



# Pathfinder K-8 Compass

Volume X, #8

May 11, 2009

## Pathfinder K-8

*Building  
community  
by honoring  
all traditions*

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**Pathfinder K-8 educates students to become passionate, lifelong learners, respecting themselves, others and the environment.**

## PTSA Update

*by Jen Giomi*

The last PTSA General Meeting of 2008-09 (and the last one in the Genesee Hill building) will be held Thursday, May 14th from 6:15 pm to 8:30 pm.

This last PTSA general meeting at Genesee Hill is a special and important one. We will do the very important tasks of voting on a new PTSA Board and the PTSA Budget for the 2009-2010 school year. We will also host a community information night on autism. As next year Pathfinder K-8 will incorporate the Cooper Autism program, we are anxious that our families and parents have a good understanding of the new program and the new students. The teachers from the Autism program, their advisor from the University of Washington and hopefully, some parents with students in the program will come and talk to us about the program.

It is important that the Pathfinder community attend this meeting!

There will be many new things for our students to adjust to next year; a new building and surroundings, a new start time, new students and a new program to name the obvious. Anything we as parents can do to learn about the changes and anticipate questions and issues ahead of time will help our children and the school make this a smooth and positive transition.

It is also extremely important that students in the autism program feel welcome in our community. Gaining knowledge and understanding of the program and students will be the first steps in creating a whole community.

We will also plan to honor all of our amazing volunteers at the last PTSA meeting of the year. If you have donated any time to Pathfinder K-8 in any way this year, come enjoy treats and a small token of appreciation on us. Whether it's been behind the scenes preparing classroom materials from home, helping in the classroom, working on PTSA, NAB, BLT, or ASB projects or activities, we value your time donation to Pathfinder K-8. It is truly everyone contributing in any way they can, big or small, that makes Pathfinder K-8 such a strong, vibrant connected community.

The meeting agenda is as follows:

- 6:15-6:30 .....Refreshments and socializing
- 6:30-7:00.....PTSA Business Meeting
- 7:00-8:00.....Presentation by Cooper Staff
- 8:00-8:30.....Volunteer Appreciation

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## PTSA Update

continued from page 1

We look forward to seeing you!

Linda Thomson and Missa Marmelstein are still looking for volunteers interested in planning and producing the Genesee Hill Closing Celebration. The Closing Celebration will be held on June 13th from 10 am to 2 pm at the school. Current families and all alumni of the school are invited to attend. Stay tuned for details!! If you are interested in being involved please contact them ASAP at [lmthomson@seattleschools.org](mailto:lmthomson@seattleschools.org) or [mgmarmelstein@seattleschools.org](mailto:mgmarmelstein@seattleschools.org).

The PTSA Board extends a huge Thank You to Amy Daly-Donovan, Lynette Martin, Wendy Eckert, Clan Coordinators and all the many volunteers who put on an amazing, creative Staff Appreciation Week. Staff Appreciation Week is an important time for the PTSA. We put our fundraising dollars to work to express the gratitude we feel towards our amazing teachers and staff. Organizing this week is a big job. Thanks volunteers for a job well done!



A big "thank you" also goes out to Akemi Hart and Marvalee Ahlen for organizing the interesting and informative ADD/ADHD information night. In addition to Pathfinder families, there were many people from the greater community present. It was a well attended event that truly served the greater community.

Don't forget the Instrumental Music Concert on May 12th, and the Student Art Show on May 28th.



### Scholastic Book Fair

The Scholastic Book Fair is coming up: May 20th, 21st and 22nd.



We look forward to seeing you at the final PTSA Staff Meeting for the year.

Don't miss this chance to learn more about our new Autism program.

**Thursday,  
May 14th from  
6:15 to  
8:30 pm**



## \$\$\$ Where Does All the Money Go? \$\$\$

*Akemi Hart, PTSA Fundraising Chair*

No...I am not writing to ask you to volunteer or purchase anything! This is to congratulate our school community on a successful fundraising year. Through *your* efforts, PTSA was able to contribute **\$21,000** (to date) for direct classroom support. This would include such things as:

- ◆ culture/Native studies
- ◆ tutoring
- ◆ art program
- ◆ supplies for individual classrooms
- ◆ instrumental music program
- ◆ science in the middle school
- ◆ library
- ◆ science fair
- ◆ outdoor education/camping
- ◆ staff appreciation week

**\$4,700** has been used for community events such as:

- ◆ culture night
- ◆ dinner at events
- ◆ childcare during evening workshops
- ◆ math night

Attached to this month's issue of *The Compass* you will find a very short survey. PTSA strives to support our students and school community in a number of ways. This survey will help us assess our efforts with communication and fundraising.

Thank you for all the volunteer hours and dollars spent!

## We Love Pathfinder Teachers & Staff!

by Amy Daly-Donovan

Last week was National Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week and the Pathfinder community showed our teachers and staff some serious love! Thanks to everyone for creating a special week for a special group of people. We appreciate every little and big thing these talented and dedicated folks do *every* day to support, nurture, and help our children grow.

Staff were greeted with a large banner over the front door and cooked-to-order waffles and a lovely buffet for breakfast on Monday morning. At Monday Morning Meeting, it was announced that a special tree will be planted at our new building to honor all Pathfinder staff at the opening ceremony in the fall. In the meantime, with the help of our Clan Coordinators, kids wrote words of appreciation on paper leaves, posted on a big bulletin-board tree in the main hall! Come stop by and read the wonderful and sweet sentiments.

Teachers and staff responsible for moving all their “stuff” to the new building got some extra support on Tuesday with a “Smooth Moves Survival Kit.” The kit included all the things one would need to get through the fun of packing up your life’s work and moving it all while still trying to work full time ... caffeine in the form of a Starbucks frappuccino drink, packing tape, aspirin, and chocolate! But the most important part of the kit was a form that teachers can fill out requesting specific help. We will be working through the Clan Coordinators and Lashanna Williams, Volunteer Coordinator, to try to fulfill each and every request for help. So please keep an eye out for a note, e-mail or phone call asking if you might be able to help pack, store, recycle, sort, etc. in the coming weeks.



Wednesday was Sweet & Savory Snack Bar day – a spread of healthy and not-so-healthy snacks were available all afternoon for grazing. And on Friday we sent our wonderful staff home for a relaxing Friday night dinner of chicken lasagna (prepared at Dream Dinners), chocolate brownies, and a bottle of wine or sparkling cider.

Amy Daly-Donovan, Wendy Eckert, and Lynette Martin are very grateful to the many volunteers who helped make the school-wide activities special and to everyone who took the time to say “thanks” to Pathfinder teachers and staff members.



Please keep an eye out for a note, e-mail or phone call asking if you might be able to help pack, store, recycle, sort, and more in the coming weeks.



## Link Up to 6-7-8

by Audrey Kaplan

Spring has sprung and science is in the air...or something like that. Expeditions abound? "April showers bring May math equations?"

### Math

In 6th grade, those equations come in "Bits and Pieces," which is an exploration about computing with decimals and percents. This will move right into "Variables and Patterns" which is an introduction to graphing variables on coordinated graphs. Meanwhile, 7th graders are working on some practical applications of mathematics with "Filling and Wrapping" – sounded like the mall during Holiday Season to me, but Mark renamed it Volume and Surface Area, and this 'old school' girl understood. 7th graders will end the year with Probability and Gaming Theory; a cool jump up for those into Magic and the like, and once again highly applicable to real life. And for 8th grade, exit projects are taking center stage, but they are still learning more about Probability and Statistics and Exponential Relationships.

### Science

Chemistry is a popular topic in the portables this time of year. With an introductory unit called "Investigating Wastewater, Solutions and Pollution," 6th grade students are developing lab skills and participating in finding solutions to human problems. Across the blacktop, Tim is working with 8th graders on "Properties of Matter", which is based on the science of chemistry as well. Students, through labs and research, are learning that all matter is unique and has unique chemical interactions. They are working on identification of matter and applying that knowledge to common, manufactured objects to deconstruct them. Of course this is also part of their exit projects. And not to leave off 7th grade, they are thinking big – catastrophically so – in their study of natural disasters, events and climate change; more physics than chemistry for this room.

### Expeditions

This Friday sixth grade kicks off their Spring Expedition with a field trip to the University of Washington Planetarium for an introduction to our "neighborhood", The Solar System. The focus of this expedition is our solar system and pondering questions about the universe; for example, how do we know what we know about our universe? They will conclude and celebrate this expedition with an overnight journey to Goldendale, Washington, where students will have the opportunity to look at several of our planets through a large telescope.

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## PE News

by Lou Cutler



### Juggling & Hula Hoop Team Perform

The Juggling and Hula Hoop team had their first ever performance outside of Pathfinder and both did an outstanding job in their performance at the Bridge Park Retirement Center.

### Volleyball Team News

Our Volleyball team has not won a match yet, but is continuing to make progress and played their best games of their season in their last 2 matches. Our final game of the season is this Saturday against Madrona.

### Track Team Off & Running

The Track team had their first meet of the season last week and though the team does not have a lot of members, their efforts are mighty and I am optimistic that our team will set many personal records as the season progresses.

### Challenges of The Week

Each week I challenge the students to a different contest to determine who is stronger and in better shape. Thus far, the students have gotten the better of the competitions and I am recruiting other staff members to help me out. One Lap Run is this week's challenge.

#### Top scores in the Flex Hang Challenge:

- ◆ Joe (Wolf) – 116 seconds
- ◆ Colby (Orca) – 114 seconds
- ◆ Ellie D (Frog) – 110 seconds

#### Top Scores in the Push-up Challenge

- ◆ Cyrus (Snake) – 47
- ◆ Joe (Wolf) – 45
- ◆ Mathea (Frog) – 32
- ◆ Lisa D (Frog Clan Teacher) – 32

### 58 Lap Make A Wish Run June 1st

What better way to welcome June than with a 58 Lap, 9.5 mile run/walk, to benefit the Make A Wish Foundation. The run starts at 9:30 am and will continue until around 12:30 pm.

Over the next few weeks, I will be sending home pledge sheets for students who are interested in raising money through pledges for the run. If you are going to solicit donations, please ask only family members, friends and relatives.

To get a better idea of what the run is all about, I have put the Evening Magazine and KIRO coverage of the run from two and three years ago on YouTube.

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## PE News

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Here are the sites:

- ♦ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=734gALdELI8>
- ♦ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hR1NU0ydhcs>
- ♦ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTHxIPbjW1U>

I am always touched by the support, spirit and generosity of the Pathfinder Community for all their generosity with donations and volunteer support. With almost 400 students running, volunteers are needed to mark lap sheets for participants. I know these are very tough economic times, so any size donation, even if it is only pennies, is always welcome.

### Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure June 7th

On Sunday, June 7th, the 16th Annual Race takes place at Qwest Field. There are a variety of runs and walks taking place that are perfectly suited for everyone to participate in.

The nationwide 2009 Komen events celebrate the 26th anniversary of the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, the largest series of 5K runs/fitness walks in the world, with well over one million participants since 2005.

Susan G. Komen for the Cure was established in 1982 by Nancy Brinker to honor the memory of her sister, Susan G. Komen, who died from breast cancer at the age of 36.

I have run in this race for the past 8 years and am always inspired by the energy and size of the crowd that take part in this very worthy event.



Volleyball Team

## Link Up to 6-7-8

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Seventh graders have also launched into a new expedition: Think Globally, Act Locally. This journey will tie together the science mentioned above, civics, an awareness of the environment we live in, the community problems we face and resources available to solve them. Several short field trips will lead to a culminating adventure to the Islandwood Environmental Camp on Bainbridge Island. Students will also be given opportunities to 'earn' their way with volunteer time and raising pledges.

Eighth graders are busy bees too. Preparation for graduation each spring quarter requires students to present the very best of themselves through their Exit Projects and Rite of Passage work. In the end, a bulging three ring binder will contain the worked and reworked best a student has to offer in all academic areas. These fabulous displays of quality will be shown on graduation day, Thursday, June 18th. And if that was not enough to keep them going, 8th graders have begun a new expedition, "Journey to the Roof of the World," with a trip to Stone Gardens. They will study Mt Everest and how people have interfaced with the mountain, bringing in aspects of environmental impact, religion, perseverance, literature and guest speakers. They will end their year, and the Rite of Passage process, with a trip to the Olympic Peninsula.

All in all, a lot of learning to keep our student's minds growing strong. Now you know what the buzz is all about.



The 8th grade Exit Projects and Rite of Passage work will be on display on graduation day, Thursday, June 18th.

# 365 photography through the eye of Machel Spence

May 1 - May 31, 2009

view Machel's work, grab a glass of wine and meet the artist

**West Seattle Art Walk Open House**  
Thurs. May 14th from 6-9 pm

photographs displayed at  
Coffee to a Tea With Sugar  
4541 California Ave. SW  
Seattle, WA 98116

{ 30% of profits go to Pathfinder K-8 Art Program }  
for more information email [machel@spencephotography.com](mailto:machel@spencephotography.com)  
[www.spencephotography.com](http://www.spencephotography.com)

## Bats Dwell in Communities

by Kelly Riggle Hower

One of the Bat Clan's culminating events for our Sky Hall "Homes" expedition was building dwellings in the classroom on Friday April 17. They used blankets, cardboard, boxes, construction paper, and lots and lots of masking tape. The First Grade clan had studied a variety of home materials and construction styles from around the world, as well as what features homes provide for people. In teams made up of their Writers' Workshop table groups they were ready to build homes of their own—together.

Before construction work, the Bats held a talking circle to come to agreement on how they would work as teams. Their norms included:

- ◆ I will use tools safely.
- ◆ I will share materials.
- ◆ I will listen to my team-mates.
- ◆ I will let everyone help and belong.
- ◆ I will make a list of steps and jobs.

When materials were shared out and construction began in earnest, it was a dynamic give and take as team-mates worked to build their homes-- and to run them cooperatively once they were in place.

Della wanted to plan, while Kyle wanted to jump in and put the house together: they compromised by building for a while, then stepping back to see what revisions needed to be made. Camas and Sage worked out the placement of doors and windows to balance coziness and some open space. Aisling wanted to have guests over, while Alex C. and Emen wanted to keep the house private, so they worked out a back entrance and visiting room where Aisling could entertain visitors.



Bats in Their Dwellings



Bats in Their Dwellings

The houses varied greatly in style, with a tipi out back behind a western style house at one table, a clay house with a grass roof at another (Audrey and Hannah completed the tropical feel with the placement of palm trees), a bungalow at a third table, an apartment building at the fourth, and a yurt rounding out the diverse community.

The Bats then "lived" in their houses for Project Time, with "free stuff" and "trading" areas on the rug. Finally, they drew their dwellings, and worked in their teams to take them apart.

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## Bats Dwell in Communities

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The highlight of the whole experience may have been the talking circle at the end of the day, with the students reflecting on what they learned from their experience. Many classmates observed that they'd learned they could figure out how to lay out and use a house. The biggest aha! moments, though, came with observations about working through differences. Xavier observed, "Kahlel and I really struggled on how we were going to put our room together, but we worked out an agreement and got it built." Herbert summed it up for the clan with his observation that, "I had to work it out with my team-mates. It wasn't just about me."



Bats in Their Dwellings



## Sharing the Gift

You have likely heard your child talk about “Sharing the Gift.” This program started many years ago – the idea is that for two hours every Friday afternoon in May kids get to explore interesting, fun, and new areas! Kids from throughout the K-8 community select their top five choices, and then the hard work of sorting them into different classes begins.

All ages work together. Teachers and parent volunteers plan classes around all kinds of cool things – this year’s roster includes Cooking, Sewing, Art, Skim Boarding, and Ninjas.



Sharing the Gift Performing Team

Lou Cutler our PE teacher is taking his show on the road during Sharing the Gift. He is taking the Share the Gift Pathfinder Performing Team around to several of the retirement centers in West Seattle to show off the skills of Pathfinder kids on Hi Jax, hula hoop, jump rope and juggling.

### Performing Team



The Performing Team, in their brand new t-shirts, visited the West Seattle Senior Center in the Junction last week and have plans to visit Merrill Gardens, Bridge Park Retirement and The Kenney in that order over these next three Fridays in May.

Isabel Lafky and Avery Powell really put on a great show with the Hula Hoop, starting with four hula hoops at a time, then increasing to six at a time, and finishing by doing eight hula hoops at a time!

In the juggling show, many kids are juggling with three rings, or three clubs and then a mixed bag of three different items at a time. The jump rope show includes basic jumps, crossovers, speed jumps and double unders. The HiJax group is the biggest group. They dance, hop around on one foot, jump with long jump rope and would race on HiJax if there were more space.

## Congratulations to Mayor's Scholars Award Winners!

Mayor Greg Nickels announced 26 outstanding middle school students (from public and private schools) who have earned this year's scholar awards for service to their schools and their communities. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Mayor's Scholars Awards and in celebration, all 189 past award recipients will be honored.

Nine West Seattle middle schools were among the winners. We are especially proud of our very own Pathfinder student winners **Emma Khan-Jones**, 6th grade and **Jesse Tibbits**, 8th grade. Each of this year's students will receive \$500 that can be used for education or donated to a charity. Criteria for selection include overcoming obstacles or meeting challenges, giving back to the community, and maintaining good academic standing.

Mayor Nickels will present the awards, along with a mayor's scholar letterman jacket, to each of the students at a reception at 5:30 p.m. in City Hall on Tuesday, May 12. The awards are coordinated by the city's Office for Education, a division of the Department of Neighborhoods, and funded entirely through private donations to the nonprofit Alliance for Education.



Future Mayor's Scholars Award Winners?





## Multi-Culture Night: May 21

This marks the second year of the successful Multi-Culture Night at Pathfinder K-8. Last year we estimate 250 people attended. They brought over 50 potluck dishes and enjoyed five performances from Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. This year we are working to book a Hoop Dancer, Taiko Drummers, East Indian Dancers and Hip Hop Dancers. Also, Eric Wilson's East African Drum Group may make a return appearance.

Please bring a hot dish or salad celebrating *your* culture and enjoy this evening celebrating culture around the world!

- ◆ Potluck starts at 5:30 pm
- ◆ Performances begin at 6:30 pm

Members of the Native Advisory Board are coordinating this event: providing dessert, beverages and extra dishes which celebrate the culture of our performers.

Some improvements are being made to speed along the line for food. We are looking for volunteers to help set up, speed the food line and clean up. Please contact Sarah Kelly or Lashanna Williams if you are willing to help.



## Editor's Blurb

### Photo Credits

Photos in this issue of *The Compass* were taken by **Jay Strevey**, **Lou Cutler** and some other anonymous contributors.

### Submission Timeline

The last issue of *The Compass* for the year will be published and sent home on Monday, June 8th. Please submit your writing, artwork and photos no later than **Monday, June 1st**. There are no restrictions on length, but the work may be edited, as necessary, to fit into available space.

### Contact Information

Beth Bakeman, [bbakeman@comcast.net](mailto:bbakeman@comcast.net), 206-605-1327

## Pathfinder K-8 Calendar

**Tuesday, May 12th**

Instrumental Music Concert, 7 pm

**Thursday, May 14th**

PTSA General Meeting with  
community autism education, 6:30-8:30 pm

**Thursday, May 14th**

Machel Spence Photography Show,  
Coffee to a Tea with Sugar, 6 pm-9 pm

**Tuesday, May 19th**

Orca & Otter clans,  
Center for Wooden Boats

**Wednesday, May 20th**

2-hour Early Dismissal, 1:15 pm

**Wednesday, May 20th, 21st and 22nd**

Scholastic Book Fair

**Thursday, May 21st**

Multi-Culture Night, 5:30-8:30 pm

**Monday, May 25th**

No School, Memorial Day

**Tuesday, May 26th**

Eagle clan, Center for Wooden Boats

**Thursday, May 28th**

Pathfinder Art Walk, time TBA

**Monday, June 1st**

Lou's Annual Lap Run for Make-a-Wish

**Wednesday, June 3rd to Friday, June 5th**

Earth Hall camping trip

**Tuesday, June 9th to Friday, June 12th**

Water Hall camping trips

**Saturday, June 13th**

Genesee Hill Closing Ceremony, 10 am-2 pm

**Thursday, June 18th**

Eighth grade promotion

**Friday, June 19th**

Last Day of Classes

### Multi-Culture Night

Plan to attend the second year of this  
fabulous event on this new rescheduled date.

Thursday, May 21st, 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm



Pathfinder K-8 School  
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Seattle, WA 98116

[www.seattleschools.org/schools/pathfinder/](http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/pathfinder/)

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