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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

February 2011

Are we really at the halfway point this school year?

Thank you so much for helping our PTA go Green this year. I hope the weekly emails from Lee West have been keeping you up to date. PTA funds have been used to purchase new sets of the novel The Caye. New magnetic letters were purchased for Kindergarten. Kindergarten, Third and Fifth grades will enjoy visits from the Science Place. Thanks to the efforts of Melissa Mayhew, all grades will enjoy a visit and writing instruction from author Ginjer Clarke this month. All grades also participated in the wonderful winter enrichment activities provided by our awesome room parents.

A Huge thank you to all of our volunteers who work hard every day on committees, in the classrooms, in the cafeteria, and in the library. The children love to see you at school. Marcy Hoff will be sending home the Square One Art projects soon. Renee Chandler has done a great job of coordinating all of our Spirit Nights. I hope you enjoyed Papa Johns pizza. A second Parents Night Out event has been planned at the Y for Friday, February 11. The children will enjoy swimming, watching movies and climbing the rock wall. Katherine Robison has been putting the year book together. She would love to receive photos from all school events from you. The Spring Carnival Committee is hard at work planning our biggest and most fun event of the

year. Save the date it is April 8.

Ms. Grinsell, Mrs. Reams and Mrs. Roye did a great job of coordinating the Talent Show. The Talent Show was a huge success that featured many of our talented gators. Congratulations to all of you!!!

The PTA will continue to do all that we can to benefit our school and enhance our children's experience at Gayton. Please continue to support our efforts by volunteering, supporting the Spirit Nights, and purchasing Spirit Wear. As the weather finally gets warmer, check out the T Shirts on the school website. Every Friday is Spirit Wear day. We even have Gator flags and Gator magnets for cars to show your spirit.

I hope to see you all at the upcoming Book Fair, After School Enrichment, and Spring Carnival.

Joyce Hedish
PTA President
president@gaytonpta.com



PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

February, 2011

Dear Gayton "Family:"

Second semester is already flying by....Where does time go?

January and February has certainly brought us inclement weather. In spite of school delays and closings, our students and teachers have continued to keep the "Lamp of Learning" going with lots of creative activities—both inside and outside of the classrooms. A big "Thank You" to all of our parents, grandparents, and other family members who continue to give their time and talents to make our Enrichment Activities such a success.

The counselors and principal of Pocahontas Middle School visited us in January and talked with our fifth graders about making course selections for next year.

Our SCA sponsored "Talent Night. It was a huge success! There are so many talented Gators here at Gayton. (: (:

Gayton recently had its full Safety Audit and Fire Inspection. We received many commendations on the things that are being done to provide a safe learning environment for our children.

Mrs. Melissa Reams was spotlighted as Gayton's Teacher of the Year. She is an outstanding teacher and this year has served as our Math Teacher in Residence. Mrs. Reams will vie with other outstanding educators in Henrico as the County's Teacher of the Year is selected in May.

Our March calendar is already full of many important and interesting activities. Please mark your calendars for our Spring Book Fair that begins on March 14.

As always, thanks for everything you and your family do to make Gayton "Rock & Roll!"

Sincerely,

Peggy Wingfield
Principal



CLINIC CORNER

Hello from the Clinic. Since the cold and flu season is upon us, I would like to share a few tips with you in order to help keep your child healthy. The flu is caused by a virus that infects the lungs, nose, and throat. The flu is spread from person to person through coughing and sneezing or from touching a germ infested surface. Please remind your family to cover their face when sneezing or coughing, wash hands frequently, and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Common symptoms of the flu are: high fever, severe headache, muscle and body aches, exhaustion, and dry cough. Common symptoms of a cold are: stuffy nose, sneezing, sore throat, and hacking cough.

If your child does have the flu, it is important for them to stay home, rest, and drink plenty of fluids. Remember that your child cannot come back to school until he/she has been fever free, without medication, for at least 24 hours. Additionally, notify the school clinic attendant, Esther Quinn, at 360-0820 if your child has been medically diagnosed with the flu. Monitoring flu incidence at Gayton will help keep students, faculty, and our community healthy.

NOTES FROM THE GAYTON FACULTY

The Gayton Staff would like to send out a hearty "thank you" to the Hospitality Committee and to all of the parents who have provided food for our luncheons! Please know how much we appreciate your time and talents. Every luncheon has been delicious! It is wonderful to take a break from packing our lunches. Thank you for making us feel so special. Gayton parents are THE BEST!

Also, don't forget to check out all of the teachers' blogs on the Gayton Elementary School Homepage. There are some awesome things going on in each and every classroom at Gayton!

LAY ADVISORY UPDATE

RACE to NOWHERE

Race to Nowhere is a new movie that is being rolled out with private screenings. There is lots of national buzz about this movie being used in communities to eliminate AP among other things so it is worth paying attention to. Here is info about the Richmond Screening for Race to Nowhere:

Commonwealth Parenting is hosting a screening of the documentary 'Race to Nowhere' on Sunday, February 27th at 2 pm at the Byrd Theater. It will be followed by a panel discussion. It is about the direction our schools are taking. You can google it to see more about the film. (It is very interesting to take some time to look through the different links, information, articles, and resources cited within the website)

<http://www.racetonowhere.com/home>

TICKET INFORMATION:

Tickets cost \$10.00 (+\$1.54 handling fee) in advance and must be ordered online. (There were 800+ tickets available when I purchased my tickets **today**). Tickets can be purchased online through the Commonwealth Parenting website (under the Parents Council link), or you can use the following link to go directly to the ticket purchase webpage:

<http://rtnbyrdtheatre.eventbrite.com/>

From what I can tell, tickets bought online are sent via email, with a link to print out the ticket(s). Tickets can also be purchased "at the door" for \$15.00 on the day of the event, assuming the event does not sell out in advance. If you have any questions, you can contact Commonwealth Parenting at: 545-1272.

UPCOMING SPECIAL DATES

February 15:	PTA Meeting 7pm 1 st Grade Program
February 15-17:	Papa John's Spirit Nights
February 21:	Student Holiday
February 22&24:	Visit Author at Gayton
February 22:	After School Enrichment Sign-Ups
February 25:	Box Tops Submission Deadline
March 14-18:	Book Fair
March 15:	PTA Meeting 7pm 2 nd Grade Program
March 16:	Student Holiday
April 1:	½ Day Student Holiday
April 8:	Spring Carnival and Bazaar

GAYTON SPIRIT WEAR

Did you know that every Friday at Gayton is Spirit Wear? Do you have your Spirit Wear yet - it's not just for kids!

There are different ways to show your Gayton Spirit: on your car, on your house or on yourself!

There are car decals either sticker or magnet kinds as well as house flags! The house flags are of excellent construction - not just printed but stitched so they last many years.

There are 4 different clothing options, hooded sweatshirts, long sleeve shirts and 2 different short sleeve t-shirts. Order yours today!

Now offering online orders (no payments online) - visit www.gaytonpta.com under Spirit Wear to order yours today!

FAMILY GAME NIGHT WITH BOX TOPS

Does your family have the winter blues? A great distraction may be creating a regular "Family Game Night"! This concept is nothing new, however, with today's technology keeping you and your kids busy, traditional board or parlor games don't seem very exciting. But you may find after a few nights, they love the interaction and family time as much as you do, and may even be asking for Games Nights throughout the year!

Some of the benefits are:

- Time together as a family
- Game play that helps teach sportsmanship and good healthy competition
- Playing together promotes communication
- It's inexpensive! Games like Charades, I'm Thinking of Something, Lookabout, and I Spy are free! You can also pull out old games that you already have or cards.
- Family nights create lasting memories
- Allows a break from technology and interruptions - of course you can occasionally play family games using technology like the wii
- just make sure everyone in the family can play.
- Its fun!

Here are a few tips to get you started:

- Put it on the calendar so that everyone can plan to participate
- Create a consistent frequency that meets your families schedule (weekly, twice a month, monthly, etc)
- Schedule at least an hour, maybe starting right after dinner so if you want to play longer you can
- If you don't already have games, purchase one or two to get started, or research some free games that you can do
- Set a rule for no interruptions or distractions; turn off the TV, cell phone, and let voicemail take your calls
- Select games that everyone will enjoy! Be creative with more challenging games by partnering with younger family members
- Get everyone involved in the planning - alternate who gets to pick the game and snack or dessert

Support Gayton during Family Game Night:

- Choose snacks or recipes that include products with Box Tops for Education like Chex Mix, Betty Crocker Dessert mixes, and Fruit Flavored Shapes and Snacks. Visit the [Box Tops for Education website](#) for participating products, coupons, and tons of great recipes!
- You can earn bonus or eBoxTops by using the [Box Tops for Education Marketplace](#) to shop online at your favorite stores to purchase new games for your family!

Have fun and be creative! It doesn't matter what your family's version of game night looks like - just enjoy being together!

YEARBOOK UPDATE

We are currently looking for photos for the yearbook of the first day of school, kids in their spirit wear and for field trip pics. If you would like to upload to the site follow these directions:

1. Go to www.myyear.com.
2. Hit share your photos.
3. Type in the project number which is 115325.
4. Type in the password which is gators.
5. Put in your personal information.

You can upload 5 pics at a time. OTHERWISE, email them to Katherine Robison at katherinerobison1170@msn.com OR drop them onto a CD and send them to school with "Katherine Robison" on them. Any and all pics would be greatly appreciated. The deadline for submission is March 10. We have to have the yearbook submitted by March 30th.

SPRING CARNIVAL & BAZAAR

Friday, April 8, 2011 - Mark your Calendar!

Gayton's annual spring carnival & bazaar is only a short time away but our PTA volunteers are furiously working to make it a truly fun day for everyone!

Read on to find out what is offered, what is new and how you can help out.

Bazaar - The past few years we've had a silent auction as well as the Market Place. Gayton families are encouraged to rent a table and be part of the marketplace. Maybe your business would like to be a sponsor or donate something for the auction. A brochure highlighting marketplace vendors and auction items will be sent home prior to the carnival. We're sure you'll find something that will interest you.

Games - There are some changes (change is good!) this year. If you have been to our carnivals in past years you will remember the "punch cards" - well this year we have done away with those and replaced them with a simpler process. Everyone will still be able to play as many games as they want - yay! What's different then? Well, rather than playing to earn punches, you play to have fun! That's what a carnival is for? Right?! At the end of the day, you simply trade your prize wristband for a prize. You still have your ride wristband so you can get your prize and still go on rides. Want a second prize? Simply purchase another prize wristband! So easy!

Instant Prize Games - We will also have some special games that are instant prize games - not everyone will win, but it offers a challenge and opportunity to win an extra prize. These games will cost a ticket or two to play.

Food - We will be offering some different fare for dinner this year instead of chicken nuggets and pizza. Details to come!

5th Graders - Are raising money with sales of drinks as well as doughnuts - so be sure to support our graduating 5th grade classes.

What's Else is New? - There will be some new inflatable rides this year as well as some cool new games based on the Minute to Win It show.

More details will be coming! Volunteer sign-ups for booths, bake sale/cake walk as well as pre-carnival ticket sales.

Remember, the PTA is going green so signups will be online at www.gaytonpta.com. Be sure to check it out!

Contacts:

Carnival Lead - Renee Chandler:
renee.chandler@verizon.net

Sponsorships - Joyce Hedish:
wlandjmh@verizon.net

Vendor/Marketplace - Lee West:
lee_west@verizon.net

Auction Items - Valerie Gibson:
valerie@crttravel.com

GAYTON GATORS RECYCLE!

As you may already know, our recycling program at Gayton has really taken off thanks to all the teachers, staff, students, and parent volunteers. Every week we bring more than 60 lbs of paper, plus a load of bottles and cans, to the recycling center at the fire station next door. I look forward to a continuation in this effort, and, as more events take place, more opportunities to reduce the amount we contribute to the landfill.

We are always in need of more volunteers! If you can spare one hour of your time on a Friday afternoon, we will fit you into the schedule. You can be willing to help out regularly, just once or twice, or just for a special event such as the Spring Carnival, or Field Day. Please consider this and contact Kathleen Richine at krichine@hotmail.com if you are interested.

CAMP WRITE-A-LOT

Gayton's fourth graders are going to camp - Camp Write-A-Lot that is. During the month of February, the fourth graders will focus on the many aspects of good writing. They have already packed their bags with all of the necessary supplies: pens, pencils, a good imagination, a dictionary, and a thesaurus. They will take part in many fun camp activities: mess hall math, story telling by the campfire, camp sing-a-longs, and a variety of writing prompts. There is no telling where the adventure will take them. Be sure to check out the fourth grade hall to see what the campers have been up to.



A NOTE FROM MRS. REAMS

Hello Gayton Family,

My name is Melissa Reams, your Math Teacher in Residence for the 2010-2011 school year. My job is to work with teachers on instructional strategies in mathematics. I work with teachers by modeling lessons, co-teaching, providing resources, and providing feedback through observation of classroom lessons. Previously, I have taught both 4th and 1st grades here at Gayton. This is my seventh year teaching for HCPS.

When I model or co-teach a lesson, my main goal is to expose the students to hands on mathematics with discussion being a key part of the lesson. I like to create a student-centered environment, where the kids are coming up with solutions and exploring their reasoning for those solutions. Whether the kids come to the Promethean lab or the lesson takes place in their own classroom, I see most teachers and their classes once a week. Being able to collaborate with our wonderful teachers and getting to know all of our Gayton Gators has been an extremely unique and rewarding experience.

There are many fun activities going on throughout the school to encourage higher-level mathematical thinking. There is a Primary Krypto bulletin board where all students can try to find a solution to the given problem each week. The fourth grade students have been so enthusiastic, with the most participation each week! All students in grade 3-5 have had a lesson on how to play this game. Most importantly the activities, lessons, and extension of the curriculum that is happening in the classrooms, has really gotten the students excited about mathematics. Please feel free to visit my blog at: <http://blogs.henrico.k12.va.us/mtreams/> for web-based activities, mind stretching brain teasers for all grade levels, and updates on all the great things happening at Gayton in the area of mathematics.