

PAC News

Deep Cove Elementary School / École Deep Cove



Newsletter Issue - January/February 2010

Message From the Presidents

Happy New Year to everyone! It seems a bit late to be saying that but as this is the first newsletter of the year it seems appropriate!

Once again we had another successful Christmas fair, in spite of all the fears of H1N1, heavy snow falls and the recession, Deep Cove pulled it off once again and judging by all the happy, sticky and excited faces, everyone had great fun too. Many thanks to our coordinating committee of Martine Lunke, Leslie MacLaughlin, Christine Kenwood, Linda Scholten and Chelsea Comber for achieving what seems impossible once more. Thanks also to the many, many volunteers who step forward each year to coordinate venues, man shifts, round up prizes and auction items, bake and do everything that helps make the event a success. Finally, thanks to the staff and administration who support the whole enterprise with such good grace and humour and enthusiastically help us to transform the school into a major party.

The new year has started with a bang, Carnaval is underway with class reps organizing crepes for the classes, the grade 4/5 bottle drive took place last weekend, Heads have been searched for lice!, the French book fair will take place the last week of February and Jump Rope for Heart on the 12th of February.

We are rapidly heading into the PAC AGM in February. This is the time when we review the previous years activities and set out the budget and objectives for the PAC for the upcoming year. With all the cuts to the schools budgets it is becoming increasingly important to consider carefully how the PAC should and can help. Please consider coming to the PAC meetings and getting involved. The more voices that are heard, the more confident we can be that we are representing the opinions of the majority of parents. Bring your ideas and your votes to the meetings - remember that every parent is a member of the PAC. If you would like to be even more involved, then please consider running for one of the PAC executive positions at the election that will be held at the AGM. Being part of the executive is a very rewarding way of being involved in your child's school and participating in a meaningful way in the school community. Please feel free to talk to any of the current executive members to get a feel for what is involved.

We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming AGM

– Karen Gartside & Chris Swain

Upcoming Dates

- Hot Lunch Day - **January 29 & February 26**
- Jump Rope for Heart - **February 12**
- PAC Annual General Meeting - **February 17**
- Non-Instructional Day - **February 19**
- French Book Fair - **February 22-26**
- Public Budget Meeting - **April 21**

Contents

2010 PAC Elections.....	2
Report on 2009 Christmas Fair.....	2
Loonie Twoons for a Laptop.....	2
Christmas Fair Thank You.....	3
Education Funding Cutbacks.....	4
Many Thanks Lori.....	4
Hot Lunch Coordinator.....	4
Lesotho News.....	5
Thrifty's Smile Cards.....	6
Co-op Number.....	6

PAC Executive Positions

Co-Presidents
Treasurer
Secretary
Parent Education Coordinator
Special Events Coordinator
Newsletter Editor
COPACS Representative
CPF Representative

2010 PAC Elections

The Annual General Meeting for our PAC is on February 17th this year, which of course will also include our annual executive elections. If you would like to join the executive and work with school staff and administration in making this such a great school, this is your chance! Some of the executive will be running again, some will be moving on after donating so much of their time. If any of the positions interest you, please feel free to contact anyone on the executive with your questions. We are especially looking for a person to be treasurer, which could mean sharing the job with the current treasurer. A parent education representative and a representative to be our schools link to the Confederation of PACS in Saanich are also needed, and important parts of our school family. Even though Karen Gartside is stepping down as Co president (but remaining on the executive) I will put my name forward as a Co-president again. This time Suzanne Demers (our Newsletter Editor) has said she would work with me in this role, as Co-president, as long as we are voted in again! Hopefully see you at one of the next meetings or at the AGM and hopefully be working with you soon!

– Chris Swain, PAC Co-President

Report on 2009 Christmas Fair

I would just like to extend a big thank you to all the hardworking parents, children, teachers, venue coordinators and the Xmas Fair Committee who made our annual Christmas Fair an incredible success last December. Everyone deserves a big pat on the back for a job well done.

The funds raised at the Fair will go directly back into the classrooms at Deep Cove. This also covers expenses for field trips, bus trips, an assortment of Special Funding Requests and shapes our annual PAC budget.

The final tally for the night was **\$20,667.82**. As well, the earnings for “Help Lesotho” in the Africa Room was **\$2,062.37**. If you would like more information on the financial report, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Many thanks to Ina Smith who helped me with the numbers for this report.

Thanks again to everyone for a terrific job last December. The students and the staff at Deep Cove Elementary will definitely benefit from YOUR generosity.

If anyone has any questions, you can contact me anytime (houley@shaw.ca).

– Tara Houle, PAC Treasurer

Loonie Twoons for a Laptop? Would you help?

Elise Schoenrank, a Deep Cove graduate, currently enrolled in grade 6 at North Saanich Middle School is battling neuroblastoma. Treatment of this type of cancer will require that Elise and her family travel back and forth between home in North Saanich and BC Children's Hospital in Vancouver for the next year or so. Many Deep Cove parents and kids have been visiting and supporting the family and it's been suggested that we raise some funds in order to purchase a laptop computer for Elise. The computer will allow Elise to keep in close contact with her buddies (her Mom, Laurel, reports that calls, emails and visits are real perker uppers for Elise) watch some movies, listen to books on tape, keep up with homework etc., as treatment allows.

How about it? Can you help raise some Loonies and Twoonies for a good friend? Send your spares with your child to school anytime over the next while. We will collect them in jars at the main office!

If you would like contact info for the Schoenrank's or if you have a question, please contact Christine Kenwood at c.kenwood@shaw.ca

Thanks for your help!

– Deep Cove PAC Executive Committee

Christmas Fair Thank You

The Christmas Fair committee is grateful for the amazing support that we received during the run up to the Fair. Our school is filled with **staff, students, and parents** who are full of enthusiasm. Thank you all for making the fair so much fun!!!!

The **venue coordinators and volunteers** are the backbone of the fair and, truthfully, there would be no fair without you (no exaggeration!). Your commitment, sense of humour, and creativity make this annual event spectacular. The school community thanks you for it.

A very special nod of appreciation must go out to the **Parkland Secondary School** Graduation Committee who arranged for 30 grads to volunteer for shifts on the night of the fair. These kids were MARVELLOUS, conscientious, enthusiastic, and they obviously enjoyed being around the kids. They were a pleasure to have around. We thank you SO much for your help! Also participating from our community was

Anne Marie Thompson from the **Sidney Community Music School** who was brave enough to lend and let the children “pet” musical instruments. Thank you for the unique and fun experience!

This year we have some photographs of our Fair. Thank you to photographer and parent **Shealyn Jackson** for documenting our event! A wonderful surprise came from parent **Russ Benwell** who arranged for several platters of delicious food from the **Red Barn Market** to appear JUST when the volunteers were hungriest. Thank you, your timing was PERFECT!

Many other people, of course, need to be thanked. Many people who assisted us and donors to the Silent Auction will be receiving thank you cards. Here is a list of great helpers and donors. Please thank them if you have an opportunity!

Helpers and Donors

Rom & Maryan Van Stolk, Vik Peck, Pharmasave, Cloverdale Paint, Fiorenza Flowers, Marks Work Wearhouse, Bowlin Photo, Tivoli , Suzanne’s, Bliss Boutique, Sabhai Thai, Bold Moves Fitness, Serious Coffee, Movie Gallery, Deep Cove Market, Home Hardware, Quality Brake and Muffler, Capital Iron, Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre, Haven Spa, Sidney Natural Foods, Christine Laurent Jewellers, Rumrunner Pub, Pat Bay Air, Hagen’s Computers, Time Enough For Books, Lilaberry, Audiotronic, Erik Adlersparre, Maria’s Souvlaki, Muffet and Louisa, Fairway Market, Genesis Hair and Esthetics, Sweet Talk and Lace, Sidney Tire, House Dressing Company, Wine Kitz, Salon J Hair Studios, Charles Dickens Pub, Stonehouse Pub, Piano Bar, 1st Team Consulting, Exist Hairworx, Royal Bank, Janet’s Special Teas, 7-11 Food Stores, Peninsula Gallery, Tab Imports, Fish Studio, Shoppers Drug Mart, West Coast Wood Designs, Peninsula Vacuum, West Marine, The Source, Bubba Loo, Buddies’ Toys, Kiddin’ Around, Sidney Pet Centre, Robinson’s Outdoors, Classic Drycleaners, Cowichan Golf and Country, Thrifty Foods, Sweet Dreams Boutique, 3rd Street Café, Brentwood Bay Massage and Physiotherapy, Muse Winery, Peninsula Co Op, Watkin’s Pamper Yourself, Watkin’s Clean Up, Watkin’s Spices, Bell Buoy Barbers, Bosley’s Pet Centre, Video Express, One Stop Furniture Stop, Birdtail Valley Woodworking, Saltspring Lavender, Viking Air, Bell Helicopters, Inner Vision Design, Dairy Queen, Video Vault, West Coast Baby Quilt, Sidney Art School, D. J. Bremner & Co, Cedar Hill Golf , Dogs Breath Antiques, Deep Cove Garage, Red Brick Café, Sidney Cleaners, Jazzaniah Café, Out Fit, Meadow Oak Nursery, Kielzack Jewellers, Custom Yacht Sales, Waypoint Marine, McCoy Fitness and Health, Eyeland Optical, In Vogue Nails, Panorama Recreation, Browns Florist, Russell Nursery, Riverbank Design, Pampered Chef, Canadian Parents for French, Can Lit, Tanners Books, Jerry Wakefield Construction, Dragon Horse, Paperdoll Mineral Cosmetics, Red Barn Market, Victoria Salmon Kings, Deep Cove Chalet, Sidney Salmon Charters, Vancouver Island Helicopter, Sidney Community Music School

Education Funding Cutbacks: Time to Get Ready For the Next Round

Did you know? In 2009/2010, School District 63 implemented \$3.6 million in budget cuts, resulting in the most significant teacher reduction in Saanich history. As a result:

- the number of classes over 30 students increased from 54 in 2008/09 to 82 in 2009/10
- the number of classes with more than 3 designated (special needs) students rose from 142 in 2008/09 to 189 in 2009/10.

But it is not over yet, oh no! The next round of cuts is appearing on the horizon. The first draft of the School District's Operating Budget indicates a **shortfall of \$2.7 million for 2010/2011**, or in other words, the budget will have to be cut by another 3.85%. According to documents posted on SD63's website, "Government Funding projections outline that increases to funding for 2010/11 will only cover full day kindergarten enrolment in 50 percent of schools/districts with no increase in funding to cover the teacher July 1, 2010 labour settlement, medical service plan increase, HST implementation, teacher pension contribution increase, and carbon offset costs". In other words, the school district is expected to cover much greater costs with far less money. More cuts in teacher positions and programs seem unavoidable. The question is: what are we going to cut this time? Expect some School Communities and Public Meetings in March and April of 2010, and in the meantime, let's remind our politicians that

a good public education is vital to the health of British Columbia.

Another interesting piece of news last week was the ruling by arbitrator James Dorsey that said that school districts have to compensate 10 teachers (2 from SD63) who had to teach classes with more than 30 students, or with more than 3 designated special needs students, by giving them extra days off or extra pay. The ruling also states that the government should fully finance the additional costs incurred by the school districts to comply with the legislation on class size and composition, which was introduced in 2006 as Bill 33. "If there isn't enough money to meet Bill 33 standards, the government should retract them and "explain to parents and teachers why the standards are no longer desirable or achievable," the ruling states. Concerned about the financial impact that this decision might have on our school district, I asked Joan Axford, secretary-treasurer for SD63, for some clarifications. Here is her reply: "The cost for the 2 teachers is about \$1,000 if they take the release time awarded. It is clear in the ruling that it does not establish a ruling on other classes but does provide some guidance on what is reasonable.

The school district normally offers release time and did in the case of these two classes. We have a small budget for class size consultations. At this point we do not intend to increase that budget based on this ruling". In other words, this ruling is not expected to put too much financial pressure on our school district for the time being.

Many Thanks Lori

You may have heard that Lori Lafave, from the front office, will be leaving Deep Cove to start a new position at Lochside Elementary. This new job will give Lori the opportunity to walk to work and spend more time with her family.

The PAC would like to say a huge thank-you to Lori for all of her help over the years. We wish her all the best for the future. Please take a moment to stop by the office and wish her well. Her last day will be Friday, February 5th. Lori, you will be missed.

Hot Lunch Coordinator

The school is also looking for someone to assist with the Hot Lunch program at the school this year, learn the ropes and take over as coordinator of the project in the fall. Michelle Bohnet is leaving us at the end of the year after much hard work.

So if you think this is an area that you can help, please talk to a member of the PAC executive or administration!

Lesotho News

I would like to say a big THANK YOU to all the children, parents and teachers who have decided to help the children at our twin school in Lesotho this Christmas. Together, we raised just over \$2,000 in the African room at the Christmas Fair. In addition, our Shoe Campaign has also brought in \$2,070 at last count, and some money is still trickling in. That means that 83 children will have a decent pair of shoes in time for the next winter. If we add the 100 pairs that were bought last summer after the “Taste of Lesotho” evening, we have now put shoes on the feet of 183 children. That is something that we can all be proud of, but we have to keep in mind that once all the children have lined up patiently and been given their new pair of shoes, there will be more children who will still need shoes and will not get any. The level of need in the school is still so great and despite the beautiful new school buildings, many children are still living in grinding poverty. So we will keep on doing what we are doing, and keep on helping them whichever way we can. The shoe campaign will be ongoing and so will our other fundraising and awareness raising activities.

For the community at Motati School, being twinned with Deep Cove has not only given them material goods that they so much need, but it has also given them lots of hope, and with hope and friends ready to help you, things can change for the better. Stephen Kendall (director of programs for Help Lesotho) and Naida Hyde (our guest speaker for the last Taste of Lesotho) have both visited Motati School recently, and they both said that the teachers are so grateful for the help, that they constantly talk about us, and that there are Deep Cove School reminders everywhere.

The money we have raised at the Christmas Fair is likely going to be used to replace the water system at the school. Last fall, someone came in the night and stole the handle for the water pump in front of the cook house – the only source of water on the property. About a week later they came and took the entire pipe mechanism, leaving only a hole into the open well. It was probably sold for scrap metal. The parents had to make a cement cap to close the well for the safety of the children. The children now have

to lug water in buckets from the nearest village – about 200 metres uphill - for drinking and cooking, and from the river – about 200 metres downhill – for irrigating the garden. There are two options: move the old 500 litre water tank from next to the fallen-down classrooms down to the new buildings and add gutters to the buildings to collect the rainwater, or install a new pump mechanism in the well and build a lockable hut over it to try to prevent another theft.

When he was at Motati School, Stephen Kendall also interviewed several children who have just graduated from Motati School with good grades and who would like to continue with their studies into High School. Unfortunately, although elementary school is free, secondary school is not and none of these children will be able to get a higher education unless Help Lesotho can find sponsors for them. I thought that this might be a nice way for some families to deepen their involvement with Motati School, or that there might be some families here who would like to continue being involved with the Motati School project even after their own children have graduated from Deep Cove. This is why I am putting a short profile on each of these children in this newsletter, hoping that there are 3 special caring families at Deep Cove who are able and willing to make a several-year commitment to sponsor a special child in Lesotho and give them the gift of a brighter future. If you are interested, please contact Stephen Kendall directly at directorprograms@helplesotho.ca (and please do let the rest of us know about the good news!). Sponsoring a child through Help Lesotho costs \$38.75 per month.

The children are:

Profile: Nthati Motjane

Nthati is a fourteen year-old girl who just finished Standard 7 at Motati Primary and would like to go to high school, but has no money to do so. She was among the top two or three children in the class. She likes Math and keeps busy with athletics and traditional dancing and music. Her family is

Lesotho News (continued)

headed by a grandmother who is not working. Nthati's mother left her children after the father's death in search of a job in South Africa but ended up not working and rarely comes home. The family does not own any fields or cows from which to gain sustenance. Nthati does not know the cause of the father's death but indicated he was sick for a long time and was no longer working when he died. Her uncle supports his children that also live with Nthati, but cannot afford to support her in school as well. She is a good, strong student who studies hard.

Profile: Pontso 'Makobeli

Pontso is a fifteen year-old girl who just finished Standard 7 at Motati Primary and would like to go to high school. She was first in the class in the term before last. She is one of two children; her younger sister is only 1 ½. The family is in desperate shape with no income and no word from the father, who went to South Africa to work, but never sends any money. The mother works as an aid worker in the

village, but is not paid. Any food they get is provided by relatives. Pontso is a very good student who consistently led her class at Motati Primary and wants to be a nurse when she grows up. She is a shy, sweet girl who really wants to go to school, but cannot afford to do so without help.

Profile: Nteboheleng Matata

Nteboheleng just turned thirteen and graduated from Motati Primary school in December 2009 with first class honours. Her situation at home is very needy, with neither parent working and only a small field and a few chickens to sustain the family of five. She is the oldest of three children; having a brother of 9 and a sister of 5. Nteboheleng is a solid student – in the top part of her class, and she wants to contribute to society. Her dream is to become a nurse. She likes English, but has more difficulty with Social Studies. She is active in sports and in her church. Without financial support, she will not be able to stay in school.

Thrifty's Smile Cards

As always, we have our Thrifty Smile Card Program in operation again this year. The total raised so far is \$832.20, with a goal of reaching \$3000 by the end of May.

The dollars raised through this program go directly towards field trips and bus trips for our students. Last year our students were able to enjoy the following outings:

- Maritime Museum (Explorers Program)
- Butterfly Gardens,
- Beaver Lake
- Swan Lake Nature Reserve
- Amherst Beach
- Salmon Program at Goldstream Park
- Sidney Spit
- Pat Bay Squadron/Sea Kings
- Centre of the Universe
- Beacon Hill Park & Petting Zoo
- Panorama Recreation Centre (Skating Program)
- Saanich Commonwealth Centre (Swimming Program)
- Climbing Wall, Stelly's High School
- Bowling
- Buses for the Robotics Workshop at Uvic

If you would like more information on this fundraiser, please contact Janice Mosher at (email) iam_jcmosher@yahoo.com

Don't forget to use the Deep Cove Co-op Number

We have another fundraiser at Deep Cove School that some people may not even be aware of. It's as easy as filling up your tank with gas, or going grocery shopping. Our other fundraiser is through Peninsula Co-op. We receive the funding in the form of a cheque, as well as 2 vouchers, which can be used for any purchases at their gas station or their grocery stores

Last year we used the fundraising money to help pay for Dansko Studios to come and teach a dance workshop to our students.

We just received our cheque for 2009-2010 in the amount of \$624.04, plus 2 vouchers totalling \$100.00. These vouchers are used for an assortment of school activities including Staff Appreciation Day, Track & Field Day, Guest Speakers and Earth Day.

Our Co-op Member Number is **18125**, so be sure to use it next time you fill up with gas at your local Co-op!