

Gordon Gazette

General Gordon Elementary School
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Principal: Margaret Davidson
Associate Superintendent: Lynn Green
Trustee: Shirley M. Wong

Vice-Principal: Noreen Morris
Administrative Assistant: Marilyn Grant
PAC Chair: Ingrid Sulston

2008 September 19

Newsletter #02

CALENDAR REMINDERS

Friday	September 26	Terry Fox Run (2:00-3:00pm)
Monday	September 29	Staff/Parent Mingle at Tatlow's (3:30-4:30)
Friday	October 10	PAC Meeting (6:45-8:45pm) Dinner at 6:00pm Photo Day

NEWSLETTERS/INFORMATION BULLETINS Regular communication is one important way that parents can be well informed about what goes on at school. Please expect two newsletters a month. We have been posting the newsletter on the website that Ingrid and Paul Sulston have set up for us at www.gordonelementary.ca.

- ***This will be the last paper newsletter sent home with every child. On the information sheets sent home (3 stapled sheets, green, yellow and white) you can indicate how you would like to receive your newsletters (email or paper or both).*** Please return the forms so that Ingrid can organize your wishes for the newsletter.

SCHOOL NEWS

SCHOOL CALENDAR: The Gordon Community would like to extend a large **THANK YOU** to ***Skip and Heather Young*** for putting together our school calendar.

CROSS-COUNTRY Cross-Country has started at General Gordon. Primary students are welcome to come and practice on Mondays and Thursdays at 12:20 in the gym and intermediate students will be running in the morning on Mondays and Thursdays starting at 8:00am in the gym. Forms for sign up are in the office. Students can also participate in the meets after school. Dates for those are in the notice. We encourage parents to come out and run and also come to the meets to cheer on our Gordon School athletes.

SCHOOL FEES Please send a cheque or money to your child's classroom teacher to pay for school supplies. These supplies include pencils, pens, glue sticks, exercise books, duotangs, and art supplies that are shared in the classroom. Students in Grades 1-7 need to pay \$25.00 and students in Kindergarten bring in \$12.50. ***Please send the money by Friday, October 3.*** Please be reminded that students will not be denied supplies or an opportunity to participate in school activities if paying fees is a hardship. Please speak to Ms Davidson if this is a concern.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE The school put in an application for an artist in residence last year and was successful in receiving a grant to begin the Gordon Legacy Project. Student council reps from last year went to each class to discuss what is special to them about General Gordon. The artist, ***Christine Germano***, worked with the students in June and in September of this year to take photos of these special places. These photos are now hanging in the hallway on the main floor. Please come and take a look at our gallery that captures the essence of General Gordon and our vibrant community.

TERRY FOX RUN We will be having the Terry Fox run on Friday, September 26 from 2:00-3:00pm. We would like to encourage families to come out and walk or run with the school. Thank you to parents who indicated that they would like to help out with the Terry Fox walk. You will be contacted soon. Any other parents interested in chaperoning the route that the children take please let Ingrid know. (604) 263 1920 or isulston@gmail.com

LIBRARY NEWS The library is gradually orienting all the classes for the new year. We are going over borrowing procedures and very basic searching procedures. More information will come home at a later date. The library will be fully open, including before and after school, later on in September. Over the years, many parents have contributed to the school by helping in the library. The work involved is shelving books and various processing tasks. If you can offer an hour a week please contact Mary. Thank you very much.

COMMUNITY SCHOOL TEAM: The Gordon Community School team is made up of a Director-Leslie Grant Smith, a teacher – Karen Young, a programmer- Michael Kulik and a youth and family worker – Lisa Janco. This groups works with two High Schools and all the elementary schools attached to them. They will be supporting our school by offering a variety of programs for children.

- **Roots of Empathy:** This program involves a leader – Michael Kulik and a mom who brings her baby into the classroom. The students in the classroom make observations around how the baby is growing and Michael leads discussions, reads picture books and develops empathy building activities.
- **Sports:** Mike will be offering basketball for grades 4-7 and for grades 2-3 in the fall (Times will be announced soon), indoor soccer in January and outdoor soccer after Spring Break.
- **Noon Hour Leaders:** Mike will be working with our Grades 5 & 6 students at lunch hour to train them in leading games for students in grades 1-4.
- **Out of School Time Programs:** The team is interested in doing programs on Wednesday afternoons and are looking for feedback from parents and students to what those kinds of programs might be.
- **Art Therapist:** Lisa, the youth & family worker, has organized art therapists to come to our school to work with students. It is called "spontaneous art" and the student is encouraged to freely express feelings through art.

MEET THE TEACHER BBQ: The “Meet the Teacher BBQ” was a great success. We would like to thank all the parents who brought in food for the potluck, White Spot for bringing & cooking the burgers and Joanne, Colleen, Cynthia, Eva and Nicole for serving up the popcorn, and Jennifer Sears for organizing and coordinating the event and Christina, Elke, Heather, Skip, Anna, Kerry, Pola and Roberta, David and Dan Graves for spending time setting up and cleaning up.

HOT LUNCH PROGRAM: The Hot Lunch Program is up and running and thanks to the input of the parents, the VSB has made some changes to the menu and are still looking to add more vegetarian meals.

GIFT CARDS: Earn money for Gordon School!!! The Gordon PAC buys grocery cards at a discount of 2-7.5% depending on the retailer. PAC sells the cards at face value and the money earned goes into PAC funds to be used for “extras” like activities, supplies, etc. Trade us your cash for gift cards for your favourite stores. Use these gift cards instead of cash when you shop. 100 families @ 200.00/month could earn \$9000 in 9 months. Order forms are available in School Main Entrance Hallway or from the website www.gordonelementary.ca
Fill out the order form, enclose a cheque written to Gordon School and place form & cheque in the Grocery card box on the office counter. Orders are ***due on the last Friday of the Month, September 26, October 31 and November 28.*** If you have any questions please contact Diana Schmidt at 604-737-4896 or email dmschmidt@shaw.ca.

RECYCLING: Our recycling is up and running so parents can bring in their containers again. For new families, our recycling containers are by the woodworking room in the basement of the school. Each container is self-explanatory. Thank you to Anna Gunner who helps keep us environmentally friendly!

ANAPHALAXIS (PEANUT/FISH/ BEE STINGS ALLERGY)

Important Notice re: PEANUT ALLERGY (anaphylaxis)

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction, which requires immediate treatment to prevent sudden death from suffocation or cardiac arrest. ***One of the life threatening allergens is peanuts.*** We have a few students in our school that have peanut allergies. ***We have a few students in the school who have peanut allergies that are life threatening.*** Not only is the direct ingestion of nuts life threatening, but also contact with peanuts. **We are asking our school community to please AVOID snacks and luncheons containing nut products.** We would like our school community to be “allergy aware” and work together to minimize the risk of exposure for the allergic child.

The treatment if the child is exposed to peanuts is to call 911 immediately and use an “epipen.” The community nurse, Emily Malnis will be do a review workshop with the staff on how to use the epipen. There is an epipen in the child’s classroom and in the medical office. The Ministry of Education’s publication ***Life-Threatening Food Allergies in School and Child Care Settings*** lists great ideas for nutritious no-nut lunches and snacks, a few of which we include here:

- String cheese or cheese & crackers, celery or bread stick wrapped in swiss cheese
- Raisins, dried apricots, fruit leather, salads (pasta, mixed bean, potato, bulgur wheat)
- Noodles, carrot sticks or baby carrots; hummus or other dip with veggies, macaroni and cheese, pizza
- Pepperoni stick or beef jerky, animal crackers, graham wafers, yoghurt drink or chocolate milk

The school and particularly the families of our anaphylactic students, thank all students, parents and staff for their cooperation and support.

A message from your PAC Chair

Welcome to the new school year. I hope everyone is settling into their routines for the fall. In case you do not already know, every parent and caregiver is automatically a member of PAC (Parent Advisory Council). PAC's function is to help parents navigate school issues, facilitate communication between the parents and staff or with outside organizations, to organize social and fundraising events for the school, and is an advocate for a quality school. Parents have already been active in making two events a success – ***the Meet the Teacher BBQ and the playground installation*** - thank you, and find out more about both of them below.

Thank you to everyone who indicated how they can volunteer for the school on the volunteer sheet. I look forward to working with you on school issues, fundraising, and in organizing fun events for our school families. The events of the year, many of which PAC helps with are on the website (www.gordonelementary.ca). Most of them are also in the calendar that your child brought home.

We have our first PAC meeting on ***Sept 29th***, more details below. You do not need to attend the meetings to be a member of PAC. They are just one way that we communicate. You can also check out our website (www.gordonelementary.ca), talk to parents you know that are already involved in PAC or talk to me. Thanks, Ingrid. (604) 263 1920 or isulston@gmail.com

PLAYGROUND INSTALLATION I just want to thank all of you who came and helped out with the installation. We had had a fantastic turn out, and some very motivated volunteers. We thought it was going to take us until 5:00pm to build the play system, but we got it up by 11:30am, had some lunch and waited for the cement to arrive. In all we had everything completed by 2:30pm. The engineer from Habitat said our installation was one of the fastest community installations that he has seen. Once again, thanks to everyone for their support. Your contributions are greatly appreciated and you can see how much this means to the students and community. Check the website for a gallery photos from the installation. ***Thanks, Aaron Dudley***

PAC MEETING (Sept 29 in the library) For this first meeting of the year a simple pasta dinner will be served beforehand at 6:00pm. Please bring a drink of your choice to share. PAC meeting will be from 6:45pm until 8:45pm. You can leave your child (ren) in the babysitting, run by grade 7 students, and held in a classroom down the hall (free). Agenda so far will include welcoming new parents, listening to your ideas for the year, meeting our community school team, and an update on current seismic issues from the Gordon School Renewal Committee. Please let Ingrid know if there are other items to put on the agenda. Email Ingrid at isulston@gmail.com.

PAC/STAFF MINGLE: The last Friday of every month, all parents and staff are invited to mingle over a drink. Meet after school from about 3:15pm onwards at Tatlows Bar (2744 West 4th). This month's mingle is on Friday, Sept. 26.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Steering Kids Away From Gangs: The Role Parents Play

Please join us for an evening session with Dr. Mark Totten to learn about youth gangs, how children/youth become involved in violence and gangs, and what parents can do to support their children/teens to resist involvement. The event will be on **October 15, 2008 from 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm** at the Vancouver School District Reception and Placement Centre located at 2530 East 43rd Avenue in Vancouver. This event is sponsored by a grant from the Ministry for Public Safety and Solicitor General, and is FREE. Free child-minding will be provided. Space is limited, please contact Alison to register or for more information. Tel: 778-772-6742 or alison@nsrj.ca. When registering please indicate your child minding needs, including the number and ages of children.

Children's book launch by one of our parents

Susin Nielsen, parent of Oskar Fernlund (division 4F), has had a young adult novel, ***Word Nerd***, published by **Tundra Books**. A *Quill and Quire* review says, "... Enlivened by the witty, articulate musings of a hyper-observant and eccentric protagonist, *Word Nerd* is also chock-full of valuable lessons about being yourself and giving second chances ... a page-turner." Kidsbooks is hosting a book launch on Wednesday, October 1st at 7:00 pm. Gordon parents and kids are welcome (PLEASE NOTE: The book is appropriate for nine to twelve-year-olds). Nielsen will also be appearing at Word on the Street on September 28th, and at the Vancouver Author's Festival on October 22nd and 23rd.

Babysitting: Grade 7 students interested in babysitting can take care of younger students during PAC meetings. Please give your name to Kyle Lessoway and/or Megan Low who will be helping to coordinate our babysitters. We encourage you to take the babysitting course at Kits community centre: "What every babysitter should know". For 11-17 years. There are a few spots left for the Oct 19th session and many spots for the November 16th session. PAC can cover some of the fees, depending on how many people take the course.