

WELLINGTON

PTO NEWS

June 2008

EXECUTIVE CORNER

From Heidi Sawyer, PTO VP of Fundraising

This year's FUNdraising theme has been all about having FUN !!!

We started the year off by building school spirit for our students with Wellington T-shirts and sweatshirts. I love it when I see kids around town proudly wearing their school apparel. School SPIRIT is definitely at Wellington!

We had many "firsts" this year with FUNdraising. First ever *Let's Dance*, *Pumpkin Fest* and *Gift Card* fundraisers. The kids loved dancing to the tunes by DJ-DQ and learning new dance moves from Mr. S and we can't wait to do it all over again next year. The Pumpkin Fest was a great way to bring the community together on a brisk fall day. Lastly, the gift card program allowed our kids to display their artwork in style on note cards. These three new events netted \$6,000 after all costs.

Our *Book Fair* and *Winter Carnival* were not only FUN for all of our students but very successful FUNdraisers for Wellington, together netting \$14,000! All of these events required a village of volunteers to be successful and the Wellington community has a lot to be proud of looking back over the year.

Wondering what's new for next year? Wellington school spirit continues, but goes GREEN! We will continue our school spirit theme and give back to our environment. We are currently looking into Wellington logo recycled bags for the kids to carry their winter boots and snow pants back and forth to school. We can then leave those plastic bags at home! We are also looking into Wellington water bottles and lawn/leaf bags. Always if you have any ideas to add to this theme please let me know. We will be busy this summer getting things ready for the fall.

Last but not least I want to remind you all of the powerful impact fundraising has on our kids and our schools. Our kids' experiences with technology, music, arts, sports and more are all improved with these funds. THANK YOU to everyone who participated!

“ Wondering
what's new
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See you all next year and
have FUN this summer !

Regards,
Heidi Sawyer
VP Fundraising

INSIDE:
• Multicultural Event!
• Enrichment Programs
• Administration Spotlight
• Fundraising Updates
• PTO Updates
and more!

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

What a Wonderful Year of Enrichment Programs!

The volunteers who work to bring enrichment programs to Wellington throughout the year are a dedicated group. We very much appreciate their success in finding interesting programs, writing grants for funding, and generally adding to our kids' educational experience.

Here are some examples of enrichment programs this year:

At the all-school assembly in early November, Jedlie Productions used comedy, theater and magic to entertain and educate the entire school through a program entitled, "Bully Free is the Choice for Me." Using role-playing techniques, the actor came up with definitions of bullying and identified strategies for kids to use in difficult situations. This assembly was funded entirely by the PTO.



"Bully Free is the Choice for Me"

In May, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society drove to Wellington in the **Plantmobile**, bringing its traveling plant-science and hands-on exploratory program to our second graders. The event was made possible by a generous grant from the **Belmont Cultural Council**.

On June 4th artist Giles Laroche demonstrated his paper-relief technique to the fourth graders. Mr. Laroche has created several books using this special combination of drawing, painting, and paper cutting that produces a three-dimensional effect. This art workshop was funded through a grant from the **Belmont Foundation for Education**.

Thank you very much to **Juliet Jenkins** who has served on the PTO Executive Board for several years. Juliet will act as the "PR" person for the in-school enrichment committee next year. While Juliet will be greatly missed as an executive board member, we are grateful that she will continue to work closely with the PTO. We would also like to thank **Alyson Conover** for being a great grade level coordinator as she "graduates" and moves on to the Chenery.

Carolyn Boyle has joined the PTO Executive Board as VP Programs Co-Chair along with Jamison Jacobs. We also would like to welcome Connie Hadley and Judy Logan. It was wonderful to work with the teacher liaisons this year and we can't wait to create new and exciting programs next year.



NEW WELLINGTON UPDATES

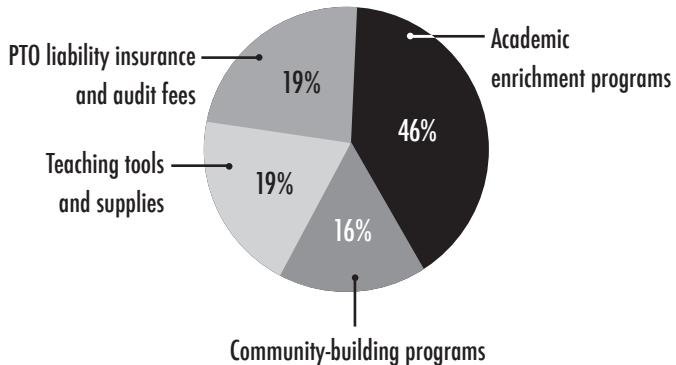
Thank you to all of you who have been active this year as we prepare for a New Wellington. It has been an exciting year. In the late fall we heard from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) that Belmont and the Wellington School were selected for the first round of funding consideration. The MSBA met with the town in February 2008 and recently approved the conclusion of the New Wellington feasibility study that the school should be replaced, rather than renovated. We expect to get the final go-ahead from MSBA over the summer. With this timeline, we hope the Selectmen will put a New Wellington debt exclusion on the November town ballot. We will have to rally together and reach out to our fellow citizens and neighbors and inform them of the importance of a New Wellington for all members of our community.

PTO UPDATES 2007-2008

The mission of the Wellington PTO is:

- to enrich the educational experience of our children
- to build a stronger school community
- to facilitate and foster communication between home and school.

To that end, the PTO allocates its spending as follows:



As you can see, the bulk of PTO expenses go toward enhancing the educational experience of our children. Of a total \$34,000 budget, \$12,000 goes towards in-school enrichment programs and \$5500 for field trips & buses. The PTO also strives to support a strong school community with multicultural events (\$1000 budget), an early September ice cream social (\$600), increasing communication (directory, communication folders, fliers) (\$1500), and a spring luncheon for teachers to thank them for all their hard work with our kids (\$500), over \$1000 for student scholarships. Other examples are that we also give each teacher \$100 at the beginning of the year to help them set up their classrooms (next year we're happy to increase this to \$150) and buy over \$1000 of books for the library and sand for the playground.

Thanks to the generous support of the Wellington community, this year's very successful fundraising efforts, and our efforts to use some of the surplus accumulated over the last several years, the PTO bought additional teaching tools and supplies for the school beyond what had been anticipated in this year's PTO operating budget. *These purchases included:*

- **2 SmartBoards** (to be used in 2nd and 3rd grade): \$6700 (the PTO contributed \$4200 and an anonymous donor to the PTO gave \$2500).
- A new **sound system** for the gym: \$1200

- New **laminators & supplies**: \$1100
- A new **microphone** for the cafeteria: \$300
- **MCAS care packages** for 3rd & 4th graders: pencils, waters, Jolly Ranchers (\$500)

We recently received another \$2500 gift from an anonymous donor, which we plan to match to buy another SmartBoard, this one for a 1st grade classroom and buy over \$500 of books for the library.



What's all the fuss about SMART Boards?

Do you know what a SMART Board is? You keep hearing about them and they keep popping up around school (we at Wellington are lucky enough to have 5, the most of any of the elementary schools) but what exactly are they and how will having them in your child's classroom enhance learning?

A SMART Board is an interactive whiteboard connected to a computer and projector. The user controls the computer by touching the whiteboard. At Wellington, SMARTBoards allow students and teachers to interact with multimedia information and bring those learning materials to life by incorporating auditory, visual, and tactile elements into their teaching. This enables teachers to reach all different types of learners in the same classroom.

SMART Boards also allow teachers to harness the power of the Internet to enhance classroom learning. Instantaneous access to information allows them to grab the crucial "teachable moment" and explore students' questions and curiosities in a dynamic fashion since they have the ability to access any online source immediately.

All this sounds great but to truly understand the impact of the SMART Board you need to experience it in person. Keep your eyes open for announcements for SMART Board demonstrations planned for the fall by the Foundation for Belmont Education. These demonstrations are an integral component of T3: Technology Tools for Teaching, the FBE's new fundraising campaign to place SMART Board technology in Belmont classrooms.

For more information visit their website at www.fbe-belmont.org.

Box Tops for Education News



From September '07 through May '08, Wellington clipped 11,858 Box Tops, worth \$1,185.80! In addition, Wellington received \$110 from your Online Marketplace purchases.

Wellington's state percentile ranking jumped from 63% to 91% this school year! We now rank #171 out of 2,146 participating MA schools!

The new (shortened) Box Tops website address is:
www.BTFe.com.

Keep clipping this summer! Special summer theme collection sheets are available on the website or through your Coordinators.

Your new 2008-09 Box Tops Coordinators will be: Lynne Czamanske and Janine Sciarappa!

Thank you for your support this year! The program has been successful and fun!

Jane Slavin, Coordinator



PTO Survey Results

Thanks to all who completed the recent PTO Survey. The response rate was very good: of 600 people on the listserve, we received about 130 completed responses.

In general, people are "satisfied" to "very satisfied" with the PTO this year. We are meeting our mission and spending appropriately. (43% "satisfied", 42% "highly satisfied")

Respondents said they liked most fundraising and community events; and asked that they be repeated next year. They support the PTO's spending allocation, but thought that we could spend more on teaching tools and supplies if teachers need them. People also indicated Wellington Weekly and the listserv are most effective for communication between home and school, and noted that Room Parents are underutilized. The survey also showed that more interesting topics would be a draw to PTO meetings (please pass along any you have!); and that people were split as to whether mornings or evenings were more convenient. We will alternate

the timing of PTO meetings next year.

Finally, the survey showed strong support for a new Wellington building. An overwhelming majority agreed that the current conditions are poor or need improvement (84.8%) and that the school needs to be substantially renovated or rebuilt (91.7%).

We'd like to extend special thanks to Connie Hadley, who helped a great deal with the survey design.



BECOME A COORDINATOR –

Help the PTO be successful in 2008-2009!

Several of these activities are suited to be done at home. READ ON!

The Wellington PTO and School both need coordinators to help organize the following activities.

Multicultural Community Event Coordinator – Join a team to help organize several Multicultural Potluck events throughout the year. For 2009, we are in the process of choosing the themes and selecting interactive performances or demonstrations. On our 'Around The World' list we have Games, Carnival, Spring, Breakfast, Transportation, and many more!

Insurance Advisor – Want to share your expertise in insurance with Wellington? We need an advisor to provide guidance on appropriate PTO insurance levels, including PTO Student Care. Solicit bids and/or checks for competitive market pricing for insurance coverage as necessary. Do at night and on your own time.

School Committee Observer – Join a team of observers from all elementary schools to listen or watch Belmont School Committee meetings and report back any information especially relevant to the Wellington School. Meetings are at night and televised on Cable.

PTO Newsletter – Do you like to write, edit or design? Join a team to help design and/or edit the PTO Newsletter. The newsletter is issued bi-monthly.

Evening Basketball Coordinator – Do you like sports? Working with the Assistant Treasurer, help coordinate the evening basketball program led by Mr "S". This PTO program is offered to all Belmont elementary schools and a few Chenery Grades.



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We need interested and enthusiastic individuals to help launch the following NEW activities:

School Store Coordinator – Run the new Wellington School Store! Hopefully a *NEW* activity! Working with the principal, determine frequency, supplies, location and who best to staff.

National PTO Advisor – If you like web research, read on....Hopefully a *NEW* resource! Investigate and understand what other PTO's are doing. Do at night and on your own time.

Field Trip Liaison – Hopefully a *NEW* support! Support the grade level designated teachers and principal in planning field trips. Manage budget for field trips and buses. Teachers will generally work with room parents for chaperones but may need some support.

Full descriptions are available at:
www.belmont.k12.ma.us/wellington/pto/jobs.pdf

Signup by sending an email:
Susan Black (susan_black02478@yahoo.com) or
Laurie Slap (lqslap@gmail.com)



THANK YOUS

Two decades of support for music at Wellington

Wow! The 20th annual Moira Gavin Bingo Night was great! We all had a good time while raising money for music programs at Wellington. There were many people who made it happen. **Thank you, Mr. S** – our favorite Bingo caller—for hosting another spectacular event. Special thanks go to **Mrs. Sullivan, Mrs. Rosenberg, and Ms. Gulati** who spent the evening with us. We also thank **Jim Tatten** for getting the Bingo cards for us. **Thank you to everyone who donated prizes and attended Bingo Night.** Thank you to **Meg Piccione** for all your efforts over the last several years!

Appreciation goes to **Janice Fairchild, Melina Jacovides, Lisa Mehrez, Tony Piccione, Heidi Sawyer, and Laurie Slap** for their assistance. Kudos also to Wellington alumni that returned

to help: **Tyrone, Haley Sawyer, Nick Piccione, Peter McHugh, and Alex Fairchild.** Special thanks to fourth graders **Justin Wagner, Chris Piccione, Alex Libenson, Mark Fairchild, and Victor Dankens** who served beverages and dessert.

Thank you to **Brothers Pizza** who delivered their delicious pizza at a discounted price. Several other Belmont Businesses donated items to make the evening's raffles extra special: **An Elegant Affair, Belmont Car Wash, Brine's Sporting Goods, Champions Sporting Goods, Dunkin Donuts (Riverside Management), Essencia Day Spa, Patou Restaurant, The Spirited Gourmet, Wheelworks, and Zeff Photo.** Please thank them while shopping there!

Heartfelt thanks from the Wellington community to the **Gavin Family** for sponsoring this special tradition for twenty years. **Funds raised at Bingo Night support music at Wellington such as visiting music programs/performances, accompanists for Wellington concerts, and the purchase of musical instruments & supplies for the music classroom.** Recently three new rosewood xylophones (approximately \$1,000) were purchased. We are grateful that our children are recipients of such gifts.

Thanks again and we hope to see YOU at Bingo Night next year!



The Wellington School Community would like to extend its heartfelt appreciation to **Mary Jane Sullivan, Linda Ott and Diana Brady** who are all retiring this year.

With combined 89 years of service at Wellington, they have committed themselves to educating the children of Belmont for almost 9 decades. THANK YOU from all of us!



Wellington Has Gotten its Wish

The PTO has had a wish list of items for Wellington this year. We want to thank three families who responded with donations.



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Thank you very much to the Alper family for 12 new fans that will keep our classrooms cooler and make it easier for our kids to learn during hot spells.

A big thank you also to the Biondo family for the flag that was installed and dedicated to all veterans at the assembly on May 23.

Finally, **thank you** to the Pergamo family for the new Music Room carpet – it looks terrific!



Shaw's Wrap Up

THANK YOU for supporting the Shaw's/Star Market fundraising programs by sending in your grocery receipts and purchasing gift cards. This year, we submitted over \$110,000 in receipts and purchased \$35,000 in gift cards to earn more than \$2,500 profit for the PTO. Please continue to send in your receipts through the end of the year and PLEASE save them up through the summer months.

For more information on Shaw's Receipt Rewards or Gift Cards, please contact Patty Guzikowski (pguzi@msn.com) or Susan McLaughlin (smclaugh@fas.harvard.edu). Ann Toomey will be coordinating Shaw's fundraising programs next year.



Belmont Special Education Advisory Council

www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bseac

The BSEAC hosted its 5th annual **Appreciation Awards** evening on May 21st. Four staff members from Wellington were recognized for making a positive difference in a child's life! To Paula Lazar, Steve Tenhor, Melissa O'Connor and Beth Losk: **thank you for your efforts.**

The results of the BSEAC **Parent Online Survey** are in! This survey had a very high 51% return rate! The results were overwhelmingly positive, particularly at the elementary school level. A report has been presented to the Belmont School Committee and to the Belmont Schools Administration. Read all about the Successes, Challenges, Recommendations and Conclusions in the report which is posted on the BSEAC website under "Newsletters".

To subscribe to the moderated listserv:
BSEAC-subscribe@yahoo.groups.com
 Jane Slavin, Wellington's BSEAC liaison

Adding to our Library One Book at a Time

Thank you for your terrific support of the Gift Book Program this school year!! New books keep our library current, interesting and fun! Your purchases have allowed us to add 181 new books to our library with a total value of \$1,870.00! **A big thank you to Anne-Sophie Dankens** for her support in processing gift books over the past two years. Next year, the Gift Book Program will be run by Jane Slavin and Mirela Duda.

Thank you to the following people who purchased books for Wellington's library:

- Brown, Nicholas Star Wars – Galactic Crisis
- Call, Jenny Horrible Harry Cracks the Code
- Carlson, Laurie The Invention of Hugo Cabret
- Carpenter, Laurel Baseball's Best
- Dent, Juliette Chocolate Fever
- Ghiozzi, Isabella Glinda of Oz
- Guarnieri, Kaleb The Million Dollar Goal,
The Million Dollar Shot
- Gurwell, Kierstin Children of the Midnight Sun
- Hale, Kaela Scorpia
- Hayner, Tess Who Were The Beatles?
- Hlotyak, Hannah The Last Day of School
- Hubbard Family Only Passing Through, John Lewis
in the Lead
- Jenkins, Tess Miss Small is Off the Wall
- Kaldenbaugh, Mia Sounder, The Day the Dragon
Danced, Armando and the Blue
Tarp School, Henry and Beezus,
The Magic School Bus and the
Electric Field Trip, I Lost my Tooth
in Africa
- Kim, Helena The Headless Cupid,
Where the Red Fern Grows
- Klingbeil, Daniel And To Think That I Saw It On
Mulberry Street, The School Nurse
from the Black Lagoon, Happy
Graduation, Witch's Brew, In a
Dark, Dark Room, Rotten Ralph's
Rotten Romance
- Lester, Emma The Luckiest Girl
- Libenson, Katherine Haunted Castle on Hallows Eve,
Sideways Stories from Wayside
School
- McLaughlin, Ryan On Beyond Zebra

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- O'Brien, Kellye Huskies, Siberian Huskies
- Pergamo Family Baseball
- Pergamo, Michael The Great Cape Rescue
- Piccione, Chris Holiday Stew
- Piccione Family Nature's Paintbox
- Roussina, Natalie Jemima Puddle-Duck
- Rumagna Family Cam Jensen and the Mystery Writer Mystery
- Shen, Walter The Bookstore Valentine, Chicken Soup with Rice, The Gym Teacher From the Black Lagoon
- Slavin, Ben Stormbreaker, Qwerty Stevens – Back in Time
- Slavin Family Poppleton and Friends, Poppleton Forever
- Tananbaum, Becca Abner & Me, The Homework Machine, Lance Armstrong
- Treanor Family The Principal From the Black Lagoon, The Custodian From the Black Lagoon, The Librarian From the Black Lagoon, Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark
- Vernick, Maya Fly With Poetry

Jane Slavin also deserves special thanks for her continued efforts on behalf of the gift book program and the Wellington library.

Thanks, Jane!!



HAPPENINGS

Come to the METCO Friends and Family Pool Party!

All Boston and Belmont Families are invited to the Underwood Pool in Belmont for a day of fun at the pool!

Saturday, June 21st from 11:00-3:00
Sandwiches and Drinks Provided by *Belmont Against Racism*



Walk . . . Bike . . . Ride the Bus and then . . .

Fill out your Traveler Tickets!

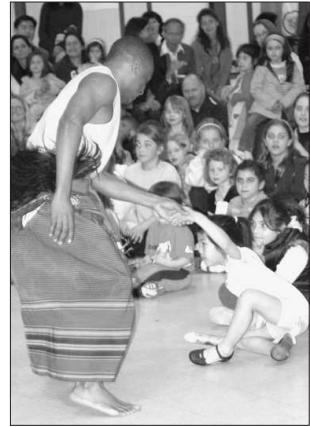
Wellington is working with Safe Routes to School in the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to promote walking, biking, and taking the bus to school instead of driving. Students earn incentives for 10, 20, or more walks, bikes, or bus trips to and from school. Pick up your Traveler Tickets from your child's teacher or at the rainbow box in the main hallway near the gym. Turn in completed tickets to the rainbow box to receive wristbands, snap bracelets, pencils, cases, and sharpeners. And don't forget about *International Walk to School day* next fall on October 8, 2008!

Questions? Contact Karen Allendoerfer at:
ravena_143@yahoo.com.



Multicultural Event – a Huge Success!

We all had a wonderful time at the Multicultural Music and Dance Event held in April. Ms. Nnyanzi's husband David and his dance troupe, the African Great Lakes Ensemble, entranced the Wellington audience with incredible foot work, jingling bells, bright costumes and a great drum beat.



Dancers from the *African Great Lakes Ensemble*

ADMINISTRATION SPOTLIGHT!

Thank you to Dr. Peter Holland for his 20 years of service to the Belmont Public Schools!

Interview with Dr. Peter Holland

By Isabel Emerson, 4W



Q. What was your first job?

A. I taught physics and chemistry at a high school in Baltimore. I also coached basketball there.

Q. How old were you?

A. I was 23 years old.

Q. As Superintendent, is it hard to decide whether to have school or not?

A. It is hard. You have to get up early and read the weather report. You also have to try to figure out what the weathermen mean when they are talking about the forecast. I talk to other people to get their advice. Bob Martin who works for the schools is very helpful. Superintendents of other school systems are also good to talk to about whether or not to close school.

Q. What did you like most about your job?

A. I really liked the people that I worked with. I liked being part of a great school system. A good school system makes a good community. Also, about once a month I would go to the high school to talk to a group of 10 or 12 kids about the rules there, the teaching, their classes, and all kinds of stuff.

Q. What did you like the least about your job?

A. Budget meetings. Budget meetings were definitely the worst. It was challenging to talk about the budget and moneyh.

Q. What will you do when you retire?

A. When I retire, I plan to play a lot more tennis. I want to get better at it. I have 2 daughters who are 31 and 34, and I would like to visit them more. Also, my mother who is 90, lives in Louisville, KY and I would like to spend more time with her. My wife and I plan to travel. I really want to learn Spanish because I would like to visit Spain and Argentina. I also would like to go to South Africa and see the game parks there. I am on the board of two Catholic boys' high schools and I would like to be more active in those schools.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **Incoming Kindergarten Playdates** at the Wellington playground: August 23rd, August 25th, August 27th
- **1st Day of School:** September 3rd (for 1 - 4)
- **1st day of School for Kindergartners:** September 4th and September 5th
(half of class on each day)
- **Welcome Packets distributed:** September 8th
- **Welcome Coffees:** September 3rd – September 5th
- **Incoming Kindergarten Breakfast:** September 8th



We send our
best wishes to all
the 4th graders!

Congratulations
and Good Luck!