



# SUNFLOWER CHRONICLE

Flower Valley Elementary School PTA Newsletter

December 9, 2011

Volume 1, Issue 4

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## Calendar of Events

*December 6<sup>th</sup>*  
PTA Meeting—5<sup>th</sup> Grade Concert

*December 9<sup>th</sup>*  
Winter Dance Party

*December 16<sup>th</sup>*  
Spirit Day

*December 21<sup>st</sup>*  
Teacher Cookie Exchange

*December 23<sup>rd</sup>*  
Teacher Sing-Along

*December 26 – January 2*  
No School for Students and  
Teachers: Winter Break

*January 3<sup>rd</sup>*  
PTA Meeting – Instrumental Music  
Concert

*January 16<sup>th</sup>*  
No School for Students and  
Teachers: MLK Holiday

*January 20<sup>th</sup>*  
BINGO Night

The Sunflower Chronicle is a  
publication of the Flower Valley  
Elementary School Parent Teacher  
Association.

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Deadline for next edition:  
Thursday, January 6, 2012

## From the President

Happy Holidays!

There are many activities in the DC Area to enjoy as the winter holidays approach. You can see one of our own Flower Valley 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students, Svea Johnson, as Gretl in the Sound of Music at Olney Theater. Or head over to Brookside Gardens and experience the outdoor Garden of Lights and the indoor train display in the Conservatory. Or maybe you'd rather go ice skating at the Rockville Ice Arena. Try something new and enjoy the colder temperatures!

I hope you have been receiving the weekly Seven O'Clock Sunday phone messages. We want parents better informed about the activities in the school and we want ALL families to participate in the events.

As another way to get families more involved, a survey will be sent next week to ask parents what topics they would like to discuss / learn about at future PTA meetings. We have come up with some ideas, but we are always open for suggestions. Please look in your child's folder for this survey and know that the class with the most parent response will receive a PIZZA PARTY!

As a thank you to our teachers this month, please consider baking and donating some sweet treats for the "Cookie Exchange" on December 21<sup>st</sup>. Thank you to Kelli Potter and the Hospitality Committee for organizing this event!

Finally, as this is a time for giving and thinking of those less fortunate, please support the Student Government Association (SGA) Food Drive by donating canned and boxed food. Notice was sent home with each class bringing a different item. The drive runs from Dec 6 – 16. Also, Mrs. Holmes will be sponsoring a "Mitten Tree" in the front hall of the school this month. All mittens collected will be sent to local needy children. So, please send in lots and mittens and let's fill up that tree!

May you and your family have a Happy New Year!

Sandy Young  
PTA President

## **NEXT PTA MEETING – Instrumental Music Concert**

The next PTA meeting is on Tuesday, January 3, 2012 at 7:00pm in the All-Purpose Room. We will address business issues at the beginning of the meeting and then the Instrumental Music concert will follow. Come on out to enjoy a wonderful show.

## **Open PTA Chair Positions**

Looking for a new way to get involved this year? Consider taking on one of these PTA chair positions:

- Newsletter Editor
- First VP
- MCCPTA Delegate
- Spring Carnival – Co-chair
- Bring Your Family to School Week (committee members needed)
- Bylaws (committee members)
- Silent Auction (committee members)
- Hands-On-Science
- Reflections
- Safety

For more information on any of these PTA activities, please contact Sandy Young.

## **Science Fair**

The Flower Valley Science Fair will be held on February 2, 2012. It's open to all students (required for grades 4,5). **Return your registration form by December 21.**

If you have questions or are interested in volunteering, please contact Kristy Johnson at [joh1311@comcast.net](mailto:joh1311@comcast.net).

## **Spirit Wear**

We are rolling out new spirit wear for the kids! The Flower Valley Bulldog and Frog will be rockin' on the new Royal Blue shirts – our school color! The shirts will be on sale for \$5 each at all PTA events!

**The first spirit day is December 16, 2011 – so show your spirit! Buy one today!**

## **FLES Program**

Does your child want to learn Spanish, French, or Mandarin Chinese? Then sign up for FLES (Foreign Language in Elementary Schools Program) today! Classes start in JANUARY 2012.

- Spanish: K-1, 2-5th is Mondays 3:05-4:05pm
- Mandarin Chinese: K-1, 2-5th is Fridays 3:05-4:05pm
- French: K-1, 2-5th is Tuesdays 3:05-4:05pm

**Please forward your registration form by December 19, 2011.** If you have any questions/concerns, please feel free to contact Leah Brownlee Taylor via email at [leahbrownleetaylor@yahoo.com](mailto:leahbrownleetaylor@yahoo.com).

## **COOKBOOK**

The CookBook is here! From appetizers to desserts, there are many recipes to keep you busy in the kitchen.

Check out the website to order your copy today! <http://www.fvespta.com/cookbook.htm>

## **E-Mail List**

If you have not already done so, please visit the PTA website at [www.fvespta.com](http://www.fvespta.com) and sign up for the listserv in order to receive important information from the PTA and other valuable resources.



## **Special Education in Focus: What is Special Education at Flower Valley?**

Special education is a broad term that describes the education of students who have intellectual, physical, behavioral or emotional disabilities. Special education involves specially designed instruction that is provided at no cost to parents to meet the unique needs of children with a disability. The eligibility of a student for special education and related services is based on a comprehensive evaluation process in which parents are collaborative partners. In general, special education services provide specially designed instruction that involves modifications to the curriculum itself and/or the way the curriculum is taught to meet the specific needs of the student. Other special education-related services such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, or physical therapy may also be needed. These are just a few of the related services that could be provided. Services are documented in an Individualized Education Program or "IEP." For more information, please see the Montgomery County Parent Guide to Special Education at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/specialed/parents/>.

Flower Valley offers a range of services and has a special program for the deaf and hard of hearing. To familiarize parents with the school's providers, the next newsletter will feature brief bios of the special educators at Flower Valley. If you have any questions, please contact our Principal, Ms. Holmes or Gail Graves, PTA Special Needs Chairperson.

## **MCPS Superintendent's Message: Recess**

During several Listen and Learn events, Superintendent Joshua Starr stated that recess should never be denied. At the MCCPTA program on November 22, Dr. Starr was forthright in admitting that there was not a MCPS policy on participation in recess and that there were actually some valid circumstances in utilizing or denying recess to students.

In response to the many queries (from both parents and principals alike) on denying recess, the Chief School Performance Officer prepared a memo, which can be accessed at:

[http://www.mccpta.net/testimonies\\_dir/2011-2012/Participation\\_in\\_Recess.pdf](http://www.mccpta.net/testimonies_dir/2011-2012/Participation_in_Recess.pdf).

It provides for exceptions that would allow denying or utilizing recess time, such as misbehavior at recess and academic interventions. Parents should note the statement that "Conversations should be held with a student's parent/guardian to gain his/her agreement for this additional academic assistance during recess time."

In discussing recess at the recent FVES PTA Board Meeting, our teachers and administration stated that they wished there were more structured activities for kids to do during recess. If you are available during the day for an hour or so and are interested in volunteering to run an outdoor program during recess, please let us know.

## **Websites for Kids**

Check out the following websites (teacher approved) for educational games and activities for your kids:

<http://www.mathplayground.com>

<http://www.basic-mathmetics.com>

<http://www.math-play.com>

<http://www.spellingcity.com/>

<http://www.starfall.com/>



## **Giant / Safeway / Harris Teeter / Target Programs**

Please register your Giant, Safeway, Harris Teeter, and Target cards for this school year. It takes only a few minutes and can help our school earn money for a variety of educational needs. Just sign up using your Safeway, Giant, Harris Teeter, and Target card numbers, designate our school and Flower Valley will earn CASH for all of your purchases. For more information, visit [www.fvespta.com](http://www.fvespta.com).

## **Box Tops for Education/Campbell's Labels**

In 2010-2011, Flower Valley PTA earned over \$700 from Box Tops! Please continue to clip and send them in. We are no longer tracking classes, so you don't need to label the bags or split the bags between your Flower Valley children. Just put them in the box in the hall, outside the office! We are also collecting Campbell's Labels, so you can send those in too!

### **Want to help?**

Keep a baggie in your kitchen. As you use the participating brands, tear off the Box Tops. Send them in with your child each month so they don't expire! Ask grandparents and other relatives to clip them too.

### **Want to do a little more?**

Before you send them in, check to make sure that none of them are expired. Please throw those away, and jot a note saying that you've checked them for expiration dates! Separate the Box Tops from the Campbell's Labels.

### **Want to do even more?**

Count your not-expired Box Tops and put them in groups of 50, either with rubber bands or baggies. Your 5 minutes of effort will save the coordinators lots of time later.

Thank you!

Sarah Beswick

Box Tops for Education and Campbell's Labels  
Coordinator

## **Gifted and Talented Updated**

The Gifted Child Committee hosted Marty Creel, MCPS Director of Enriched and Innovative Programming, for a discussion of Curriculum 2.0

(C2.0) geared specifically to gifted education, on Wednesday, November 30, 2011 at Carver Educational Services Center. Mr. Creel presented an overview of C2.0 and its relationship to the new standards Maryland has adopted, discussed the acceleration and enrichment tools built into the new curriculum, and took some parent questions, including several from FVES parents, especially parents of high-ability second graders

Parents continue to be concerned about how C2.0 will meet the needs of the very highest ability math students. While MCPS states that a few students per grade level may need to be accelerated to the next grade level, there is no formal assessment to give these students. MCPS stresses that grouping decisions regarding math at all grade levels are a building decision, so either a model where the homeroom teachers uses small group instruction/differentiation is acceptable, as is a model where homogeneous math groups are used. In all cases, groups are to be flexible and fluid.

## **Communicating with Children: Tip from National PTA**

Excerpt from National PTA website article on how parents make a difference in children's life. Read all tips here:

<http://pta.org/2617.htm>

"Listen! Listen! Listen!

When your children want to talk, stop everything. If you continue what you were doing, they will think you don't care and don't have time for them. Avoid jumping in and not letting them vent or discuss their concerns, worries, and fears. In life, sometimes we all need a shoulder to cry on. At times, we don't even want advice or comments. Other times, we just want to be heard and to feel like someone shares our pain. A silent and sympathetic ear is sometimes the best thing we can give to our children.

Here are a few words that show we are listening:

- Tell me more!
- I know.
- Wow!
- That is just awful.
- I am here.
- Go ahead; let it out"