



# The Farmland Harvest

The Newsletter of the Farmland Elementary PTA

May 2009

---

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

--*Joe Piff*

We had excellent attendance at the May PTA meeting. I reported that I had received several emails from MCCPTA concerning the H1N1 virus (also known as swine flu) and that additional information is available at the following website:

<http://www.naspoline.org/resources/swineflu.aspx>.

Our Principal, Diane Smith, reported that three Farmland employees will be leaving at the end of the school year. They are Alberta Fisher and Sunny Thomas, Fourth Grade teachers, and Emily Canter, a Paraeducator. We will be celebrating their service at our June PTA meeting. Watch your list serve email for further details. Additionally, our Assistant Principal, Michelle Picket, is going back to teaching and will be replaced next year by Mary Bliss. Diane is actively seeking replacements for our teaching losses as well as our new positions identified as a result of student population growth predicted for next year.

Our Counselor, Linda Bart, is still looking for volunteers for Career Day, June 9. She needs presenters and aides.

The biggest news was the fact that Dr. Weast announced that Farmland will move over the summer rather than waiting for Winter Break. The office is scheduled to move on July 6. **Our teachers are looking for volunteers to help them pack. Please contact the school office if you can help.** Farmland will end the school year on June 15, which is one day earlier than shown on the MCPS school calendar. Also, that is a ½-day of school.

Our Teacher Representative this month, Audrey Fincher, reported that concern about the swine flu has raised the concern for hand washing and use of hand sanitizer and that teachers are re-educating the students on the proper methods for performing these health functions. She stated that the Fifth Graders are very excited about the Geography Bowl. The MAP-R computerized testing is approaching for Third to Fifth Graders. While the Seven Keys are important, Farmland teachers look at each student as an individual and gear their class work to their individual needs.

Finally, she thanked the PTA for the gifts for Staff Appreciation week.

Matt Hamill, our Treasurer, reported that the finances looked pretty good on his handout, but, because of known upcoming expenses and the fact that most fund raising activities have ended, he expects to spend about \$4,500 more and end the year with about a \$1,000 deficit. We have about \$18,000 in the bank.

Shari Campbell reported that the last Cluster meeting was held at Farmland. Most of the discussion was on the Seven Keys and the Farmland move. While she had the floor, she reported on the retail store gift programs: Giant Food - \$868.02, Target - \$182.07 so far with a September award date, Bloom - \$27.76, and Harris Teeter - \$27.65. Shari will miss the last PTA meeting because she will be in Atlanta relieving CDC personnel.

Information from the Fifth Grade Celebration committee is that the pool is booked for Thursday, June 11, decorations are planned, and the celebration will be Friday, June 12.

Cheryl Morris submitted a report on the Geography Bowl. We had over 100 Third, Fourth and Fifth Graders complete the Geography packet and 85 of these students took the written quiz. The top four students plus one alternate per class were selected and are studying to represent their classes in the First Annual Geography Bowl that will be held for each grade level on separate days during the week of May 11. All students who completed the packet will receive a certificate. The student representatives at the Bowl will receive a prize. Each grade-level winning class will win an ice cream party. The PTA thanks the teachers for all of their help in encouraging the students to participate and a special thank you to Diane Smith and Michelle Picket for all of their support to make this happen.

Melissa Keller reported on the latest meeting of the School Improvement Planning (SIP) group. This is a school committee on which parents are invited to participate. The last meeting addressed math scores and data. Farmland students are doing well! Teachers are providing the extra help to individual students in need as indicated by the data. The next meeting will take place sometime this summer – the topic is the Seven Keys and how the SIP needs to be modified for

their inclusion.

Kate Heald is helping the school with the Field Day T-Shirts. The color for each class will move annually with that class so a new T-Shirt will not have to be purchased every year. (My comment – my son is growing too fast for that to work!)

Melissa Keller reported that she is working with Diane Smith on a new design for a T-Shirt for Farmland for next year. Our Scarecrow will be wearing a hard hat to show that we are under construction. The design may be offered beginning at Kindergarten Orientation to our incoming class.

Finally, we held an election of officers whose time in office is June 2009 until May 2010 (except for the Treasurer whose office coincides with our fiscal year, July to June). Your new officers are as follows: President – Caroline Cooksey, Vice Presidents – Lisa Miller (1<sup>st</sup>) and Andrea Nadelman (2<sup>nd</sup>), Treasurer – Matt Hamill, Recording Secretary – Lisa Garson, Corresponding Secretary – Lisa Bonato, Cluster Representative – Stacey Jungreis, Alternate Cluster Representative – Alan Hairston, and MCCPTA Representatives – Michele Wisniewski and Yvonne Levine. Please support them and communicate with them as they operate our PTA over the next 12 months.

These are my last few weeks at Farmland after 11 consecutive years as a parent of two Farmland students. This is also my last report as President. As I feared when I was heavily recruited to serve as President, the time and energy that I had to devote to the job were far less than it required. Without the excellent support of our two Vice Presidents, Carol Lange and Lisa Miller, Treasurer, Matt Hamill, Secretaries, Lisa Garson and Liz Brinker, Cluster Representatives, Shari Campbell and Stacey Jungreis, and MCCPTA Representatives, Andrea Nadelman and Alan Hairston, I would have had a very hard time doing what I did. I thank all of you and all of the wonderful committee chairs and committee volunteers for making me look better than I am. Farmland and Farmland PTA will continue to excel with active parents like those I have mentioned and those I have had the privilege to work with and to know a little better. I greatly look forward to our new, improved, modern school building on Old Gate Road!

Now, as we prepare to vacate our facility for two years, it will be even more important for all of you to stay in touch. Join the Farmland list serve ([farmlandpta-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:farmlandpta-subscribe@yahogroups.com)) and visit the Farmland

PTA website ([www.farmland-pta.org](http://www.farmland-pta.org)) often.

**MISSION OF PTA**

- To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in our schools, in our community and before governmental agencies and other organizations that make decisions affection children;
- To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

*Taken from the Montgomery County Council of PTAs Handbook*

<b>MARK YOUR CALENDARS:</b>	
Week of May 11, 2009	<b>Geography Bowl begins</b>
May 12, 2009	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Potluck 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.</b>
May 18, 2009	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Potluck 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.</b>
June 2, 2009 7:00 p.m.	<b>Last PTA meeting</b>
June 11, 2009	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Grade Pool Party</b>
June 12, 2009	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Grade Celebration</b>
June 15, 2009	<b>LAST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR FARMLAND (Early Release Day)</b>

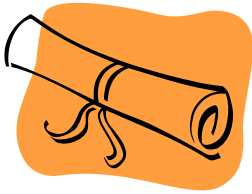
**OBJECTIVES OF PTA**

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community and place of worship.
- To raise the standards of home life.
- To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.
- To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social and spiritual education.

*Taken from the Montgomery County Council of PTAs Handbook*

**ATTENTION – FIFTH GRADE PARENTS**

If your current Fifth Grade Farmland Student is your youngest child and you have chaired or served on any Farmland committees this year or any year in the past, or if you have been an officer of the Farmland PTA any time in the past, please contact either Joe Piff ([jc2pi@yahoo.com](mailto:jc2pi@yahoo.com), 240-292-4083) or Melissa Keller ([mskeller2000@verizon.net](mailto:mskeller2000@verizon.net), 301-881-2387).



We want to acknowledge your service, thank you for the time spent, and present you with a certificate of appreciation at the last PTA meeting of the school year, June 2, 2009.

**SIP COMMITTEE UPDATE**

The SIP (School Improvement Planning) Committee met in May to go over student data for math assessments. All teachers/grade levels are working very hard to make sure every student can and will succeed.

Most of our students are working at or above grade level in math. When the committee meets again this summer we will discuss how the SIP can be modified to match the Seven Keys to Learning. Grade level teams are to discuss how they can collaborate within the school and cluster so they are in line with the Seven Keys.

Our next meeting will be this summer. It is usually several half days or one full day. As soon as I know the date, I will post it on our list serve.

This committee includes staff and parents—there are plenty of staff but very few parents. If you would like to be part of this committee, contact either myself or Diane Smith. We meet about four times during the school year, usually on Friday mornings from 8:00-9:30 a.m.

-- Melissa Keller ([mskeller2000@verizon.net](mailto:mskeller2000@verizon.net))

**GRADE LEVEL POTLUCKS**

Second Grade and Third Grade each have Potlucks coming up. Both will be held outdoors, weather permitting.

Second Grade will have their get together Tuesday, May 12 from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Third Grade's will be Monday, May 18, from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Please see attached flyers for more information.

**WELCOME OUR 2009-2010 PTA OFFICERS!**

President – Caroline Cooksey  
 Vice President – Lisa Miller  
 Vice President -- Andrea Nadelman  
 Treasurer – Matt Hamill  
 Recording Secretary – Lisa Garson  
 Corresponding Secretary – Lisa Bonato  
 Cluster Representative – Stacey Jungreis  
 Alternate Cluster Representative – Alan Hairston  
 MCCPTA Representatives – Michele Wisniewski and Yvonne Levine

***THE HARVEST IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:***

**The Farmland Harvest is the monthly newsletter of Farmland Elementary School PTA.**

**Farmland Elementary School  
 7000 Old Gate Road  
 Rockville, MD20852  
 301-230-5919**

**PTA President: Joe Piff  
 Principal: Mrs. Diane Smith  
 Harvest Editor: Peggy Ellett**

**You can find more information about the PTA on our website ([www.farmland-pta.org](http://www.farmland-pta.org)) or by joining our listserve ([farmlandpta-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:farmlandpta-subscribe@yahogroups.com).)**

**For Harvest submissions please send them via email to [ellets5@verizon.net](mailto:ellets5@verizon.net) and indicate HARVEST in the subject line. Deadline is the Friday after each month's PTA meeting.**