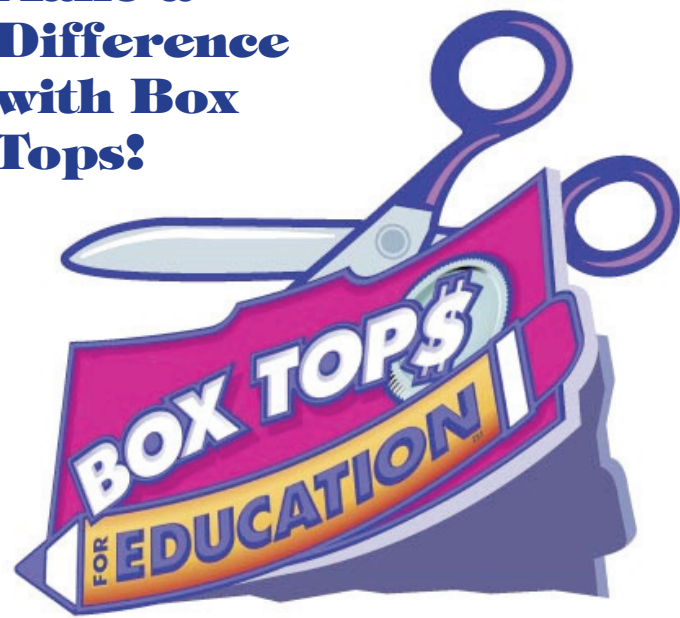


Make a Difference with Box Tops!



MAKE OUR SCHOOL A CUT ABOVE!

Dear Parents and Guardians,

My name is Dawn Jones, and I am the volunteer Box Tops coordinator at Gunpowder Elementary School.

Box Tops is all about the difference one can make. For the 2011-2012 school year, our goal is to raise \$2,100 for the school's technology fund. So far, 3,830 Box Tops have been submitted, which equates to \$383.00, so we are off to a great start! I will be sending off the next submission on or about October 15, 2011, so please keep clipping and sending them in as often as you can.

Here are five easy, everyday ways you can help:

Clip — Clip the Box Top from hundreds of participating products and send them to school. Each one is worth 10¢ when our school redeems them from Box Tops for Education. It would be extremely helpful if the Box Tops were fastened to one of the official Box Tops submission forms. For your convenience one has been sent home along with this newsletter. Additional forms can be found under the "Forms" tab on the Gunpowder PTA website. Also, please do not staple the Box Tops to the forms, as they cannot be submitted that way. Instead if you can't submit them on the form, please send them in a Ziploc baggie.

Shop online — Shop at your favorite online stores through the Box Tops Marketplace® (boxtops4education.com/marketplace). Up to 15% of your purchase total is automatically donated to our school, at no additional cost to you. Plus, you'll get exclusive Box Tops deals and discounts!

Read — Buy books online through the Reading Room™, a

partnership between Box Tops and Barnes and Noble. Our school receives up to 6% of qualifying purchases.

My Class Essentials™ — This is a free online registry to help classrooms get the learning tools they need. Our school earns a 2% cash donation with every purchase.

Sign up — It's easy and free. Sign up to support our school at boxtops4education.com, where you can:

- See how much our school is earning with Box Tops
- Enter online promotions for chances to win Bonus Box Tops and other prizes
- Print money-saving coupons for your favorite Box Tops brands
- Make mealtime easier with family-pleasing recipes

You can also sign up for Box Tops email newsletters that will keep you updated on the program, and for Marketplace newsletters with Box Tops members-only deals and discounts.

To learn more, visit boxtops4education.com. Thanks for choosing to make a difference for our school with Box Tops!

Sincerely,

Dawn Jones
PTA Box Tops 4 Education Chair

For more information please contact
Dawn Jones, PTA Box Tops 4 Education Chair
boxtops@gunpowderpta.org

5th Grade FUNdraiser

The PTA's 5th Grade Steering Committee is hosting its annual Longaberger Basket®/Vera Bradley® Bingo Fundraiser from 6 to 10:30 p.m. on Friday, October 28, at Tall Cedars on Putty Hill Avenue. Tickets are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door, and are on sale now. Proceeds raised will be used to support several "Class of 2012" events and activities throughout the school year. To find out more about how you can support the steering committee, or for a ticket order form, visit the PTA website or send an e-mail to grade5fundraiser@gunpowderpta.org.



Gunpowder Elementary PTA Newsletter

www.gunpowderpta.org

Every year it seems the first PTA newsletter of the year features a letter from the PTA president welcoming parents to a new school year. The letter highlights the importance of membership in the PTA, supporting our fundraisers, volunteering, and of course setting up an account on the PTA website, www.gunpowderpta.org, so that we can stay in contact with you throughout the year. I agree with all of these items, and as this year's PTA president, I hope you will support them. They are important. I believe in them, and have done them all myself and hope you will too.

I decided, however, when posed with the question of what to write about, to do something different and direct this letter to the parents of our kindergarteners, as

well as impart a little bit of knowledge I've gained as a Gunpowder parent with a fifth grader this year. Here it is: The elementary school years go by too fast!

It seems like just yesterday that my daughter, Katie, was a kindergartener in Mrs. Blackwell's class and like her, I was new to the school. A lot of what she experienced, I did as well. I had a classroom of parents to get to know, school rules and policies to get used to, homework every night, lunches to make, field trips to look forward to, and so much more. Katie had a new routine and so did I. Her transition was easy; mine was a little harder. A working parent, I didn't find it convenient to get involved with the school during the day, and although I joined the PTA, I wasn't sure what that meant or

exactly how to participate. It took me two years to become an active member, choosing to get involved when my son entered kindergarten and Katie was in second grade.

I found that the PTA is largely filled with people like me, people who wanted to help out, to make a difference in their child's education, and who were looking, like our children, for a smooth transition into the Gunpowder community. It was good for me. I know a lot more parents than I would otherwise. I know what's going on at the school, and have made some good



Upcoming October Events

Oct 4	Market Day Sale Pick Up
Oct 11	CPR Training Volunteer Training PTA Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Oct 14	Banking Day
Oct 18	PTA Innesbrook Fundraiser Order Pick Up
Oct 21	Professional Development Day
Oct 26	Market Day Internet Order Deadline
Oct 28	5th Grade Fundraiser: Longerberger Basket/Vera Bradley Bingo

Upcoming November Events

Nov 1	Market Day Sale Pick Up
Nov 3	Awesome Autumn Gala First Marking Period Ends
Nov 4	Professional Development Day
Nov 7-22	KidsStuff Book Sale
Nov 7-18	Sportswear Sale
Nov 8	CPR Training Volunteer Training PTA Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Nov 11	Banking Day
Nov 14-18	PTA Canned Food Drive American Education Week
Nov 17	Report Card Distribution
Nov 23	Skateland Party
Nov 24-25	Schools Closed, Thanksgiving Holiday
Nov 29	Market Day Sale Pick Up

The next PTA Newsletter Deadline is November 10th.

To submit an article for the newsletter, or if you have any questions please contact: **Jaime Elwood**, PTA Newsletter Chair newsletter@gunpowderpta.org



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friends, while helping our organization, the school and my children to prosper. Here I am four years later waiting for Katie to move on to middle school, thinking in many ways I wish I had realized what the PTA was, what it did at Gunpowder, and the benefits it offered two years sooner.

That's the reason for my note today. I want all of our parents to know, but most especially those wondering how to get involved as a PTA member, that we want you to join us.

Our organization is an open and friendly one. It is comprised of parents and grandparents with a common goal, sometimes very little time, but the same desire—to make the most of the time we have at Gunpowder for our children as well as ourselves. The PTA board meets monthly. All members are welcome to attend. We have committees that want and need staff. There are ways you can get involved, and you don't need to have a lot of time to make a difference.

So, kindergarten parents, as you and your child experience each facet of elementary school for the first time this year, I hope you will remember my words of wisdom, realize how fast these Gunpowder years will go by, and take me up on my invitation to get involved in the PTA. You and your child will reap the rewards.

Wishing all our members a good school year,

Chris Hagan
2011-2012 PTA President
president@gunpowderpta.org

Gunpowder Community Book Club

We would like to invite you to join our Gunpowder Community Book Club. It is open to all Gunpowder Elementary families, friends, faculty and staff as well as anyone you would like to invite. Please feel free to tell your family and friends about the book club.

This group will meet at the Perry Hall public library or at a volunteer's home. For more information or to join the book club, please visit our page on Facebook under "Gunpowder Community Book Club," or follow the link from the PTA website. If you prefer, you may also contact the chairperson by email for more information.

The first meeting will be in early October. The first book we are reading is *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan: A Novel by Lisa See*.

Kathryne Snyder
Book Club Chair
bookclub@gunpowderpta.org



Thank you

to everyone for making the 17th Annual Hot Dog Night a huge success!



Attention Kindergarten Parents:

Volunteers are needed to assist students in the computer lab each week from 9:55 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. during their technology period. Volunteers do not need to have computer experience. If you can volunteer once a week, once a month or even every few months, please contact our PTA Kindergarten Computer Lab Coordinator at K-computers@gunpowderpta.org

PTA SURVEY: Frequently Asked Questions & Comments

Thank you to those of you that took the time to participate in our PTA survey last year. We value your opinion and wanted to share the answers to some of the most common questions.

“I can't remember the last time I saw a PTA newsletter or weekly e-mail blast...”

Newsletters are sent via school “backpack express” bi-monthly and are packed full of information on upcoming events and activities. E-mails are also sent periodically to inform parents. To ensure you receive PTA email updates, please make sure you go to www.gunpowderpta.org to create an account. Accounts must be updated each school year in order to receive emails.

“Pick dates early and have a calendar to hand out at the beginning of year...”

A PTA calendar for our 2011-12 school year was sent home via “backpack express.” Some of the information on the calendar is tentative, and all of it is subject to change. To stay informed, please visit the PTA website regularly, or make sure you provide your e-mail information so that you can receive our PTA e-mail blasts.

“We need an explanation of committees so parents of children in younger grades understand and can get involved. Parents would like to be contacted if they sign up for a committee...”

In an effort to address this concern, a slide show of all PTA activities/events was presented during Back to School Night and volunteer sign up sheets included pictures, committee chair information and committee descriptions this year. Committee information also can be found on the PTA website under “Committees.”

“Since schools are eliminating fun holiday activities that build a school community, I would like to see the PTA do more in these areas...”

We are aware that new BCPS rules have caused changes to seasonal programs and practices we as parents enjoy for our children. Our PTA exists to create and facilitate opportunities that enhance the unique and timely nature of the elementary school experience for students and families. This year, the PTA is planning to have an “Awesome Autumn Gala” event in early November and a Winter/Holiday event in early December.

“Most events seem to fall on a Friday or weekends, which is difficult for weekend workers. Can some be offered during the week? ...”

Logistics sometimes dictate when and where we can have events. We try to do our best to accommodate everyone. This year the PTA has planned the Awesome Autumn Gala for a Thursday, the Spring Dance for a Friday and Winter Carnival for a Saturday.

Please don't hesitate to contact the PTA at officers@gunpowderpta.org at any time with suggestions, questions or concerns. We encourage all parents to get involved and have a voice in Gunpowder Elementary PTA!

New e-Labels for Education Retailers



The e-Labels for Education program will be expanding to include more retailers than ever before!

At retailers like Safeway and Shop Right, you now will be able to earn one point electronically each time you use your frequent shopper card to purchase participating products. It's just another way eLabels for Education is making it easier to earn FREE educational merchandise for our school!

For details and a full list of participating retailers, visit eLabelsForEducation.com.

