



BOBCAT NEWS

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 6 - JUNE 2010

An open Letter to the Fathers of Mark Twain Elementary

By Shawn Palmer, PTSA co-VP3

Good day, my fellow football-watching, beef-jerky-eating, duct-tape-using brethren. (For those of you present at the first general PTSA meeting of the school year, I apologize for dipping into that well again; but for those who missed it, enjoy the chuckle.)

As a Twain parent, PTSA member and PTSA Board VP (co-VP3, along with the harder-working and more-on-top-of-things Tammy Gilliam), I can proudly call this school year a success. A balanced budget; a successful Welcome Back Barbecue, Fun Run, and school dance; financial support back to the school; a new provider for school pictures and yearbook; staff training in emergency preparedness...to name but a small spattering of the wins generated by your PTSA.

As the sole male member on an otherwise all-female Board, I tip my hat to fellow Twain dads who make significant contributions around campus: Gary Runstadler, George Tsantilas, Pete Mangouras and Michael Fox. Of course, I cannot list every father who has volunteered time this year, and I apologize; but to the remainder of the dads out there...c'mon, guys. Let's get more involved.

Studies continue to indicate that children are more successful in school when their fathers are more involved. Students have higher attendance, earn higher grades, seek new challenges, and participate more in extracurricular activities. There are numerous ways to serve the students of Twain with your fatherly know-how, judgment and elbow grease. You could be an invaluable resource for a committee, an event (you can sign up to be a "done in a day" volunteer) and/or in the classroom.

There are 180 school days; volunteering for a half of one of those...bringing your wisdom, your personality, your presence...to your child's classroom and/or the PTSA will make a world of difference to the school and to your student. One morning as a classroom volunteer offers your son or daughter something very special by afternoon recess: bragging rights. "Did you see my dad? Did my dad help you with your art project? Did my dad help you with your math? That was my dad." A father has a very special impact at school; I ask you to explore ways you can make your positive impact resonate at Mark Twain.

Operational commitments to the US Navy will have me away from home for an extended time beginning next Autumn. You will all have the opportunity to continue to be an active part of the Twain community...and I will be jealous of you for it.

You can learn more about volunteering opportunities by e-mailing me at cwu_wildcat@yahoo.com or next year's PTSA President, Julie Tribolet, at julietrib@clearwire.net.

Reference: http://www.strongdads.com/files/60149-53566/SF_Handout_Packet_07.pdf

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UNIT 2.8.65
MARK TWAIN





Staff Birthdays

July

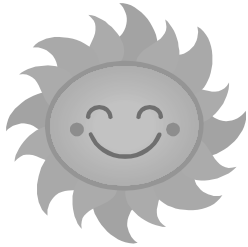
Haley Cooke.....7
 Amy Newport.....22
 Jody Louise.....22
 Linda Tarte.....31

August

Becky Alfrejd9
 Shelley Enstrom.....17
 Amy Waldroup.....30

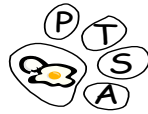


Have a great and safe summer!



Lost and Found

Please check the lost and found before the last day of school. Anything that is left will be donated at the end of the day on June 16th.



Egg Drop Contest Sat. June 12th at 10AM

Michael Fox, PTSA Engineering



End the school year with a bang or a splat by making a contraption or two and bring it to the egg drop contest! The crew of Kirkland Fire Department will be dropping them using Ladder Truck #26! The "oohs", "ahs" and "yucks" start at 10AM on Saturday June 12th in the schools upper parking lot. Mark your calendars because it's going to be "eggs-tremely" "egg-citing"! Photos of past years events located at www.kodakgallery.com/mfox/marktwain. A few volunteer parent-child teams are needed to open contraptions to see if "cracked" or a "survivor". Please contact Michael Fox at 425-497-8400 or on email at mb.fox@verizon.net.

The idea is to demonstrate an understanding of the engineering challenges that rocket scientists face by designing and building a landing craft (at home) so your test pilot (an egg) survives the descent (a drop from the top of the fire department ladder truck) on another planet (the pavement of the school parking lot). No entry forms to submit. Simple rules are; write your name and grade in large print on the contraption, don't bring your contraption to school before the event, nothing sharp or to fly off to hurt someone upon impact, remember this event is at school so all school rules apply – no propellants. This is a dropping contest, which means no airplanes, helium in balloons, or lowering on string, you get the idea. A standard uncooked egg must be used, not hardboiled or frozen!

This event is brought to you by the PTSA and the Kirkland Fire Department as an opportunity for our students to advance their critical thinking and problem solving skills in a fun way!

Gallery Walk was a Success!

Thanks to all of you who came out and enjoyed the art and refreshments during our Gallery Walk Celebration on Thursday, June 3rd. We want to extend a huge THANK YOU to all of our art docent parents. Thank you for making the time this year to put in countless hours to make the Explore Art program come together. We appreciate you and couldn't do it without you!

Cindy Neils, Laura Bartoletti & Tracy Johnsen

Making Mistakes...a Great American Freedom

By Melanie Miller, M.Ed.

Certified Positive Discipline, Trainer, Parent Educator and School Counselor

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I came across an article recently in Time Magazine; "In Defense of Failure; Making mistakes is a great American freedom", by Megan Mcardle. (*Time*, Mar 22, 2010, 51) The article points out some wonderful ways in which our country has nurtured our entrepreneurial spirit and creativity and supported those of us who are willing to take risks, make mistakes and get back up on our feet and try again. Although it's an article about our country and our current economic struggles, it got me thinking about how we, as parents are the first teachers to foster our children's' creativity, ability to take risks and freedom to make mistakes.

The article goes on to say that, in America, somewhere between two-thirds and three -quarters of all Americans report that they have considered starting their own business, whereas in Europe that number is only 40%. We have preserved our "most cherished freedom to fail" in this country. So much so that while the European Union is publishing documents on "overcoming the stigma of business failure," executives in Silicon Valley proudly make their failed start-ups the centerpieces of their resumes. Once again, as the first teachers of our children, what are we teaching about taking risks? Do our own fears step in to save our children from the natural consequences of their actions? Do we ever contradict our children's ideas...saying things like "It's cold outside today, how can you possibly go out without a coat?" Could it be that our children know their own bodies and that perhaps their temperature runs warmer than ours? When our children come to us with their elaborate ideas for the science fair, do we give them some guidelines that we can live with (provide them with a budget, some tools and remind them to clean up after themselves) Or do we question what they're doing, offer our "words of wisdom" and expertise and then proceed to step in and pretty much take over the whole project? As we continue to inch through the current recession, the article also reminds me of the tragedy of the great depression. Statistics like 25% unemployment, GDP falling by about a third and life savings wiped out. We've all seen pictures of the soup lines and through the generations heard about the struggles of our grandparents and great parents to keep their jobs and feed their families. Mcardle goes on to say that because we studied the failings of that era, our financial policy makers learned what didn't work and how not to repeat the mistakes. We can once again be thankful to the "Great Generation". It is because of their willingness to look at the economic mistakes, learn from them and create policies that protect from similar economic disaster that we are currently in a recession and not a depression.

So as we look at the next generation, the great grand children and great, great grandchildren of those who lived through the depression, what are we teaching our children about making mistakes and learning from them? Jane Nelsen, Ed.D, author of the Positive Discipline book series has a favorite quote "Mistakes are a Wonderful Opportunity to Learn". McCardle refers to mistakes as a "great American freedom". What are your children learning about mistakes? As toddlers we celebrated the mistakes as they took their first steps and tumbled to the ground. We cheered them on. "Do it again, do it again", we said. They stumbled a few more times but eventually they were off and running. Now, our children "stumble" and perhaps the impact is greater. Perhaps it affects themselves or others in a negative or hurtful way. But, there is always room to grow, always room to learn. As long as we are alive we will continue to make mistakes. As parents we can create an environment where our children feel safe to recognize their mistakes, repair them as needed, and gain some valuable learning.

McCardle also says "We should be searching for the lessons of this crisis, but we can't because we're too busy searching for bad guys". So when your children are once again arguing over who made the mess in the family room, are you as a parent looking for blame....who started it, which child is at fault? Or are you looking for solutions, searching for the lessons of the crisis, and putting into place a few family policies to help our children navigate through the pitfalls of life. We are responsible for raising the future policy makers, the scientists that perhaps will discover a cure for cancer, save our rainforests, and raise our grandchildren. Do we want them to welcome mistakes, learn from them and keep doing the amazing life changing work they are doing? Or do we want them to stop, to give up, to point fingers and blame and lose the entrepreneurial spirit that is so unique to our country?

Mccardle believes that failure is one of the most important economical tools we have. So for the livelihood of your children and great grand children, send your kids off to school, tell them to have fun and make lots of mistakes. And then be there for your kids when they make mistakes. Listen and work together to repair them. Ask your kids what they learned from their mistake. And let them know that you have faith in them that they will get back on their feet and try again....just like Americans have done for so many years.

Melanie is a *Certified Positive Discipline Associate* and works as a Parent Educator and Grade School Counselor. She offers parenting classes in the Bellevue, Kirkland and Redmond, WA area and is available as a Parent Coach, and Trainer of professionals who work with families and in schools. You can contact her at Melanie_miller@verizon.net or 206.579.2172. To find out more about Positive Discipline, visit www.positivediscipline.org or www.sounddiscipline.org.



THANK YOU to everyone who volunteered on the PTSA this year! Your extra time and effort supporting our committee programs and services benefited all our students and the school. And a special word of thanks goes to all of our wonderful committee chairs!

From Laura Bartoletti and Karen Smith, co-VPI's

THANK YOU to all of our COMMITTEES this year! You all made the school a better place for our kids with many on-going programs and special events...thank you so much!!

Student Safety – **Doreis Howard** did a fabulous job of managing and coordinating all the volunteers involved in Twain's Safe Arrival program. This group of dedicated parents checked student attendance and made sure our kids arrived safely to school. It is with great appreciation that we say thank you for your dedication to this year-long daily job.

Twain Apparel – The students, staff, and parents of Twain have never looked so good! Thank you to **Pirkko Terao & Jill Miller** for bringing back school pride with our newly designed Twain clothing line!

ExploreArt! – For the eighth year of ExploreArt!, our new co-chairs **Cindy Neils, Laura Bartoletti, Cindy Uthus, and Tracy Johnsen** led the school through another wonderful year of art techniques, experiences, and lessons. From training sessions, endless emails, nurturing a team full of grade-level docents, and wonderful add-ons such as the Discovery of Art and Gallery Walk, these fabulous ladies have ensured that all our students are touched by art and continue a legacy – our ExploreArt! program – for future years. Thank you!!

Skate Party – Thank you to **Amanda MacPherson** for spearheading our cherished nights at Skate King. Thank you so much for taking the time to organize these popular events!

Emergency Prep – Thank you to **Shawn Palmer** for making great strides in preparing our school should an emergency occur. Shawn worked diligently all year to organize our emergency prep department and even organized a disaster drill recently which involved the city's police and fire departments.

Student Directory – What a task it is to get our entire student contact info entered into a user friendly format for us all to use. A big thank you goes out to **Kim Bourassa and Valerie Whelan** for coordinating this and getting it in families hands in record time!

Reflections – **Vanessa Banks and Julie Tribolet**-Thank you to Julie and Vanessa for advertising the Reflections program to our students to gain exposure and interest in the program. They also coordinated all the incoming art and made sure the any qualify pieces made their way for final judging.

Book Fair – **Pirkko Terao, Dana Neilson, and Julie Tribolet** lent their dedication and expertise and took the annual Book Fair to new fundraising heights. The Book Fair enriched each and every grade level, as well as the library, with new books. Thank you!

Craft Fair – **Holly Hawkins, Alicia Ferguson, and Diane Galliett** With the vision and coordination of these two ladies the annual craft fair was a huge success. This is no small job and we appreciate their time and dedication at a time of the year when the only thing most of us are thinking about is holiday shopping.

From Amy Maher & Karrin Wikel, co-VPII's

We would like to thank the PTSA committee chairs for their enthusiastic support of the Mark Twain community. Thank you everyone for your hard work, energy, and support!

After School Programs – **Florence Canel** is responsible for bringing an after school foreign language program to Mark Twain. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to this program. **Amy Maher** helped organize the jump rope and after school art classes. Thank you to all the parent volunteers who chaperoned these classes, we appreciate your support.

Box Tops – thank you **Tobi Smith** for organizing Box Tops and bringing such great rewards to our school. Her efforts helped raise money for the PTSA and supplies for our classrooms.

Chess Club – congratulations to the Mark Twain Chess Club for your achievements in the community. Thank you **Doris Lim and Bhanu Purohit** for your outstanding leadership.

Engineering – thank you **Michael Fox** for organizing the popular popsicle stick bridge contest and egg drop. These are unique and much anticipated events for our students.

Family Fun – thank you pancake breakfast organizers **Tammy & Mauricio Silva**. Bingo night was brought to us by **Julie Tribolet**, and the school dance could not have happened without **Tamar Hefets**. Your efforts to foster community at Mark Twain are appreciated.

Science Fair – thank you **Carol Lewis** and **Susan Glynn** for your hard work with the Science Fair this year. Seventy seven students presented projects ranging from Earthquakes to Strawberry DNA.

Staff Appreciation – really made a splash this year! Thank you **Coco Fulton** and **Amy Maher** for the countless hours & creativity you put into spoiling our staff.

Teacher Wish List – led by **Vlasta Hillger** did a great job of communicating the needs of the teachers to the Twain parents.

From Shawn Palmer & Tammy Gilliam, co-VPIII's

We would like to recognize our PTSA committee chairs for their endless and enthusiastic support of Mark Twain. Your time, efforts, energy and dedication is what sets our school apart from others. We couldn't have done it without you!

Historian/Photo Journalist – **Gary Runstadler** deserves endless thanks for tirelessly attending almost every school event and visiting classrooms and recess times on many occasions to capture the students in action. He posted the photos on the bulletin board outside of the library for everyone to enjoy and contributed a great number of photos to the yearbook.

Hospitality – **Karen Brown**, the hostess with the mostess, provided delicious treats and amazing childcare for our PTSA meetings. She also continued her quest for an organized lost and found for all those wayward jackets left on the playground.

Parent Education – Thank you to **Melanie Miller**, who enhanced Parent Education by organizing speakers on hot topics such as school bullying, coordinating with other schools for additional parent education opportunities and writing valuable articles for the *Bobcat News*.

School Pictures – Our thanks to **Tammy Guisness**, who once again provided a day of flawlessly coordinated photography for school and classroom photos. The photos are a treasure for parents and grandparents to have forever.

Sixth Grade Celebration – **Jodi Scheffler**, **Happy Tsantilas**, and **Lisa Jahnke** worked and planned tirelessly to give our graduating 6th graders a fun and memorable end to their days at Twain. Thank you, thank you, thank you for helping coordinate the 6th grade ceremony, fundraising events, and the pool party. Your efforts to send them off with much fanfare leaves them feeling loved and appreciated.

Special Needs – **Malia Campbell** once again did an outstanding job representing the students of Mark Twain with special needs. Your time spent is much appreciated.

Studio East – **Karen Getzinger** and **Leslie Holle** receive a standing ovation for the production of "The Emperor's New Clothes." These lovely ladies spend countless hours behind the scenes to bring the dramatic arts to the students of Twain in coordination with Studio East.

Vision/Health Screen – Our Health Screening day went smoothly thanks to the outstanding job done by **Roxanne Raubacher**. Thank you for a job well done.

Yearbook – Thank you to **Leslie Reusser**, **Tamar Hefets**, and **Tammy Gilliam** for chairing the yearbook committee. The book captures the spirit of Twain students and will be treasured for years to come.



PTSA Board of Directors

Executive Committee

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Secretary: Teri Colbert / 425-827-5039
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Treasurer: Jilleen Broyles / 425-827-3820
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Board Members

Communications Tammy Gilliam

Community Awareness..... OPEN

Fundraising Malia Campbell, Shan Evans

Legislative..... OPEN

2010 Reflections: "Together We Can"

By Shawna Gruner & Julie Tribolet, 2010 co-Chairs

Thank you again to all those students who participated in the Reflections program last fall, and to their parents who supported them! Next school year we will again accept entries for judging in four categories: Literature, Visual Arts, Music Composition, and Photography.

The theme for 2010-11 is "Together We Can". Entries may be submitted to the school office Oct. 18-22nd; deadline is Friday, Oct. 22nd. For students wanting to start on their entries during the summer, the rules and entry form are posted on the school's Tandem Calendar:

<http://lakewashington.intand.com/index.php?type=view&action=event&id=15494>

Please be sure to read all rules carefully before beginning a project. Remember, all entries must be the ORIGINAL work of ONE STUDENT! Good luck and enjoy your summer!



PTSA Back to School BBQ!



Friday, August 27th

12:00-1:00

**after the Teacher Meet & Greet*

Pick up your tickets in the front entryway,
across from the school office.

**Tickets are \$2.00 and include
hot dogs, chips & bottled water!**

**Twain students will receive one ticket free
while supplies last**

**Please note, Meet & Greet ends at 12:00 at which time
classrooms will be closed.*

Staff Appreciation Week

by Coco Fulton & Amy Maher

Special thanks to our Mark Twain loving local establishments:

School Employees Credit Union of Washington, George's, Acropolis, Sushi Mojo, Rikki Rikki, Parkplace Books, Coho Café, Rosehill Starbucks and Flamingo Car Wash.

A special thanks to these extravagant givers and helpers:

Barb Scavera & Lynette Droke who tirelessly assisted with staff communication & logistics.

Room Parents who really personalized Staff Appreciation week in the classroom.

6th Grade Students who worked with the students to write thank you notes to staff.

Anne Buck	Kati Quigley
Barbara Miller	Kathryn Hammer
Beth Turtle	Kimberly Bull
Brandi Comstock	Leslie Reusser
Cathy Schwartz	Liz Fulton
Charyn Lhyle	MaryLee Berthon
Christine Aguirre	Melody O'Tierney
Cindy Khauv	Pirkko Terao
Coco Fulton	Sandi Kaiser
Happy Tsantilas	Susan Burianek
Jill Coon	Tammy Gilliam
Jill Dean	Tina King
Jill Miller	Tracy Johnsen
Jilleen Broyles	Trish Mann
Johna & Pete Weller	Vlasta Hillger
Julie Tribolet	Valerie Whelan

PTSA Committee Chairs

After School Programs Amy Maher
 Book FairPirkko Terao, Julie Tribolet, Dana Neilson
 Box TopsTobi Smith
 Chess ClubDoris Lim, Bhanu Purohit
 Craft Fair Holly Hawkins, Alicia Ferguson, Diane Galliett
 Emergency Prep..... Shawn Palmer
 Engineering Michael Fox
 Explore Art!.....Laura Bartoletti, Tracy Johnsen, Cindy Neils,
 & Cindy Uthus
 Family Fun Nights Tamar Hefets, Tammy Silva
 Historian/Photo Journalist.....Gary Runstadler
 Hospitality..... Karen Brown
 Mathnificent sched for 2010
 Membership..... Sandi Kaiser
 Parent Education.....Melanie Miller
 Reflections.....Julie Tribolet, Vanessa Banks
 School AssembliesLynn Peterson
 School Pictures Tammy Guisness
 Science FairSusan Glynn, Carol Lewis
 Sixth Grade CelebrationLisa Jahnke, Jodi Scheffler,
 & Happy Tsantilas
 Skate Party Amanda MacPherson
 Special Needs Malia Campbell
 Staff Appreciation Coco Fulton, Amy Maher
 Student Directory..... Kim Bourassa, Jill Coon & Valerie Whelan
 Student Safety Doreis Howard
 Studio East Karen Getzinger, Leslie Holle
 Talent Show JonErik Johnson
 Teacher Wish List.....Vlasta Hillger
 Twain Apparel Pirkko Terao, Jill Miller
 Vision/Health ScreenRoxanne Raubacher
 Yearbook Tammy Gilliam, Tamar Hefets & Leslie Reusser



Mark Twain

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Parent Organizer:

www.parentorganizer.com

Tammy Gilliam, Communications

Twain Website:

www.lwsd.org/school/twain

Click the "PTSA" link to access
PTSA information.

Click the "Calendar" link to view
events posted on Tandem Calendar.

State PTSA Website:

www.wastatepta.org

Did you know that... the first day of the 2010-11 school year is Wednesday, September 1st? It's the ONLY Wednesday that WILL NOT be an early release day, so School ends at 3:00.

June 2010

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

- 6/2: Skate King 6:30pm
- 6/3: Gallery Walk 6:30pm
- 6/9: Yearbook Distribution
- 6/10: Field Day
- 6/11: 6th Grade Graduation
- 6/12: Egg Drop Contest 10:00am
- 6/14: 6th Grade Pool Party/Celebration
- 6/16: Half Day—Last Day of School .. 11:30am

August 2010

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- 8/14: NRHNA Clean up at Mark Twain ... 9:00 am
- 8/26: Kindergarten Orientation 7:00 pm
- 8/26: Class Lists posted 4:00 pm
- 8/27: Teacher Meet & Greet 11:00-12:00 pm
- 8/27: PTSA Back to School BBQ.. 12:00-1:00 pm
- 9/1: First Day of School 8:30-3:00

■ NO SCHOOL ○ HALF DAY □ EVENT – check calendar

2010-11 MARK TWAIN PTSA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Annual membership fees are \$11.00 per individual or \$20.00 per couple. Make checks payable to **Mark Twain PTSA**.* Please submit this form with payment to your child's teacher. Your membership includes a student directory. Thank you!

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Please send my directory home with:

Student's Name: _____ Teacher's Name: _____

I am a returning Mark Twain PTSA member.

*Checks returned for NSF subject to a \$20.00 fee.