



Salem Salamander News

Newsletter of the Salem Elementary School PTA

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Savon Willard, Principal
Denise Kiser, PTA President

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From Our Principal

How do you know what your child knows?

Decisions about student thinking are based on multiple criteria. Just as you would not buy a car based solely on the style of the front grill, we here at Salem do not make decisions about students based on one piece of evidence. When you buy a car you may drive the car, listen to the engine, kick the tires, listen to the salesperson, and check to see if you can afford the price. The criteria we used to assess student understanding can be based on homework, tests, and formal and informal assessments including teacher observations. Obviously, observations can only be conducted while the student is at school; This is why it is important for all students to be at school, on time, ready to learn.

Standardized tests give us a snapshot view of how a school or class performs on any given day. This information is only a small piece of the picture that is *your child*. Assessment information guides instruction, reporting, and conferences. When your child comes home at the end of a day at school, ask them to explain in their own words what they learned. This thinking aloud will help make connections in a child's brain so retrieval of this information is easier.. This cements learning into a child's long-term memory.

You received a document call "Connections" at the beginning of the school year, which gives you a list of the objectives your child will learn this year. If you have misplaced this document, you may access it on the Wake County Public Schools Web site. Teachers use multiple ways and a variety of tools to determine whether a student has learned the desired information.

I am also pleased to announce that the State Department of Public Instruction has announced that Salem Elementary is an "*Honor School of Excellence*." This means that Salem met the growth standard set for our school by the department and that we had more than 90% of our students at or above grade level in Grades 3-5 on the End-of-Grade testing. We also met the federal criteria for "No Child Left Behind" during the 2006-2007 school year. I am very proud of the hard working and dedicated staff, students and parents at Salem Elementary. These accomplishments are something that can make us all proud. With the parents on our side, we can truly do whatever it takes to honor and educate.

Notes From Our President!



Wow, it is October already! We have had a very successful start to the 2007-2008 school year: Spirit Night at Chick-Fil-A at Beaver Creek was great. Thank you to everyone who came out. Thanks also to Karyn Knoke for her hard work in planning this great event. Our CitiPass Book sales were also a huge success. I hope you all enjoy your books as much as I do. Thank you to Stephanie Bagwell, our VP of Ways and Means, for her dedication to this fundraiser.

Remember that our annual Book Fair begins on Wednesday, October 17 and runs until Wednesday, October 24. Family Night will be on Monday, October 22. We look forward to seeing you all there. Thank you again to Marley Braun and Cathy Ketterer, our Book Fair Chairs, for their hard work getting this exciting event together.

October also brings back our Sally Foster fundraiser. Catalogs will go home soon and orders will be due by Friday, November 16. We are excited to provide you with a way to purchase great gift-wrapping paper, gifts, and gourmet foods just in time for the holidays. The best part is that a portion of our sales comes right back to our school to help purchase shade structures for our playgrounds. Thanks again to Stephanie Bagwell for heading this fundraiser in its second year. Please watch for more information to follow in your Friday Folders.

Thanks again to Subway on HWY 55 and Beaver Creek for donating sandwich trays for the teacher luncheon on September 27: It was greatly appreciated.

In closing, I want to remind you that the Salem PTA **does not expect** every family to participate in every fundraising event. We provide many options for support throughout the year so that everyone can contribute as best benefits their family. We look forward to an exciting and productive fall season.

Thank you!

Denise Kiser, PTA President

Salem Elementary PTA "No Nonsense" Fundraiser

The 2007 tax year will soon be coming to an end and so far we have collected more than \$3,000. If you would like to make a tax deductible donation to the No-Nonsense Fundraiser there is still time. Just fill out the form at the bottom of this flyer and send it in by **December 15**. **Any amount is welcomed**. Our thanks to those of you who have already participated in this fundraiser we are truly amazed at the generosity of our Salem families!

PTA "No Nonsense" *All donations are confidential*

Donation amount enclosed: \$ _____

Parent(s) name: _____

Name of Salem Student(s): _____

Teacher / Grade: _____

Matching Company Name: _____

Retain this portion for tax receipt. Salem Elementary School

2007/2008 "No Nonsense" Fundraiser

Donation amount enclosed: \$ _____ Check # _____

PTA Membership

Salem Elementary is proud to announce that we have **462** PTA memberships. We still have a long way to go to reach our **100%** membership this year. Please consider becoming a PTA member and remember that when you join your local PTA, you automatically become part of North Carolina PTA and National PTA. Let's unite and make a difference for the children, families, and staff of Salem Elementary.

Below is a PTA membership form, which you may fill out, attach cash or check payable to Salem PTA and return with your child to school. To show our appreciation we will be sending you a \$5 off coupon to *The Loop*.

Salem Elementary PTA Membership Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ ZIP _____ Phone _____

Student Name _____

Grade/Track _____ Teacher _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

(Individual Membership \$5 and Family Membership \$8)



Save the Date: Fall Book Fair

When: Wednesday, October 17th through
Wednesday, October 24th

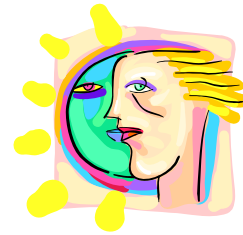
Where: Media Center

Family Night: Monday
October 22 6:00 – 8:30PM

Special Guest Star: Cary YMCA Super Skippers!

In the multipurpose room at 7:00PM.

Hope to see you all there!



Reflections is coming!

Please be looking for our flyers and packets that will be coming out in the middle of October. The exciting new theme this year is "I can make a difference!"

FROM THE HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

Laura Stone and Kelly Jaynes (Co-Chairs)

The Hospitality Committee hosted the Grandparent Breakfast on Friday, September 7 and Monday, September 10. We would like to thank all of our volunteers who donated their time to make this event a success:

Stephanie Bagwell
Marley Braun
Laura Cope
Dee Deanhardt
Karin DellaMaestra

Emily Dilday
Karyn Knoke
Madhavi Krevat
Natalia Krishnakumar
Lisa Sacco

Adair Salgado
Erika Sauerwalt
Debby Sullivan

And we also want to give a big thank you to all of our young volunteers who got up early to be there to help too!

Abigail Bagwell
Ally Deanhardt
Darian Deanhardt
Hopey Jaynes

Matthew Jaynes
Kara Sauerwalt
Alyssa Stone
Zach Stone

We also held our second Early Release Luncheon on Thursday, September 27, 2007. We'd like to thank Subway at both locations of Hwy. 55 and Beaver Creek Commons for helping with this event. Working with them was a pleasure.

Literacy News

Mrs. Bigham and Mrs. Harvey



Happy fall! Thank you for continuing to read and write with your child every day. Congratulations to Track 1 for reaching their reading goal —100%!

We'd like to remind you to discuss what you and your child read together. Comprehension is at the heart of reading. You can help develop this through conversations about the setting, characters, and events (including problem and solution) in narrative text and topic, details, and author's purpose in expository text.

Writing continues to be a strong focus for all K-5 teachers at Salem this year. Everyone is incorporating Writer's Workshop into our daily routines. This is an opportunity for us to model a skill or strategy through a "mini-lesson" and then to allow students to write independently, attempting to incorporate the strategy into their writing (with teacher support). The mini-lesson concludes with time to share the students' writing.

Grade 4 teachers are busy planning the "Get It Write" presentation for October 2 (6:00-8:00PM). Please make plans to attend this information session if you are the parent of a Grade 4 student. This will be a time for you to learn more about writing instruction and the Grade 4 writing test expectations.

Keep up the wonderful reading!

Please feel free to contact us at anytime with questions.

Stacy: sbigham@wcpss.net

Laurie Ann laharvey@wcpss.net



Media Matters

Hispanic Heritage Month

What is the definition of Hispanic? According to George Ochoa, the author, of *Amazing Hispanic American History*, a Hispanic person is anyone whose family origins come from Spain. People from Brazil are not considered Hispanic, because their origins come from Portugal. Hispanic cultures influence our country. "What do the English words cork, anchovy, alligator, parade, guitar, ranch, vigilante, canyon, and filibuster have in common? They were all borrowed from Spanish."

Hispanic people have made many contributions to our society through music, art, technology, and theatre. Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month.

Scrabble Club Meeting Dates: October 1 & 15

Genre of the Month: *Historical Fiction*

I had the pleasure of sharing a book named *Blue*, by Joyce Moyer Hostetter, with a fourth grade class recently. The story is set in World War II era Western North Carolina, during a polio epidemic. The students looked up information about polio, iron lungs, and D-Day.

The most surprising gift I received during the reading of the book was when a fourth grade student informed me that they had finish the book and showed me the bibliography of other possible books to read in the back of the book.

Here are some of the books at Salem Elementary:

Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio by Peg Kehret,
Don't You Know There's a War On? By Avi
The Journal of Ben Uchida by Bary Denenberg
Lily's Crossing by Patricia Reilly Giff
My Secret War: The World War II diary of Madeline Beck by Mary Pope Osborne.



Box Top News

Salem Salamanders continue to be truly AMAZING! Our total Box Top collection for the month of August was \$357.70, bringing our total for this year to **\$896.00** so far!

The top collecting class in each grade for the month of August is as follows.

Kindergarten	Mrs. Groesser's class	103 Box Tops
Grade 1	Mrs. Gray's class	483 Box Tops
Grade 2	Mrs. Phillips' class	657 Box Tops
Grade 3	Mrs. Shankle's class	539 Box Tops
Grade 4	Miss Ortiz's class	149 Box Tops
Grade 5	Mrs. Soriano-Lillis' class	292 Box Tops

Congratulations to each class!

As you know, September 28 marked the end of our fall Box Tops contest. At this time Box Tops are still being tallied, and we will announce our winning class soon.

We are already more than half way to our goal of \$1756!!

Let's stick with Salamander tradition and **BEAT OUR GOAL!!!** Please keep sending in your Box Tops!

Thank you!

Your Box Tops Committee -

Susan McMorris, Laura Brockman & Maryellen Kist



Campbell's Corner

Our Campbell's Labels collection continues to grow at a steady rate! So far this year, Salamanders have collected **3,300 Campbell's Points!**

Our top collectors for the month of August were as follows.

Grade 2	Mrs. Phillips' class	287 points
Grade 3	Mrs. Gallagher's class	205 points
Grade 2	Miss Howard's class	133 points

The top overall collectors so far for the competition are as follows.

Grade 1 -	Ms. Horwich's class	405 points
Grade 2 -	Mrs. Phillips' class	401 points
Grade 3	Mr. Copperwheats' class	222 points

Please keep in mind, Campbell's requires us to submit the **UPC CODE** from the package, not the label front. Campbell's no longer accepts label fronts for submission with this program.

Also remember our Campbell's Contest runs until Friday, December 21, 2007. The class collecting the most points will receive a "Super Snack" party after returning from their holiday break.

Keep those Campbell's UPCs coming in! If you have any questions, you can visit their Web site at www.labelsforeducation.com, or contact us!

Thank you!

Your Campbell's Labels Committee

Dawn Worthington & Maryellen Kist



Milk Tops Make Money \$\$\$

Salem Elementary continues to participate in Harris Teeter’s Milk Challenge, as part of Harris Teeter’s Together in Education school fundraising program.

Send in your clean milk caps from Harris Teeter Brand and Hunter Farms half gallon or gallon containers of milk. They both have an “H” on the cap.

Each cap is worth \$0.05. For the months of July and August, Salem has collected **more than \$40.00** in milk caps!!

Please keep those milk caps coming in, and help Salem Elementary be the best that we can be!



Tyson Project A+ Talk

Salem is off to a solid start in our collection of labels with our Tyson Project A+ program!!

We set an annual goal of \$150 this year. So far we have raised \$36.00 – that’s 24% of our goal!! We are almost ¼ of the way there!

Salem receives \$0.24 for each label turned in. Please keep in mind, we need the **whole label panel** turned in, not just the A+ logo. See the example below.



I truly believe that we can meet our goal for this school year!! Please keep sending in your labels!

Thank you!

Maryellen Kist



Fall Harvest

We are gearing up for Salem Elementary’s annual fall harvest which will begin November 5 and continue through November 16. Every year Salem collects non-perishable food items and toiletries to benefit the *Western Wake Crisis Ministries* located in Apex and the *Ronald McDonald House* in Durham. We are looking for volunteers from each track to help out with this wonderful project. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Lisa Sanchez at 362-1881.

Salem Elementary Homework Policy

The WCPSS School Board has specific policies and procedures regarding homework, and our staff has worked to develop and maintain a policy that is aligned with the School Board's expectations.

Homework shall be a purposeful continuation or extension of the instructional program and appropriate to the students' developmental needs. Homework should fulfill the following purposes.

- To reinforce learning and application of skills by providing practice and application
- To enrich and extend school experiences through related/supplemental home activities
- To stimulate effort, independence, responsibility and self direction
- To encourage parent participation in learning
- To complete unfinished class work assignments
- To review and prepare for tests

Some students will complete assignments in less time while others may require a little longer. Assigning homework is optional and based on the teacher's professional judgment as to the instructional support needs of the students at that time.

Salem Elementary adheres to the research-based guidelines for minutes of homework per day.

Grade	Total Amount of Time	Days
K-2	0-20 minutes per night	Monday – Thursday
3-5	0-50 minutes per night	Monday – Thursday



Salem students chosen by their classmates who demonstrate **RESPONSIBILITY**:

Kindergarten: Rohan Venkatraman, Day Sneed, Charlie Siegel, Hailey Sauerwalt, Dylan Duguid, Kate Moore, David Espinoza-Lagunas

Grade 1: Cameron Stovall, Jack O'Leary, Peyton White, Curtis Fowler, Audrey Payne, Joel Hoffler, Calvin Rubes

Grade 2: Drew Partridge, Simran Patel, Merel Devaney, Lindsay Knoke, Emily Keefe, Mallory LaRusso, Ryan Moore, Sameer Mengale, Dawson Duguid

Grade 3: Gaby Iori, Vienna Chaleunvong, Matthew Worthington, Jared Kebea, Luke Bishop, Liam Donovan, Hannah Klemmer

Grade 4: Cameron Fulton, Julianne Lewis, Salvatore Corrandengo, Hannah Day, Michael Salpietro, Adam Zeid

Grade 5: Caley Dunn, Joanna Kassimis, Navya Pothireddy, James Mayfield, Rachel Stiglitz, Kajal Patel

What is Odyssey of the Mind?

Odyssey of the Mind (OM) is open to all children, elementary school through college. OM strives to teach brainstorming techniques, how to work in a team and problem solving skills. At Salem Elementary, there are two “groups” of volunteers that work with the OM-ers on these skills. The Salem OM Team, Sujata Shirsekar, and Rosanne Taft, hold Spontaneous practice, and Team Coaches hold weekly team meetings.

Spontaneous practice is every Monday at 8AM in the Media Center for Division I students (Grade3-5). Here, we practice brainstorming skills by presenting the teams with problems they must solve in a 2-10 minute timeframe. For example, at one session we passed out paper and markers and asked the teams to “create a greeting card with a verse, for a new holiday.” The answers were incredible:

- All Holiday Day (similar to what I have seen some companies call “Diversity Day.”)
- Free Day
- Wright Brothers’ Day

And, somehow, I think some of our students are watching Cartoon Network!

- Backwards day
- Doom Evil Weasel Day
- Evil Cute Bunny Rabbits Day

I am proud of these students, because they took every day things (ideas from Cartoon Network and topics they are studying in class) and used them to solve the problem they were given. As these teams work to solve their problems Sujata and I walk around the tables and coach members on how to work in a team. If they are grabbing materials out of each others’ hands, if they are being disrespectful, or if they are not listening, we point out other methods for getting the same ideas across. Later in the year, we will be assigning point values to their solutions, and there is almost always a “team work” component to the overall score.

Team Coaches meet weekly, and they also practice spontaneous problems with their teams. All of this spontaneous practice should build the skills the students need to solve the Long Term Problem. The Long Term Problem is a set of requirements the students must meet when they perform their scene, and various points are awarded based on their creativity in meeting these requirements.

As you can see, OM is all about working together effectively towards the common goal of solving simple or complex problems. This year, Salem Elementary has a total of 12 OM Teams. There are 7 Division I teams, and 5 Primary Teams (Grades K-2). We have more than 17 volunteer coaches working together. Coaches will be attending training at the end of October, held by the Eastern Region. And in the months to come, you’ll see even more volunteers stepping up to help pitch in so we send these teams to competition in March 2008. I know these Salem Salamanders will shine!

Important OM Dates to Remember:

October 27, 2007	Coaches Training - Rashkis Elementary
January 26, 2008	Spontaneous Fair (TBD)
February 9, 2008	Judges Training - Rashkis Elementary
March 1, 2008	Eastern Region Competition (TBD)

For more information see the Eastern Region Web site: <http://ncome.org/>



Salem Celebrates Red Ribbon Week October 22 – 26, 2007

Red Ribbon Week is a national campaign held during the last week in October that symbolizes the commitment to creating a drug-free America. We don't often think that discussions about drugs and alcohol are necessary in the elementary schools. Student surveys reveal that when parents listen to their children's feelings and concerns, their kids feel comfortable talking with them and are more likely to stay drug-free. This week-long celebration is a wonderful opportunity for you and your children to continue having open communication that may one day include a discussion about drugs and alcohol. You can learn more about how to talk to your children about drugs and alcohol at www.drugfreewave.com. Each day during Red Ribbon Week, Salem will have a special theme to show our support for a drug-free America and a drug-free school.

Monday	Red Ribbon Day – students given red ribbons to wear
Tuesday	Give Hugs Not Drugs Day
Wednesday	Red Day – Wear Red
Thursday	Crazy Sock Day – Wear your craziest socks
Friday	Salem Spirit Wear Day – Wear your spirit wear



October 2, 2007

Dear Parents:

This year, Salem Elementary will once again participate in the Kids Voting Program. Voting for Tracks 1 and 3 will occur in conjunction with the Tuesday, October 9, 2007 polling day. Tracks 2 and 4 will be polled in coordination with the Tuesday, November 6, 2007 Election Day. A Kids Voting Polling station will be set up in the Town Meeting area in the rear of the school on both voting days.

Please take the time to review the voting process with your child(ren). Since our school is represented by many precincts, not all areas on the ballot will be completed by each child. For more information on the candidates and the proposed Bonds that are on the ballot, please visit <http://share.triangle.com/election2007>. We encourage you and your child(ren) to read through the profiles for each candidate that affects your locality. This will help you and your child(ren) make an informed decision at the polls.

In addition, we encourage parents to have your child(ren) accompany you to local polling locations as you VOTE in the 2007 elections.

Thank You.

Maria Johnson
PTA Legislative Chair

DATES TO REMEMBER

Tuesday, October 2		Fall Pictures – Track 2 Make-up Pictures Tracks 1 & 3
Tuesday, October 2	6:30PM – 7:30PM	Science Fair Information Session Media Center (Tracks 2 and 4)
Wednesday, October 3	8:45AM – 9:10AM	First Day of Chess Club Grades 3 - 5
Thursday, October 4	6:30PM	PTA Board Meeting
Friday, October 5	8:45AM – 9:10AM	First Day of Chess Club Grades K - 2
Wednesday, October 17 – Wednesday, October 24		Book Fair
Monday, October 22	6:00PM – 8:30PM	Family Night at the Book Fair
Monday, October 22 – Friday, October 26		Red Ribbon Week
Thursday, November 1	6:30PM	PTA Board Meeting
Monday, November 5 – Friday, November 16		Fall Harvest
Tuesday, November 6		Make-up Picture Day Track 2 only
Monday, November 12		Veteran's Day – HOLIDAY No School
Wednesday, November 21 – Friday, November 23		Thanksgiving Holiday

Thank you to Jump Zone for sponsoring this month's Salem Elementary PTA Newsletter.



What is Jump!Zone? Jump!Zone is a national children's party and play facility with 27 locations across the country. It offers safe, active play with an unstructured format in a comfortable, climate controlled, indoor setting. The Holly Springs location will be a 10,000 square foot indoor party and play center featuring one huge arena with large themed inflatables (like Batman, Scooby Doo, etc.) for children ages 2-12. Our center will include bouncers, obstacle courses, giant slides, interactive games, a Toddler Area and more. Best of all, your admission covers all attractions—no quarters or tokens necessary. Parents & babies under age 2 are ALWAYS FREE.

We HIGHLY encourage parents to sign their children up for the JZ CLUB right now. It is FREE and it will enable you to receive birthday discounts, 2 for 1 passes and many other special offers. You will then be on our E-Mail list and will be the first to hear about our Grand Opening which is scheduled for mid-November 2007.

Because we offer Small!Party (15 children), Classic!Party (20 children) and Jump!Party (25 children) packages, there is sure to be an option to fit any budget. At Jump!Zone your party has total access to all inflatables throughout your arena time and use of a private party room for the entire time of your party to store gifts, belongings or just to hang out and relax. Jump!Zone also offers Open!Play hours during the week for play groups, a special play date with Mom or Dad, or just spontaneous indoor fun with family and friends. Reservations are not necessary, but recommended for groups larger than 10.

We will be located at 250 Premier Drive in Holly Springs off the Highway 55 Bypass. The phone number to call is 919-249-7320 (Mike Wagner, owner) and make sure to check out our Web site at www.jumpzoneparty.com.

A special Thank You to **PostNet of Apex** for printing our newsletter and for your continued support.