



The Newsletter  
of the  
J.B. Watkins P.T.A.

Editor: Angela Castillo

# The Coalminer

October 2008

## President's Message

Dear J. B. Watkins Parents,

Welcome back! We have started this school year with a bang. There were over 50 parents present at the first PTA meeting this year and I would love to see that continue. The National PTA has a slogan "Three for Me," which is to encourage each parent to find three hours throughout the school year to volunteer in some capacity. Studies and common sense show that children respond positively to parent involvement in their school. By volunteering at school, we are setting a wonderful example for our children. It takes a lot of effort, time, and certainly caring to make a community work and what a great life lesson to teach.

A huge thank you to all of the parents who have volunteered this year to head a committee. Without you many school activities would not happen. You are commended for your willingness to actively participate in our school. I also thank the hundreds of parents who have already or who will volunteer throughout the school year. You make it happen!

Fondly,  
Stephanie Gonzalez  
PTA President, J.B. Watkins

### Upcoming PTA meetings:

Tuesday, October 14  
Tuesday, November 11  
7 p.m., at J. B. Watkins

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*We hope that you  
enjoy the 2008-2009  
School Year.*



### Your 2008-2009 PTA Board

**President** - Stephanie Gonzalez  
stephgonz@hotmail.com 379-3314

**Vice President** - Kristen Holland  
hollandkma@yahoo.com 794-7256

**Treasurer** - Marian Kuhn  
Mariankuhn@verizon.net 897-4052

**Secretary** - Robin Sheldon  
ct\_sheldon@yahoo.com 794-4305

### PTA Membership

THE PTA WANTS YOU!!!

If you are not already a member, please consider joining the J.B. Watkins PTA. There is no better way to know what is happening at Watkins than to be part of the PTA. PTA functions are opportunities to meet other parents and discuss issues of importance to our school community. Membership is optional, but 100% participation is our goal.

To join the PTA, or for membership questions, please contact

Dawn Fuller, Membership Chairman.  
Fullerwilliam@msn.com

## A Word from the VP:

Welcome back to another great year at J.B. Watkins. I look forward to serving as the PTA Vice President again this year! One of my main duties as Vice President is to plan two special programs for our students. Our first visitor has already come and gone and boy was he exciting! On September 25<sup>th</sup>, each grade level heard Joseph ole tipanko speak in the third grade round. Joseph came to us all the way from Kenya, Africa! He is an educator and a goodwill ambassador for his people. He was wonderfully informative and entertaining. He came dressed in full costume and shared about the Maasai community and its culture. He kept the children so engaged! I hope some of you had the opportunity to hear him speak. He was fantastic! Mrs. Matthews, our wonderful art teacher, coordinated his visit, and of course she and Mr. Lee have incorporated the information he shared with our students into their art lessons in the classroom. In addition, Mr. Rhode and Ms. Jones have shared African musical instruments and songs with our students.

I am in the process of choosing and planning our second guest speaker. One idea we have had is to see if we could find an Olympian to come and speak to our students. Unfortunately, all the information I have found about Olympian speakers has been way out of our budget. So, I thought I would throw the idea out to our parents and see if anyone in our J.B. Watkins community might know a former Olympian that would be willing to come and speak to our students. If you do, please contact me ASAP at 794-7256. Thanks and I hope everyone has had a great start to their school year!

Kristen Holland

### Box Tops



J.B. Watkins is participating in the Box Tops for Education program again this year. Please help our school with this easy way to earn money. Simply cut the Box Top symbol off of the hundreds of participating brands (ex. Cheerios, Betty Crocker, Pillsbury, Ziploc) and send them to school with your child. We will be collecting Box Tops throughout the school year. Thank you for participating.

## Meet your PTA Board: President Stephanie Gonzalez

J.B. Watkins PTA President Stephanie Gonzalez grew up in Chesterfield and attended Matoaca schools. She received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from James Madison University. She has been a practicing Registered Nurse since 1993, and has been working in home health for the past 13 years. She has been married to her husband, Chris, for 12 years and they have two children, Olivia, a 4th grader, and Rebecca, a 1st grader. They have lived here in Midlothian since 1997. In addition to being active with the JB Watkins PTA, Stephanie is active in her neighborhood and is the Vice President of the Michaux Creek Neighborhood Association.

Stephanie prides herself on being frugal, efficient and down to earth. She enjoys snow skiing, swimming, boating, reading, riding her bike, exercising, and of course shopping. With the PTA, Stephanie began volunteering as the McDonald's night chairperson, then served one year as Vice President and is now in her second term of President. She reports that next she would like to do the room mom thing, maybe next year for her daughter's 5th grade year.

## New PTA Website

If you forget the date or time for an event, and it's too late to call someone, you'll probably find your answer on [www.jbwatkinspta.com](http://www.jbwatkinspta.com)! The newly designed PTA Website hosts online versions of the weekly Lantern newsletter, a school calendar, and information about the 30+ events & programs the PTA is planning. The Home page contains an RSS feed of Important Announcements **you can subscribe to** so each time something new is added you'll get it! If you haven't already done it, please sign up to receive the weekly Lantern delivered to your email inbox as soon as it is published.

### Weekly Lantern Email Sign Ups Help Our School GO GREEN

If you are not among the 547 parents and teachers who have already done so, take a moment to visit [www.jbwatkinspta.com/news](http://www.jbwatkinspta.com/news) and sign up to get the Lantern delivered to you via e-mail. Many thanks to the people who have signed up— and you can pat yourselves on the back for helping our school save 19,692 sheets of paper (547x36 weeks of school) and the associated costs of purchasing and printing the Lantern this coming year.

### Webmaster@jbwatkinspta.com Seeks Assistant Webmaster

Hi, I'm Carol Gottschalk and this is my 6th year as webmaster of the PTA website. My youngest is graduating Watkins this year and I'll be moving up to middle school fulltime the end of June. Being Webmaster is a great way to meet lots of other parents, keep current with everything going on at school, and it's something that can be done from any computer, anywhere - on your own time. Being webmaster is an administrative role, and not a technical role anymore. If you can send email, with attachments, download files from the web, and follow a recipe, you have enough technical knowledge to lend a hand as Assistant Webmaster. For more information, please visit my PTA Committee webpage at [www.jbwatkinspta.com/website](http://www.jbwatkinspta.com/website) or email me at [webmaster@jbwatkinspta.com](mailto:webmaster@jbwatkinspta.com).

### McDonald's Night and Chick-Fil-A Night

McDonald's nights and Chick-Fil-A nights are starting soon! Mark your calendars and come on out and support J.B. Watkins. These are both great fundraisers for our school.

McDonald's nights (Village of Midlothian location) 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.:

Thursday, October 9

Thursday November 13

Chick-Fil-A nights (location behind Chesterfield Town Center) 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.:

Tuesday, October 28

Tuesday, November 25

## SAVE THE DATE

**What:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Tea & Shopping Event

**Where:** The Grove Clubhouse

508 Biggin Pond Road

Midlothian VA 23114



**When:** SUNDAY, NOV 2

**Time:** 1 - 4

**Who:** EVERYONE IS INVITED

**Vendors:** ~~Bella Petit~~, Cindy's Scarves, Mary Kay, Natures Creations, R-Ideas Jewelry, Stampin' Up, Carolyn's Whimsical Creations and more...

Drop your name in our teapot for a chance to win the **Grand Prize Basket!**

**Staff Appreciation**

The Staff Appreciation Committee is looking forward to a fun and busy year!! During the first week of school, we already had the opportunity to show our appreciation to our teachers by giving them "Green" Shopping Bags donated entirely by Ukrops!

**Thank you Ukrops for a wonderful gift for our staff members!**

Throughout the year, the committee has several luncheons and breakfasts planned. Each one is hosted by a different grade level. Below is a list of the dates:

Event	Grade	Date
Salad Luncheon	5 <sup>th</sup>	Oct 15
Conference Day Meal	4 <sup>th</sup>	Nov 4
Soup Luncheon	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Jan 14
Potato Bar	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mar 11
Cinco De Mayo Mexican Fiesta	1 <sup>st</sup>	May 5
End of Year Breakfast	K	June 9



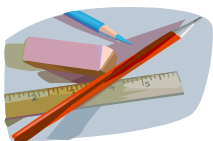
**Room Mothers** - you will be receiving more information about these closer to the date of your grade's event. **Parents** - room mothers will be looking for donations and help to support these events.

In addition to the luncheons, the committee will sponsor other treats and raffles throughout the year. **Businesses/Vendors/Crafters** - if you would like to donate items to support these events - please let us know or send an email to [paris972@msn.com](mailto:paris972@msn.com). It is an easy way to help and promote your business...

The Staff Appreciation Committee consists of Catharine Anderson, Dona LaChance, Laura Povedano and Shelley Neofotistos. We have a great staff here at J.B. Watkins and we appreciate your help in showing them how thankful we are to have them!

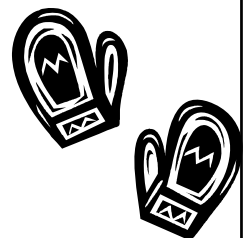
**Watkins Friends**

Thank you to everyone that donated to the school supply drive. Ukrops also donated \$25 worth of supplies. All of the school supplies were delivered to Chalkey Elementary on September 23, and they were grateful for our support and are looking forward to using the supplies.



The next Watkins Friends project will be a mitten tree in December for Reams Elementary. Get ready to bring mittens in to help other children this winter.

Tina Pace



The **Lunch Buddy Program** is off to a great start.

Thank you so much to all of our Watkins parents and family members who have donated their time in helping make the first weeks of lunch go so smoothly! Your smiles and overall presence not only comforts the children, but also gives our teachers the ability and peace of mind to enjoy their lunchtime.

Lunch Buddies help younger children open lunch items, and they respond to all students who ask permission to go to the bathroom, water fountain, or for whatever they need. Over 250 students eat lunch in the cafeteria at a time, and there are two Instructional Assistants there to help them all. A couple of parents in there helping out makes lunch go much more smoothly for the kids. Helping as a Lunch Buddy is a good volunteering opportunity if your schedule is not consistent - you can participate once a week, once a month, once a year; whatever works for you.

Thanks also to those of you on the schedule who have not had the chance to work your shift just yet. If you have not had the chance to sign-up, or you or someone you know would like to join the Lunch Buddies or get some information on the program, you may contact me at [jbwlunchbuddies@yahoo.com](mailto:jbwlunchbuddies@yahoo.com) or at the number listed below.

And a reminder to all of you who are on the schedule to work any lunch shift(s), don't forget to put your name in the Lunch Buddy Basket when you get your visitor's badge. One lucky scheduled volunteer for September will be receiving a prize.

Thanks again for all of your support!

Jennifer Siegel 423-6641



## **Pumpkin Lighting**

The J.B. Watkins Annual Pumpkin Lighting family event will be held on **Friday, October 24th from 5:30 – 8:00**. Children are encouraged to wear a costume (no masks or pretend weapons allowed). The Scholastic Book Fair will be held in the gym, food will be sold in the cafeteria and 35+ pumpkins will be on display on the school front lawn, custom carved by each classroom. Be on the look-out for \$1 dollar 50/50 raffle tickets coming home in your child's backpack that your family can purchase and sell to friends and family. Please turn-in your money and raffle tickets to your child's teacher by

Wednesday, October 22nd. Additional tickets will be sold throughout the night of Pumpkin Lighting. In order for this event to be a success **we need parent volunteers** to monitor the pumpkins, serve food, sell raffle tickets and assist with set-up and clean-up. Middle or high school students in need of volunteer hours are welcome to help. If you are available please contact Sarah Peachee at [speachee@comcast.net](mailto:speachee@comcast.net) or call 378-3747.



## **GREEN TEAM NEWS**

You have probably seen by now the splatters of blue, gold, and GREEN all around the school. You may have also guessed that it represents an exciting year for J.B. Watkins, and our first year of “going green” as a school.

In fact, we are one of three schools in Chesterfield that is working together as a pilot program to show ALL of the County how much a difference we can make in working together to increase awareness and reduce our waste and energy use. We hope that you will participate with us and join the fun!

Some of the plans we have for the year include RECYCLING, joining in on our ADOPT-A-SPOT team, weekly GREEN TIPS in the lantern, and GREEN FRIDAYS!

We hope to incorporate green into many of our school programs and events this year, including the Engineering Fair, Field Day, and even things like the Pumpkin Lighting!

Periodically throughout the year, you will receive information both through letters sent home by your child and through emails. You can also check the websites for additional details.

**GREEN TEAM VOLUNTEERS** – We are looking for volunteers to continue to provide great ideas for the coming year and beyond. If you are excited about going green, and would like to be a member of our “Green Team”, **please contact me, Catharine Anderson**, at 379-3988, or at [cathanddave@verizon.net](mailto:cathanddave@verizon.net)

## **Sally Foster Fundraiser**

It's that time of year! The Sally Foster gift wrap, gifts, and magazine orders have gone home with students. This is the **PTA's major fundraiser** of the year. We are hoping to buy all new white boards for the classrooms. These will eliminate dust throughout the school. We will also use the money to buy a new Computer on Wheels (COW), a portable computer system used by the entire school and fund other requests and programs throughout the school. We are privileged to work with parents and teachers to provide such valuable equipment for our students.

Please remember to return your order forms to your child's classroom by **Thursday, October 9**. Delivery of your orders will begin on **Thursday, November 6**. If you have not received a form or need another one, please contact the office. The highest-selling student will receive a CD/radio/mp3 boom box! Students who sell 10 or more items will be treated by Sally Foster to an ice cream social. And the first 50 orders with 15 items or more will receive a free 2009 Entertainment book!

Thank you again for your incredible participation! And remember if you are not interested in ordering, you're welcome to make a donation to the PTA Ways and Means committee. (Checks are made payable to JB Watkins PTA). Let's make it a record breaking school year!

Liz Allums  
Chairman, PTA Ways and Means Committee  
[lizallums@bajabean.com](mailto:lizallums@bajabean.com)