

Robious Express

September
2008

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Upcoming Events

- September 16th—Back to School Night—Grades 3rd, 4th, 5th from 7:00pm-8:15pm
- September 23rd—Back to School Night—Grades K, 1st, 2nd from 7:00pm—8:15pm
- September 25th — Picture Day
- September 25th — Chick-Fil-A Night
- September 26th—Fall Fundraisers come home

PTA President Report

Do you remember what it felt like when you expected your first child? You had seen pictures of the baby on the ultrasound, saw a beating heart and 10 fingers and toes, but you were just nervous as all-get-out for the big day. Well, that's the way I've felt the last few weeks as we approached the first day of school. With all of the new programs underway (the PTA web-

site, the online Volunteer database, and the recycling program), I wasn't sure if we were 100% prepared and ready. Now, two weeks later, it looks like our new "babies" will be just fine. Thank you for all of your kind emails and words of support regarding the changes. Yes, we realize there are improvements that need to be made, but the Board strongly feels that the

new programs will enhance our experience at school and make our work a lot easier (and greener!) Many, many thanks to Missy Bane (Webmaster), Mary Beth McCabe (Volunteer Coordinator), and Bryna Dunn (Recycling Chairman), who devoted so much of their summer time to get these programs up and running.

Kathy Hostetler
PTA President

Polar Bearzaar

Are you a crafter or retail business owner? We are looking for vendors for "Polar Bearzaar", a holiday shopping extravaganza for our students, on Friday, December 12 from 6:30 – 8:30. Merchandise must be affordable for our small shoppers – up to \$25 but with an emphasis on lower priced items. Please contact Sandy Zabel at info@respta.org for a vendor application. To volunteer to help with this event - set up, clean up, wrapping station or bake sale - go to www.respta.org and click on the "Get Involved" link



The First Day

My footsteps echo throughout the hall,
Then a kind lady comes out to call.
"Come in, young child, we're about to start."
I notice the kind lady seems to have a big heart.
I walk into a room filled with kids,
And there are all different boxes with all different lids.
Shiny new things lay upon their tables,
Up on their shirts are multi-colored labels.
Some say "John," some say "Mary,"
While others say "Lenny," and others say "Larry."
When I got home that very same day,
I found a note; on my dresser it lay,
That note did say,
Did you have a good first day?

By Elizabeth Holleman, Mrs. Jones' 5th grade & Mason Smith, Mrs. Ferguson's 5th grade

What Will We Accomplish in 2008-09?

A note from Principal Anne O'Toole

Welcome, parents, to the 2008-09 school year! Our vision at Robious Elementary is to create a school where learning in an inquiry-based "EL way" happens every day in every classroom, not just during in-depth investigations and expeditions. The instructional strategies we use are the foundation of instruction that leads children to discover important learnings for themselves in all subject areas. As we implement our fourth year as a national Expeditionary Learning School, we look forward to creating instruction which is even more authentic, purposeful, and lasting.

School Culture

The faculty of Robious Elementary will collaboratively develop a set of five Character Traits that will be taught, modeled, and used consistently across the school at all grade levels. Parents, students, and teachers will be expected to remember and utilize the character traits in all interactions. Specific learning targets and work habits will be developed for each character trait.

Differentiated Literacy Instruction

Teachers will collaborate to refine best practices for differentiated literacy instruction using the readers' and writers' workshop model. They will integrate the use of

leveled libraries during guided reading. They will use the newly-adopted reading series as a resource to enhance the existing format of the readers' and writers' workshop model.

Mathematics

Teachers will continue to refine instruction which is student-centered in mathematics at all grade levels. A new teacher resource, *Investigations in Mathematics*, will be implemented in all classrooms grades K-5.

Resource Classes

School administrators will work closely with resource teachers (art, music, library, French, physical education) to clarify and refine expectations for instruction and assessment in each resource area. The goal will be for resource teachers to teach in an inquiry-based "EL way" within their subject area. Resource teachers will have greater opportunities for participation in off-site professional development and will receive more support from the EL School Designer. A year-long schedule for resource teachers to co-lead morning meetings with classroom teachers will be implemented. Grade level standards and benchmarks will be developed and implemented in French.

Student Products

Teachers will collaborate to increase the quality of student project work through articulating a strong vision for products. This will involve the creation of a product archive in the school, looking at student work together as teams, and developing strong rubrics with students.

Assessment

The faculty will continue to improve the quality and consistency of assessment for learning strategies in all subject areas and at all grade levels. Teachers will utilize a variety of research-based strategies to actively engage students in the assessment process through reflection, goal setting, tracking of progress, and focused revision. Teachers will learn how to scaffold instruction to prepare students to share their work through portfolios and student-led conferences.

Technology

Technology standards and benchmarks, which were developed for each grade level during 2007-08, will be implemented during 2008-2009.

We look forward to another wonderful year at Robious Elementary, as your family joins us in our journey to excellence!

Anne O'Toole

Don't Forget



Make sure you visit www.respta.org *no later than* **September 19th** so you can:

- Register information for the school directory
- Sign up to volunteer for PTA activities
- Inform us of your email address so you can receive the monthly PTA newsletter

To sign up:

Go to www.respta.org

In the title bar, click **Get Involved!**

On the left side, click **First Time Users**

Click **Download First Time User Instructions**

Follow the instructions to enter your information

The deadline for registering is September 19th. If you have any questions or problems, contact Mary Beth McCabe at mccabeva@yahoo.com or 379-2611

Please note: The system requires you to list the dates and hours you are available to volunteer for an event and sometimes that doesn't make sense (for example, the date and hours you can volunteer to be a Room Mom just doesn't apply!) At this point, please put in any date and time. The Event Coordinator will contact you to clarify your request and assign tasks.

Remember you have to be "approved" by the Volunteer Coordinator before you can sign up for PTA activities!

Date Night!

Saturday, February 7th. Please hold the date for our first time **Robious Elementary School Auction** to be held at Salisbury Country Club.



This will be a time to mingle with friends, neighbors, teach-

ers and staff all for a great cause, to support our children's school. In the past the Auction has been a part of the Whistlestop Festival. This year we are trying something new and hope you will enjoy the change.

If you are interested in volunteering to help the auction

committee or would like to make a personal or corporate donation please let us know.

Sincerely,

Robin Hogge

lessstressdinners2005@yahoo.com

Lorene Whitehouse

lorene7163@aol.com

Auction Chairs

Monster Mash

Kids, get your costumes ready for a new fall event! "**Monster Mash**" is coming right up on Thursday, October 23 from 6:30 – 8:30. There will be a DJ in the gym to provide music, games, contests and prizes. Pizza will be avail-

able in the cafeteria and drinks and treats will be served to everyone. Be on the lookout for more information on **pre-ordering** pizza. As always



– we need lots of help to decorate and assist with this event. Please go to www.respta.org and click on the "Get Involved" link to sign up for a shift and/or send in treats. Any questions? Contact **Sandy Zabel** at info@respta.org

Whistlestop 2009

Welcome back to a brand new school year of exciting things happening at Robious Elementary.

This year will include our bi-annual Whistlestop Festival and we expect it to be the best one yet! This event will take place on Saturday May 2nd, 2009.

For those new to Whistlestop, it is a fun filled day of rides, games, food and friends. It is a great way to get out and have some good ol' family fun!

In order for us to be able to

have such a fun event, we will need tons of support from our Robious families and friends. Please consider lending a helping hand by signing up to volunteer.

Volunteers will work one hour shifts and middle/high school students are encouraged. Volunteering is a great way to earn those community service hours!

We also need several people to help head up the following committees: Toy Walk, Public Relations, Set-up and Clean-up and Decorations.

If you are interested in helping out, please sign up or contact the Whistlestop Chairs.

Thank you for volunteering!!!



Whistlestop Co-Chairs

Stacey Dunlop

dunlopfamily@verizon.net

Kim Mayes

KKmayes@aol.com

PTA Membership

Welcome back to another great year at Robious Elementary! We are fortunate to be part of such an outstanding school community.

Our PTA is very dynamic and active. We have many volunteers who have contributed to the success of the PTA. Additionally, we have consistently achieved over 100% membership.

Your support is needed and we encourage all parents to join the Robious Elementary PTA. It is through your support that we can continue to help make Robious a special place for all of our children to grow and learn.

To join, please fill out the PTA membership and class party form that was sent home with your child on the first day of school. Send in \$5 per adult or \$10 per family and

make checks payable to Robious Elementary PTA. If you have more than one child at Robious, you need to only join once. Please include each child's name and teacher on the form.

Thank you in advance for your support and please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Jenny Puccinelli

PTA Membership Chairman

jenpooch@comcast.net

Library

I hope you all had a great summer vacation and enjoyed some good books! Please consider the library when planning your volunteer schedule at the school this year. There are morning and afternoon



shifts available each day, and you can work once a month or more often if you would like. Just sign up on the PTO

site or call me (622-7915).

Since the library gets in full swing this month, we need to line up volunteers right away.

Nicole Lubin

Wellness & Fitness

Kids Eating Healthy

I recently read an article in the newspaper which noted that couples *without* kids tend to eat healthier. The reasoning is that when kids are around, so



are corn dogs, ice cream, pizza, and French fries.

For some reason, we're programmed to think that children without access to junk food are deprived of some magical aspect of childhood. In reality, finding out at 20 years of age that you're pre-diabetic and insulin resistant with high blood pressure and the joints of an 85 year old isn't exactly considered a privilege. So what's the answer? How do you ensure that your children live healthy lives with strong bones and peak physical potential, without making them feel "left out", "underprivileged" or "deprived". Keeping healthy foods a priority in your family is not rocket science! Here are a few tips.

Don't Focus on the Fat

Children should not be led to believe that the reason they're eating a salad for dinner is to improve their body image. While childhood obesity has inherent health risks, most kids don't understand that fact. Instead, all they know is that fat people are the butt of many jokes in cartoons, books, and pop culture, so it must be bad to be fat. **What your kids need to understand is that they're eating healthy *for**

themselves*, not for other people. Instead of focusing on body image or waistline size, educate your children about the benefits of wholesome nutrition, fiber, fruits, vegetables, complete proteins, and whole, unpackaged and unprocessed foods. In other words, focus on the positive - the "do's", and not the "don'ts".

Put Your Kids in Charge

Anytime a meal is being prepared at home, you should use it as an opportunity to teach your children about healthy ingredients and well-balanced meals. There are several ways to do this. You can put each of your children in charge of a different preparation aspect of each meal, with pre-set ingredients. For instance, one gets to prepare the salad, one gets a complex carbohydrate like wild rice or whole grain bread, and one helps out with a lean protein, like chicken. In such a case, the first child could pick out and arrange three different vegetables for the salad, the second could help measure out water and add special ingredients (i.e. almonds and raisins) to the wild rice, and the third child could help season the chicken with three spices of their choice (i.e. curry, turmeric, and black pepper). Responsibility breeds awareness, and it will help for your children to help create the finished product, and see how the ingredients interact. This will also help spark discussions about good recipe sub-



stitutions, like olive oil vs. margarine, or whole wheat flour vs. regular. Another example of putting your kids in charge is to let them create a dinner menu for one day of the week. For older children, this would include grocery list and recipe preparation.

Grocery Store Challenge

Try to "shop around the perimeter" of the grocery store. Outside the aisles are fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, milk, yogurt, lean meats and proteins, unsalted nuts, and whole grain breads, while the aisles contain many of the tempting packaged



foods, including sweet cereals, frozen entrees, snacks, salty or sugary trail mixes, sodas, and other processed and packaged foods. Brave these elements yourself while you send your kids out to the healthy areas of the store. This will keep your children from grabbing unhealthy items to throw in the cart, while teaching them how to utilize the more healthy sections of the grocery store. Don't wait until your son or daughter gets to college to confront a perplexing line of produce items. They should be well versed in choosing complex fruits and vegetables, lean meats, and nutritious dairy items and breads early in life.

Your child can learn basic nutritional strategies and tricks to stay healthy and strong. We need to take it upon ourselves as parents to get our children started on the right track!

Derived from PacificFit.net article by Ben Greenfield, January 2006

Reflections Contest



What makes your child say "Wow!"? Is it thoughts of a great summer vacation, a fantastic book, or a favorite movie? Any one of these things, and so many more, can provide inspiration for this year's annual PTA Reflections program!

The annual PTA Reflections Program encourages children in all grades to create an original, artistic entry, which can take the form of literature, music composition, photography, visual art, dance choreography or film / video production. Students

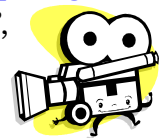


are recognized at a school celebration in the spring, and winners in each category advance to the next level of competition. The goal of the program is to increase community awareness of the importance of the arts in education by recognizing the most original and imaginative interpretation of the theme through the use of any of the approved mediums.

The theme for the 2008-2009 40th anniversary year is "Wow!" With a



theme like that, how can you go wrong? Find out what makes your child say "Wow!", and encourage them to use their own unique perspective and talents to communicate that feeling of astonishment and joy to the rest of us! The deadline for submitting entries to the school is October 17th. Information and entry forms can be accessed at www.respta.org under "Programs / Events", "Reflections".



Yearbook News

We are pleased to announce that Jostens will publish our yearbook this year!

The Yearbook Committee is always looking for help! Contact Holly Strom at 897-4710, Dawn Delano at 794-9270 or robiousyearbook@hotmail.com.

The Robious tradition of a 5th grader designing the yearbook cover is happening once again! All 5th grade children are encouraged to participate. The winner of the cover contest will receive a free yearbook and plenty of recognition. The deadline for submitting their artwork is Sept. 19th; they will get information through their art class.

Get your pictures in the yearbook! This year the Yearbook Staff invites parents to submit photos for the yearbook online! If you've got great photos, we'd love to see them! Our photographers can't be everywhere. Help us get as many photos as possible to create a terrific book everyone will want to have. (Remember that only photos of Robious Elementary students can be used - no relatives or friends, please.)

Here is how you can submit photos online:

- Go to: <https://images.jostens.com>
- If it does not automatically log you into the site, enter username:1205178 and password:robious
- Browse to select the photo(s) you wish to upload.
- Enter information about the photo and provide contact information in case the staff needs additional information.
- Click "Save Details".

It's that easy! Submit your photos today!

The Yearbook Staff will review all photos and determine final yearbook content. We cannot guarantee that all submissions can be used in the book.

Counselor's Corner

The month of September is flying by! Students are adjusting into their routines with teachers and friends. I have enjoyed visiting with each class in our school. Students learned about my job as a school counselor and had an opportunity to introduce themselves to me. For your information, I am available to meet with students and parents individually, as needed throughout the year. I will also be forming small groups on various topics throughout the year. These groups typically meet weekly and are age and need specific. Topics covered in small groups are: anger management, changing families (divorce), friendship and study skills. Please look for a brochure in Friday folders explaining more about my role here at Robious.

This year at Robious we are introducing five school wide Character Traits that we selected as a faculty. These traits are: integrity, compassion, collaboration, perseverance, and commitment to quality. The traits will be introduced to the children during Morning Meetings. Mrs. Dean, our librarian, has compiled a list of books that target these five areas. I have given the teachers many activities to use during morning meetings that will help students understand and internalize what these words really mean. Below please find the five character traits along with the specific Learning Targets. It is our intent that the students will begin to use and practice these traits through out their day. Each class will pick specific targets under each trait that they will focus on for six or

nine weeks. These five traits will be called “**The Robious Way**”!!! Our purpose is for these character traits to become an integral part of our school culture here at Robious.

I can be reached at school, 378-2500, or by email

[Marigrace Wilkes@ccpsnet.net](mailto:Marigrace_Wilkes@ccpsnet.net)

INTEGRITY

Primary

I do what is right, even when no one is looking.

I tell the truth.

I treat others with respect.

I have good behavior wherever I am.

Intermediate

I do what I know is right, even when it is not popular.

I tell the truth.

I treat others with respect.

I am a positive role model at all times.

COMPASSION

Primary

I listen to others.

I treat others with kindness and respect.

I say “I’m sorry”, if I hurt or embarrass someone.

I am helpful to others.

Intermediate

I listen attentively to others and value their words.

I accept the differences in others and treat them with respect.

If I cause another person to feel hurt or embarrassed, I recognize my mistake and apologize.

I connect with other people by helping and contributing to the community.

COLLABORATION

Primary

I share my ideas and listen to

others.

I join my assigned group and take turns.

I agree or disagree using kind words.

Intermediate

I work actively and cooperatively with others to achieve group goals.

I take ownership for my role in groups and perform a variety of roles.

I maintain a positive attitude with peers by respecting others’ ideas and opinions.

PERSEVERANCE

Primary

I ask for help.

I make my work better after getting feedback from my teacher and/or classmates.

I try new things.

I never give up.

I use my time wisely.

Intermediate

I have the courage to ask for help and support.

I accept feedback and revise accordingly.

I continue to work through difficult tasks.

I take risks and try new things.

I use my time wisely.

COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Primary

I am prepared to do my best work.

I don’t make excuses.

I stay focused while working.

Intermediate

I am prepared for class (supplies, work).

I don’t make excuses.

I am actively engaged in my learning.

I use rubrics and models to produce quality work.

Fall into Fundraising!

Welcome back! Fundraising is an important part of making Robious Elementary a great place for our children to learn and grow. Please support our endeavors as much as you can.

Our first Chick Fil-A night is Thursday, September 25th from 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. at the location near the Chesterfield Mall. Chick Fil-A generously donates 10% of all indoor and drive-thru sales to our school during this time period. Grab a

quick dinner and have fun mingling with other Robious families.



One of our biggest fundraisers of the year, the wrapping paper and candy sale, will begin September 26th. Watch your child's backpack for order forms. Innisbrook donates 50% of sales to Robious. All orders will be delivered in plenty of time for the holidays. In addition,

online ordering will be available through our website so friends and family near and far can participate and help our school.

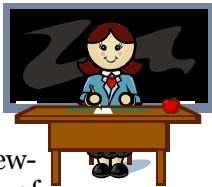
Finally, please clip and send in the Box Tops for Education found on many products you already buy. We get 10 cents for every box top and that adds up quickly.



Celeste Alcorta

Welcome New Faculty & Staff

The Robious Elementary School PTA would like to welcome the newest members of our Faculty & Staff. In the coming months we will feature short biographies so that you can learn a bit more about the people who are helping your children throughout each day!



•**Mrs. Susie Holstein**— Promoted to Assistant Principal

•**Mrs. Allison Ferguson**— returning to teach 5th Grade

•**Mrs. Debbie Powers**— Substituting in 5th Grade

•**Mrs. Emily Swain**—Teaching 4th Grade

•**Mrs. Gabi Gammel**— Returning to teach Special Education

•**Miss Jamie Berman**— Speech & Language Pathologist

•**Mrs. Joann Goergen**— Speech & Language Pathologist

•**Mrs. Becky Schlacter**— Special Education Assistant

•**Mrs. Lora Graf**—Special Education Assistant

•**Ms. Becca Welch**—Special Education Assistant

Calling all Room Parents!

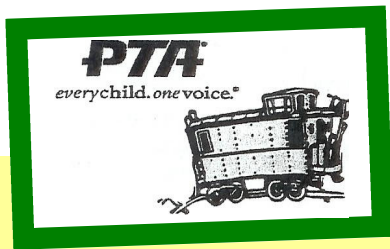
The Room Parent team is looking forward to another great year and we need your help! Please consider volunteering to be your child's room parent. It is a great way to spend time in the class room and get to know your child's teacher. If you can't make that commitment, maybe baking is your way of helping out. Please sign up on our new volunteer web site. If you have any questions about being a room parent, please feel free to send me an email (hbenedetti@verizon.net) or give me a call (379-2929).

Thanks, **Heather Benedetti**

Study Buddies Needed

Please volunteer your time only 30 minutes a week to be a Study Buddy. This is a wonderful opportunity to work one-on-one with students who need extra help. Teachers will provide work that they need to review or math games to help with studying. Teachers need time to assess the needs of the children, so this program will not get under way until October. If you are interested, please contact Mary Copeland at 323-0231 or MaryC169@aol.com

Thanks, **Mary Copeland**



2801 Robious Crossing Dr.
Midlothian, VA 23113

Phone: 804-378-2500
E-mail: info@respta.org

**Visit us on the web
at www.respta.org**

*We are crew, not
passengers!*

- Thank you to all who contributed to the Back to School Staff Luncheon on August 28th. A special thanks to the custodial staff, PTA board members and Janet Stevens and Jennifer Breslin who helped set up, serve and break down the room. Innisbrook also donated door prizes. Thanks for making this a successful event!

Holley Lewis & Brooke Shepard
Staff Appreciation/Hospitality Co-chairs

In Case of Inclement Weather

- At the beginning of each school year, families should make emergency closing child-care arrangements so that students know what to do and where to go if schools close early.
- If it becomes necessary to close schools because of bad weather or for any other reason, such as power failure, announcements will be carried on the school system's web site (chesterfield.k12.va.us), made on Comcast Channel 96, submitted to local radio and TV stations or communicated via ParentLink.
- Chesterfield schools use ParentLink to communicate with parents via phone or e-mail. So that this communication tool can work effectively, parents need to make sure their school has their correct phone numbers (home, work and cell) and e-mail addresses. In addition to emergency closing information, ParentLink is used to notify parents about children's absences and to share information about upcoming school events.

The Chesterfield County public school system does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, age, religion, disabilities or national origin in employment or in its educational programs and activities.

More info: [http://www.chesterfield.k12.va.us/CCPS/About CCPS/compliance_guidelines.htm](http://www.chesterfield.k12.va.us/CCPS/About_CCPS/compliance_guidelines.htm)



Green Team News



It almost doesn't matter where you look... you're bound to hear about "going green". What may have started years ago as a trend, going green has gone mainstream, and Robious Elementary is going green, too!

This year, the PTA has officially formed a "Green Team" and I was pleased to be asked to coordinate this effort. The Green Team's first task was to make it easy for all of the students at RES to keep their recyclables out of the Chesterfield County Landfill.

Over the summer, the PTA arranged for every classroom to

have its own recycle bin, and contracted with TFC to haul our recycling away and keep it out of the landfill.

Please take a few minutes to review the attached flyer, which illustrates which materials can be recycled through this program.

When sending snacks, lunches, or anything else to school, please take a moment to consider whether the packaging can be recycled... or better yet, brought home and reused.

Classroom recycling is just the first step, and I am sure many of you have great ideas on other

ways we can go green at RES... if you do, I want to hear from you. And if you have any time to help me strategize and implement these great ideas, I definitely want to hear from you.

Stay tuned for exciting updates on all the different ways our young eco-heroes at RES are treading more lightly on the world they will, all too soon, inherit.

Bryna Dunn
brynadunn@comcast.net

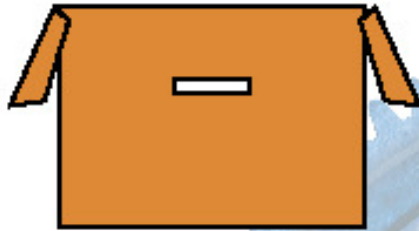


RECYCLING IS EASY!!



Many things can be recycled. Find the things in the chart that you use every day that can be recycled.

Cardboard



Steel Cans

Paper Bags



Aluminum Cans



Paper



PHONEBOOK

Newspaper



Magazines



Plastic Bottles



Glass Bottles and Jars



Plastic Milk Container



thanks you for recycling!!