



## Mystery Dinner Games

Are you interested in hosting a dinner party for a group of six to eight friends while solving a crime? Then you should consider borrowing one of the PTA's "Mystery Dinner" Games on cassette tapes. These games are available to the 7th and 8th grade students. The four mysteries available are: *A Cajun Killing*, *A Deadly Design*, *Roswell That Ends Well*, and *Barbecue with the Vampire*. Each game comes with invitations to send to party guests who will take on the role of one of the game's characters, menu and costume suggestions, instructions on how to play, and tapes to listen to that walk you through the mystery. The games typically take three to four hours to complete, including the dinner you choose to serve with the game. Students should dress in costume based on the character they are assigned. If you are interested in borrowing a game please call Lisa Read at 399-9825.

## Staff Recognition Luncheon

Spring is now upon us and we are preparing for our annual O'Rourke Middle School Staff Recognition Luncheon. This year it will be held on May 12, 2009 from 10:30-1:30 pm. As always, volunteers are a crucial component to the success of such an event. This year we are looking at a "Garden of Learning" theme. Our goal is to provide a simple yet inviting environment for our teachers and staff to see how thankful we are for them.

We are in need of parents who love to cook or wish to volunteer time or their thoughts and talents on decorations. We will need help with setting up, serving, and cleaning up.

Our desire is to prepare a luncheon from our hearts, with each of us giving a little something of ourselves to show our "O'Rourke Family" how much we appreciate what they have done and continue to do for our children. We are hoping to be able to avoid catering, if at all possible. If you are interested in helping out in any of these ways or if you would like to offer additional suggestions on making this a wonderful day for our staff, please contact Beth McKeone at 399-7024 or email me at kmckeone1@nycap.rr.com. Thank you.

## A Note from Your PTA Presidents

### School budget

In the last few months a great deal of emphasis has been placed on our school's budget. Board of Education meetings have experienced high community turnout as the district forges ahead to resolve significant budget constraints. According to Principal Germain, lobbying efforts have been underway to assist BHBL in increasing the amount of money we get from the State and Federal government. After much consideration, Superintendent Schultz has proposed a plan, which can be viewed on [www.bhbl.org](http://www.bhbl.org).

### Scheduling

Because Labor Day falls so late, on September 7, the Board of Education has also determined that the day before Thanksgiving and the Friday before Memorial Day will not be school holidays. Paula VanBuren (pvanburen@nycap.rr.com), PTA Council President and parent representative on the Board's calendar committee, is involved with helping to determine how to handle the coming year's sixth- and ninth-grade orientations affected by calendar changes in the fall.

### Founder's Day awards

We celebrated the spirit of volunteering on February 5 by acknowledging Founder's Day Award recipients Carolyn Guyer and Suzanne Rayome for their significant contributions to our school community. Congratulations and thanks so much!

### Monopoly

Our Monopoly fundraiser is fast approaching and will take place April 24-25. There are approximately 30 teams for this final year. Thanks to Lynnette Ziskin and Mary Carrier for organizing this 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary event. Many volunteers are needed for such a large event so please contact Lynnette or Mary to help!

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## New Fundraisers

In response to the need for alternative fundraising options, we've come up with RockNBowl and Great Escape tickets. Thanks to MaryBeth Frewin for organizing the RockNBowl on March 27. Music, bake sale, and raffle prizes all included! Barb Becker and Lisa Rao have also done a wonderful job in organizing the Great Escape ticket sale. Forms are attached to this newsletter, are available for download on our website, and can be

obtained at the middle school office. Please take advantage of the savings these tickets provide that will also benefit our middle school PTA!

## Upcoming PTA leadership

The nominating committee is also in the process of determining PTA positions for next year so please consider getting involved. More than ever it's important to stay in touch with what's going on in our school community and PTA is a great way to do that!

—Poppy Picozzi and Penny Manly  
Middle School PTA Co-Presidents

## From the Desk of Don Germain, Middle School Principal

### No boundaries

The issue of *cyberabuse* is a growing concern among teenagers, parents, and educators as rapid improvements in technology compromise the boundaries of control on these devices. The inherent convenience and lack of personality inevitable with the use of sophisticated technology has made even the most milk-toast of children a potential predator in cyberspace. According to a recent series of studies done by the Journal of Adolescent Health, more than 80% of our children own at least one form of media technology which they use for communication, presenting information, and sharing media creations. These devices are also being used more and more to escalate aggressive behavior among our youth, as well having them to begin to cross the lines of moral and ethical behavior, with the perception that there are no consequences. The boundaries we have established for our children may no longer be completely within the realm of our control as they step into the world of personal cyber-relations.

We certainly want students to be responsible for their cyber-conduct, but in order to do so a significant amount of education needs to take place and limits need to be established that clearly outline expectations for those behaviors. Children do not completely understand the consequences of their actions when utilizing technology to socialize. From the vast array of predators, to the violation of the personal rights of others, the window for stepping off the cliff into a serious problem can occur at a moments notice for our children. The Internet has presented a great moral dilemma for our society that embraces our rights to free speech and expression, but contradicts our rights for personal protection and fear from harm. Legislating this vast chasm of information and ideologies is nearly impossible. Therefore, we must take the time to inform our children

about the pitfalls they may face in the cyber-world, as well as helping them understand its many benefits as they navigate their global lives.

If you are interested in learning more about this timely topic, please refer to the following websites:

- ◆ [www.netsmartz.org/netteens.htm](http://www.netsmartz.org/netteens.htm)
- ◆ [www.safeteens.com](http://www.safeteens.com)
- ◆ [www.teenangels.org](http://www.teenangels.org)
- ◆ [www.webwisekids.org](http://www.webwisekids.org)
- ◆ [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org)

### Dress code

Although we have made great strides in the application of our dress code enforcement this year at the middle level, we are always conscious of maintaining a school climate that maximizes learning and minimizes distractions and embarrassing situations. We have taken measures such as holding Town Meetings to review the guidelines, presenting a video to students on "Dressing for Success", and more clearly defining a process for enforcement, to name a few measures. The parents' role in this process is essential in helping students to make choices for their clothing that are not distracting, embarrassing, compromising, or revealing; and enforcing those choices before they leave the home to attend school. Guidelines for our dress code can be reviewed in our student handbook on pages 9-10, or on the middle school website. Your support in helping us to continue to offer a school learning environment that is safe from distraction and that models the values of our community is appreciated.

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### A time to celebrate

Our students continue to perform at high levels of academic achievement, participate actively in extracurricular events, and display a sense of pride in their school. For that, we salute them!

Please check our website for updates on our students' exceptional performance.

### Browsing

Please utilize the district and school websites daily as a source of valuable information and resource material to support your child's education. The site can be accessed at [www.bhbl.org](http://www.bhbl.org).

### Final exam schedule

At O'Rourke Middle School, preparation for State and Final exams has been going on throughout the year. As you prepare for the final quarter of the school year, please keep in mind that middle schools across New

York State are held to rigorous testing schedules. So you may make preparations for those exams, an exam calendar is shown below. Please take some time to discuss this calendar with your children, helping them to organize for the many tests that will take place in the months of May and June. This notification may seem premature, but due to the important nature of these exams, it is only fitting to give families extensive advance notice so they may properly prepare for their administration.

Please understand that the exams indicated on the calendar are mandatory. Students need to be in attendance to complete the required exams on the dates prescribed. Accommodations to make up exams will only be made to those students who have legal, excused reasons not to attend.

Should you have any questions regarding the exam schedule or its parameters, please contact your child's teachers or the main office. Thank you for helping us better serve your children.

#### State Exams – Grade 8 Only

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| April 20-24 | NY State Grade 8 Science Performance Test |
| May 4-8     | NY State Grade 8 Science Written Test     |
| June 1-5    | NY State Grade 8 Social Studies Test      |
| June 8-12   | Grade 8 World Language Oral Exams         |

#### Local Exams – All Grades (administered in a half-day schedule)

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| June 18 | ELA 7-8, Science 6, Living Environment Regents (noon)           |
| June 19 | Social Studies 7-8, Math 6, Integrated Algebra Regents (noon)   |
| June 22 | World Lang. 7-8, NYS Lang. Proficiency 8, Social Studies 6      |
| June 23 | Math 7-8, Literature 6, Algebra Students Social Studies 8       |
| June 24 | Science 7-8, No School 6, Living Environment Students English 8 |

### But Wait, There's More!

Check out the attachments that are included at the end of this newsletter for information on eighth-grade class night, Great Escape tickets, and the schoolwide directory!

Please Join Us!  
**April PTA Meeting**  
 April 6, 7:00 PM  
 in the Library Media Center



## O'Rourke Middle School PTA

### JOIN US FOR THE GREAT ESCAPE & SPLASHWATER KINGDOM FUNDRAISER SPRING SPIN: ONE GOOD TURN TO BENEFIT ANOTHER™

Saturday, May 9 - 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Sunday, May 10 - 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Saturday, May 16 - 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Sunday, May 17 - 10 a.m. - 6 .pm.  
Friday, May 22 - 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Saturday, May 23 - 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 24 - 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
Monday, May 25- 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Thursday, May 28-10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Friday, May 29-10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Saturday, May 30 - 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
Sunday, May 31- 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

We're celebrating the 2009 season opening of The Great Escape & Splashwater Kingdom by giving all nonprofit organizations an opportunity to raise thousands of dollars.

#### Here's how it works:

We have been selected as one of several groups participating in the sale of admission tickets to the fundraiser Spring Spin: One Good Turn To Benefit Another™. **Tickets to Spring Spin are just \$19.99 and you get 12 days to choose from!**

*Each ticket we sell earns \$5 for our organization.  
The more tickets we sell, the more money we raise.*

#### Everyone who attends receives:

- **A full day of unlimited rides, spectacular shows and incredible attractions – there's something for the whole family**
- **A special "C'mon Back!" ticket to revisit the park any day during the 2009 season for just \$13, plus tax**
- **Opportunity to upgrade to a season pass for only an additional \$39.99, plus tax!**

#### ORDER YOUR TICKETS FROM US TODAY!! ORDERING DEADLINE MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>

To order tickets, complete and send in with a check or money order to:

O'Rourke Middle School PTA  
c/o Barb Becker

Student's Name

Parent's Name

Grade/Homeroom

Phone Number

Number of tickets ordered

at \$19.99 each Amount enclosed \$

Please make check payable to: [O'Rourke Middle School PTA](#). Return orders to the box located in the Middle School Main Office. Call [Barb Becker](#) at 399-3775 for more information.

Please allow one week for your tickets to be sent to you Via Back Pack Mail. If you would like them mailed directly to you, please include a self addressed stamped envelope. If you would prefer to order/pick up tickets in person, please call Barb to make arrangements. Thank you!

# **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Night**

## **Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Class Of 2013**

Friday, June 19, 2009 – 6:00PM

*at the*

High School Gymnasium

**Awards and Class Night Ceremony**

*followed by the*

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Dance – “*Above the City Lights*”**

7:00-10:00PM at the Middle School

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Night Committee Needs Your Help**

We need pictures for the montage show which is played during the ceremony for all of us to enjoy. We need group shots of your child and their friends, teammates, classmates or any other group shot you might have of your child during their middle school years. The cut off date for sending pictures is in May 21<sup>st</sup>, so please start looking. You can send actual copies of pictures in to school with your child to give to their homeroom rep, or you can send in a CD, or a zip drive with pictures on it, or you may e-mail them. Please label whatever you send in with your child's name and homeroom number on it so we can return them to you. If you have any questions about this process, you can call Lori Blatnick at 399-3146 or e-mail at [lacblatnick@aol.com](mailto:lacblatnick@aol.com).

We are also in need of food donations for the students to enjoy while they are at their dance. If you would like to help us out with a food item, please call Lynnette Ziskin at 384-3737 or e-mail at [lynnettez@earthlink.net](mailto:lynnettez@earthlink.net) as soon as possible.

We are also looking for people to be on the clean up crew after the dance is over. The more people we get, the quicker we can get done. So if you can help out with clean-up please call Julie Schumacher at 399-4172 or e-mail at [jschu2462@yahoo.com](mailto:jschu2462@yahoo.com).

The next area that we are looking for help is with the decorations. If you would like to help make the decorations please contact either LuAnn Draina at 885-0907 or Patty McCormack at 399-9643. We need people to help out on Thursday June 18<sup>th</sup> and Friday June 19<sup>th</sup> with getting all the decorations displayed. We would like people to sign up for time slots so we can make sure we have enough people throughout the day, On Thursday we are looking for help between 12:00 – 9:00PM. On Friday, our time is shorter; we need help from 12:00 – 4:00PM. You can work for two hours or as many as you like, whatever works for you, and once again whatever time you can help would be appreciated. If you are able to help at any of these times, please contact LuAnn Draina at 885-0907 or email me at [Ludraina@nycap.rr.com](mailto:Ludraina@nycap.rr.com).

We are looking for large cardboard sheets, from any large appliances, if you can help with this please call one of our chair people to make arrangements to be picked up.

If you are interested in helping in any of these areas Food, Decorations, Cleanup, Souvenirs, Stage decor, Programs and Invitations please contact either one of the chair people above or call Luann Draina or Patty McCormack.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING WILL BE APRIL 2, 2009 IN ROOM 104 AT 7PM  
ALL ARE WELCOME!!

# O'Rourke Middle School PTA Directory for 2009-2010

## Work in Progress NOW!

For the convenience of both parents and students, the O'Rourke Middle School PTA sponsors a student directory. One copy is provided, FREE OF CHARGE, to each student and distributed in Homerooms in early October. Student name, address, phone number, and parent/guardian names, address, phone number and email can be listed.

**Signed forms** will be accepted until mid-September.

**If you would like your child included in the directory**, please fill out the form with **ONLY** the information you want to appear in the directory, **SIGN IT**, and drop it off in the Main Office, or mail to Laura Foster, 20 Yolanda Dr., Burnt Hills, NY 12027. This form will also be available on the school website at [bhbl.org](http://bhbl.org)

Any questions or for more information, please contact Laura Foster at 384-1407 or [dlfoster5@verizon.net](mailto:dlfoster5@verizon.net).

### O'Rourke Middle School PTA Directory 2009-2010

\*Provide only the information you want published in the Directory.\*

This is a NEW Entry     This is a CORRECTED Entry

\*\* **PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY AND LEGIBLY** \*\*

**STUDENT Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Grade in September 2009 \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT Address: \_\_\_\_\_ CSZ: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

#### MOTHER/GUARDIAN Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### FATHER/GUARDIAN Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form, you give permission for your child's name and the information provided above to be included in the Middle School PTA directory for his/her years in the middle school, unless you rescind your permission in writing or complete a new form.

By signing you also give permission for the PTA to use your email address to keep you informed of any PTA information, otherwise initial here for NO \_\_\_\_.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_