

# Bollman Bridge PTA Newsletter

September 2009

President: Tina Ferguson



## PTA Calendar

*Dates are subject to change.  
Please check our website for  
an up to date listing.*

### September

- 4 Schools closed
- 7 Schools closed
- 15 Back to school 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>
- 16 Back to school 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>
- 25 Family Picnic 6-8PM
- 28 Catalog orders due  
Schools closed
- 29 PTA meeting 6PM

### October

- TBD Fall Festival/Oktoberfest  
Tentatively 10/23/09
- 16 Schools closed
- 26 PTA meeting 6PM

### November

- 6 Schools closed
- 23 Schools close early
- 24 Schools close early
- 25 Schools closed
- 26 Schools closed
- 27 Schools closed



## President's Message

Welcome to another exiting year at Bollman Bridge Elementary! More than any other year in recent memory, this summer has brought tremendous change to our school. We have a new principal in place, Mr. Jonathan Davis, and new PTA leadership. The PTA board has been busy all summer, working with the new school administration, to prepare for a wonderful year filled with fun activities and enriching programs to both educate and challenge our children. We begin this year with new ideas, fresh perspective, and tons of energy!

One of our primary goals this year is to dramatically increase the communication between the PTA and parents. We have several strategies we're planning to use. First, we're going to distribute information each week in your child's Friday folder. All PTA communications will be printed on bright orange (go O's) paper, so it'll be hard to miss. We'll also publish information on our PTA website and Yahoo message boards. We'll be setting up fun events to draw parents to the schools for events and meetings. We'll conduct monthly PTA meetings with the schedule disseminated on those weekly fliers. Finally, we've established a new program to embed PTA representatives at each grade level. This last approach is meant to provide parents with a "local" point of contact for PTA matters. We can all recognize that the needs of a 1<sup>st</sup> grader are vastly different than those of a 5<sup>th</sup> grader. These grade representatives are there to be a liaison between the teachers, students, parents, and the PTA.

As always, the heart of the PTA is you, the parents. Our focus, while primarily on improving the academic experience for our children, is also serving as advocates for parents at both the school and county level. In order to serve these functions, we need your help. Volunteering for school activities, no matter how much, provides us with resources necessary to pull things

together. While we always need help in the school directly supporting the teachers, we also need help in the evenings and weekends. Most of our activities happen then. You'll be providing valuable help to the PTA and serving as an excellent example to our children. You'll get to meet teachers, administrators and other parents. We're all like you, working hard to make the school the best place possible for our kids.

The PTA also depends entirely on our parents for funding. We recognize that times are tough, but the \$6 membership fee really helps us. This fee provides the PTA with the funds necessary support events and activities such as Oktoberfest, picnics, Bingo Night, socials, the Silent Auction, various after school activities, snacks at events, and to provide supplies when needed. It doesn't lock you in to any additional duties. There are benefits to having a PTA membership card. Aside from the obvious support to the school, you can also receive discounts at local merchants, including Barnes and Noble, Sharp Electronics, T-Mobile, Southwest Airlines, MetLife and many more. The national list of discounts can be found on this site: [http://www.pta.org/member\\_benefit\\_providers.asp](http://www.pta.org/member_benefit_providers.asp) In addition to the PTA membership fees, we'll be conducting several fund raisers this year. As always, your support is essential to making these a success.

As I mentioned before, communication is one of our primary goals. We want to hear your ideas. Please feel free to interact with the PTA via our website, <http://www.bbespta.net/>, or contact me directly at [president@bbespta.net](mailto:president@bbespta.net).

I can't wait for the year to begin and I look forward to seeing you at our PTA meetings!

Tina Ferguson

# Volunteer Spotlight

**Kathleen Smith**  
BBES Parent



**Years at BBES:**

This will be my 7<sup>th</sup> year at BBES!

**Jobs volunteered for:**

I have done a little bit of everything! Friday folders, working in the classroom, cutting out Indian vests, field trip chaperone, and serving the teachers, just to name a few.

**Volunteers Because:**

I decided to volunteer because it was my oldest son's first year and I really wanted to get to know the school.

**Favorite Volunteer Jobs:**

My favorite way to volunteer was to work with the kids in the classroom. I went in once a week to work with reading groups. I really got to know all the kids in the class this way. This will be my 3rd year on staff appreciation. It's a lot of work, but it is so easy to please them (just bring food:)) and they are so grateful.

**Like most about BBES:**

My favorite thing about BBES is the friends I have made.

**Volunteer words of advice:**

My advice to future volunteers - JUST DO IT! Whether it be something small or large, every little bit makes a difference.

## Health Highlight

It's back to school time. This means that the chaos begins and you now have to pack school lunches for your kids. It is very important to teach your kids healthy eating habits when they are young. This will instill healthy habits that they will take with them throughout their lives. What you pack in your child's lunch is a great way to reinforce healthy habits.

Many times, parents will give in to the things their kids want at the grocery store (chips, cookies, etc.) or go with what's quick and easy to throw together. But it's

just as easy, and really important, to pack healthy stuff, too. Instead of chips, pack crackers or even better...carrot sticks. They will be nice and crunchy. Pack animal crackers instead of chocolate chip cookies or water instead of high sugar fruit drinks. Little changes can make a big difference. And for those students who buy lunch, pack them a healthy snack instead of giving them snack money. You're keeping your child healthy and teaching them how to eat right.

*By: Casey Schurman*

## ESOL Bridge

### Connecting Families 2 Families Bridge Cultures and Build Community

Welcome back! Connecting Families to Families was created from the needs of the new international and refugee families attending Bollman Bridge Elementary School. The new families came from war torn countries and impoverished homelands to find opportunities for employment and an education for their children.

The program introduces the new families to a new "culture" of the American Educational System. Through Joyce Epstein's six types of parental involvement: Communicating, Parenting,, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Collaborating with the Community, and Decision Making. Families learn of the school and community resources to help them become involved in the school and to help their children to excel academically.

Community members are involved by providing clothing and book drives for the families. FIRN provides trained volunteers and retired teachers to come to BBES twice a week for an enrichment homework club to complete homework assignments and activities to promote oral language development.

Who is FIRN? FIRN (Foreign-born International Referral Network) grew out of an informal support service for foreign-born students and families in our

community and an idea by Pat Hatch for a place where immigrants could learn about resources and assimilate into their new American culture. Their services expanded to include immigration counseling, interpreting and other critical services. FIRN believes in the power of collaboration, and values the opportunity to work in partnership with other organizations to "bridge cultures and build community." FIRN helps ensure equal access to community resources and opportunities for all foreign-born individuals. For the past eight years, FIRN has had a partnership with HCPSS and has collaborated with BBES to provide an after-school program for our new English-language learning students! For more information: <http://www.firnonline.org/about.html#4>

Last year, ESOL and community members visited the homes of our new families to help with homework, English, school projects, and taught some traditional American cooking!

BBES ESOL needs families to continue to help "bridge cultures and build community" by welcoming our foreign-born families. Please contact Laurel Conran for more information at [Laurel\\_Conran@hcpss.org](mailto:Laurel_Conran@hcpss.org).

*Laurel Conran - ESOL Team Leader*  
<http://web.me.com/bbesesol/iWeb/ESOL/Home.html>



# Committee News

## Membership

Last year we had 350 members join the PTA, this year our goal is to have over 375. Please help us meet this goal for the 2009-2010 school year. Joining the PTA is an excellent way to stay connected and informed. Our children deserve to have the opportunity to participate in after school activities and for you to be able to meet other families and friends at events such as Oktoberfest, Bingo Night, School Picnics, the Silent Auction and so much more. The kids always look forward to ending the school year and starting the summer right with FIELD DAY, an event that takes place right outside the school. Without your help and support, these events can't happen and new ones cannot form. *Together Everyone Achieves More ~Thank you for your time~*

For questions, email Maricela at [membership@bbspta.net](mailto:membership@bbspta.net).

## Catalog Fall Fundraiser

One of our only major fundraisers this fall will be the Sally Foster catalog coming home Thursday, Sept. 3rd (the Fun Run will not be a fundraiser this year). If everyone buys just one or two items, it will really help! If you prefer, instead, to make a cash contribution to the PTA, that will help even more (and it is tax-deductible)! Please support the PTA and all the great things they do to help Bollman Bridge by buying a few items from the catalog or giving a direct donation. The Sally Foster sale will run from Sept. 3rd to Sept. 28th.

If you have any questions, please contact Diane at [catalog@bbspta.net](mailto:catalog@bbspta.net).

## Family Fun

Please join us for the annual BBES Back-to-School Family Picnic scheduled for Friday, September 25, 2009, from 6-8 pm. Families are asked to bring a picnic dinner and a dessert to share. (Rain date is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, October 1.) We tentatively have a DJ scheduled to provide music to listen to as we dine together.

Also, the annual BBES Fall Festival is tentatively scheduled for Friday, October 23, from 6-9 pm. Plans are still in the works for activities, so if you have any ideas or suggestions, please contact Melissa Morley at the above number.

Any questions or concerns, please call Melissa Morley at 240-568-8972 or email at [familyfun@bbspta.net](mailto:familyfun@bbspta.net).

## Beaver Store

*We need volunteers!* Parents and 5<sup>th</sup> graders are needed to help run the beaver store. If you would like to help, please contact Lisa at [beavercart@bbspta.net](mailto:beavercart@bbspta.net).

## Spring Auction

If you would like to help plan for the auction fundraiser in the spring, it's never too early to sign up! Please contact Doug at [auction@bbspta.net](mailto:auction@bbspta.net).