

OCELOT OBSERVER

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January Birthdays

Aaron Stark
Dawn Devillier
Jennifer Jackson
Robin Gilbert
Abigail Vega

Aldridge PTA
*Parents and Teachers
Working Together for the
Children of Aldridge*



A Word from our Principal ...

Welcome back and Happy 2010 to all our Aldridge families!

We have much to be thankful for as our new year begins. Aldridge has a dedicated staff, terrific students and an incredible amount of support from our PTA/parent community. The holidays are behind us, but I want to acknowledge and thank the many parents who were involved in making our parties and December Ocelot Assembly so much fun for the students. The Dad’s Den truly “rocked the house” and the parties organized by the room moms made it a memorable day! It is amazing to know how many parents were here on campus; thank you!

Getting back into the school routine after a break can be challenging. Consider organizing clothing, coats, backpacks, etc. the night before and maintaining a consistent time for going to bed and getting up. Please be reminded that our front doors open, with staff on duty, starting at 7:00 each morning. A hot breakfast is available in the cafeteria at 7:15, and can be a good way to help children get to class on time. Students arriving after 7:45 are tardy, and must get a tardy slip before going to class. Thank you for working with your children to establish good attendance habits.

The New Year brings opportunities for all of us. I look forward to partnering with you for a great 2010 for all Aldridge students.

Mrs. Carruthers

From our PTA President

I hope that you had a great holiday season that included a restful winter break. If your family is like mine, the break flew by too fast, and everyone is scrambling to finish up Science Fair projects. Take note! They’re due on January 12.

Speaking of Science Fair ... We wrap up the January event with a fun-filled, family-friendly, educational program: our annual Science Night. On January 14 at 6:30 p.m., we’ll show off the fantastic Science Fair entries and announce grade-level winners. Students and parents will be entertained – and educated – by SciTech Adventures, the wonderful organization that will providing our after-school science program. Kids, both young and old, will be shown a brief demonstration on making ice cream with Nanotechnology, and they’ll get to do hands-on fun stations. Please plan on joining us for Science Night. It’s one of our most popular PTA events!

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2009 – 10 PTA Board

President	Tammie DeVoe
1 st VP – Programs	Karrie Ronk
2 nd VP – Ways & Means	Sheila Gabel
3 rd VP – Hospitality	Alicia Rinaldi
4 th VP – Volunteers	Karen Fleming
Secretary	Amy Gokey
Treasurer	Dawn Hunck
Parliamentarian	Pam Hainlin
Historian	Carla Getz

Committees

Arts in Education	Diane Valdez
Communications/ Newsletter	Kelli Peters
Council Delegate	Marjorie Campbell
Council Delegate	DeLisa Menton
Cultural Diversity/ ELMS	Beth Smith
Dad's Den	Tim Manders
Directory	Rebecca Ballard
Environmental	Kelly Barton
Legislative	Eve LaMendola
Membership	Kristina Rodriguez
Newcomers	Carol Doyle
Parent Education	Judith Reiter
SAGE	Angela Gibbons
School Supplies	Missy Peelman
Spiritwear	Catherine Jones
Yearbook	Brandy Diamond
Youth Safety	Shawnee Pittman

PTA Representatives / Co-Chairs

Principal	Marilyn Carruthers
Staff Representative	Sue Melton
Marquee	Susan Lindholm
Hospitality Asst.	Ashlynn Bourque
Ways & Means Asst.	Becky Hodnett
Webmaster	Mark Smith

Visit us online at:
www.aldridgepta.org

Aldridge Ocelot Observer PTA Newsletter

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To submit content, contact:
Kelli Peters 972.814.9255
kelli.peters@hotmail.com

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This year, I've made a New Year's resolution to become even more active in my two boys' education and continue to be an active school leader. Studies show a strong link between parent involvement in their children's school and student academic achievement. I hope that you'll make this a priority on your resolution list, too.

It's an exciting New Year, and I am looking forward to the great things to come at Aldridge. I hope to see you next week at our PTA Science Night!

Warmest regards,

Tammie DeVoe

Volunteer of the Month

Congratulations **Rebecca Ballard**, our January Volunteer of the Month. Rebecca spent a lot of time over the several months putting together the PTA School Directory distributed in December. In addition to entering, checking, verifying and formatting all the data involved with the directories, she also has been the Room Mom for Mrs. Beard's 2nd grade class.

In 2010, Rebecca and her husband Josh will celebrate their 15th year of marriage. The couple has three boys, a 2nd grader, a 1st grader, and a son who turns three in March. And so Rebecca has a female companion in the house, they have a dog named Lily.

After growing up in Illinois, Rebecca and Josh have lived in every time zone in the continental U.S, including: Boston, San Francisco, and Boulder, Colorado. A great job convinced them to move to Dallas in 2008. They couldn't be happier living in Canyon Creek, since they have met so many great people.

Rebecca recently completed her Master's Degree in Education, concentrating in Policy and Practice, and she will be looking for a job this year that builds on her experience in higher education, volunteerism, and her newly minted graduate degree. Rebecca really enjoys volunteering at Aldridge and will continue to do so, not only because it is personally fulfilling, but also because she thinks it sets a good example for her kids.

Rebecca, thank you for helping Aldridge families stay connected with the new school directory!



New Feeder School Alignment Plan

In September 2009, the school board set forth an inclusive process to address the need for a revised feeder school alignment due to the opening of Otto Middle School in 2010 and McMillen High School in 2011. Under the approved plan, the new Otto Middle School will include students from Mendenhall, Schell and Stinson Elementary Schools. The new McMillen High School will include students from Armstrong and Murphy Middle Schools.

In the central cluster, Clark High School will become a Plano Senior High School feeder campus. Jasper High School will become a Plano West Senior High school feeder campus, with Schimelpfenig Middle School becoming a choice feeder whose students will declare in eighth grade their attendance of either Jasper High School, feeding to Plano West Senior High, or Clark High School, feeding to Plano Senior High. Transfers are allowable in accordance with district policy, but students should be aware of UIL eligibility rules related to transfers. Visit www.pisd.edu for additional details.

Wilson Transfers

If your child attends Aldridge on a school transfer and you wish for your child to attend 6th grade at Wilson Middle School for the 2009-2010 school year, you must obtain a new transfer to Wilson. Sixth-grade openings are limited, and transfers are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Beginning January 4, 2010, transfer applications will be accepted at the Plano ISD Administration Center, 2700 West 15th Street, Plano TX 75075. The Student Services Department hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The deadline for submitting applications is June 15, 2010. No transfer requests will be accepted after June 15.

A \$50 transfer application fee is required at the time the request is filed. The fee may be waived for students who provide a copy of the letter confirming qualification for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program. More information and forms are available at <http://www.pisd.edu/parents/transfers/index.shtml> or you may obtain more information by calling the office of Student and Family Services at (469)752-8124 or (469)752-8021.

Fundraiser Donation Receipts

If you made a donation to the *All Dressed Up and Ready to Go!* 2009-10 Check Writing Campaign and did not receive an e-mailed receipt, please get in touch with **Sheila Gabel** at wrgabel@sbcglobal.net or **Becky Hodnett** at hhodnett1@msn.com. Please note that items purchased in the Silent Auction are not considered school donations. You may claim these items as tax deductions if you subtract the item's value from the amount that you paid for the individual item.

PACE Referrals

PACE provides services for academically gifted and/or talented students in grades K-12 who have demonstrated the need for advanced, differentiated instruction. The Plano I.S.D. conducts open, rolling referral, meaning that any student may be referred at any time during the school year; however, elementary students are assessed in the second semester. Students may be referred for the gifted program by teachers, parents, principals, counselors, or by the students themselves. Students are assessed at their home campus during the school day.

Grades 1-5 will be assessed in March and April. Referral deadline is **February 19, 2010**. Contact **Nancy Harrison**, Aldridge's Gifted Specialist to obtain a referral packet. Completed referral packets should be returned to Ms. Harrison by the above deadlines.

District Technology Survey

Plano ISD has been participating in *Speak Up*, an online national research project facilitated by Project Tomorrow. Parents, teachers and students were encouraged to provide input about key topics of importance to K-12 educators and policy makers. Survey question topics included: learning and teaching with technology, 21st century skills, science and math instruction, career exploration, emerging technologies (such as Web 2.0, mobile devices, online learning and digital content), professional development, school-to-home communications, and investment recommendations for 21st century schools. As a participant in *Speak Up*, our district will receive aggregated results with national comparisons. PISD will be using our data to help prepare a new three-year technology plan.

Important Upcoming Dates

Science Fair Projects Due	Jan. 12	7:30 a.m.
Science After-School Program Begins (Advanced Registration Required)	Jan. 14	3-4 p.m.
PTA General Meeting & Science Night	Jan. 14	6:30 p.m.
Science Fair Posters Go Home	Jan. 15	
MLK Holiday (No School)	Jan. 18	



A Few Green New Year's Resolutions from Aldridge Kids Saving the Earth

Happy New Year! It's hard to believe that it's 2010 already. With the beginning of a new year, now is the time to come up with a list of New Year's resolutions. Along with trying to lose a few pounds, organizing the closets, and being on time, please consider adding an Eco-Friendly Resolution to your resolutions' list.

Were you aware there are 19 billion catalogs mailed to American consumers every year? These catalogs require more than 53 million trees and 56 billion gallons of water to produce. So, why not begin reducing the number of all that paper being inserted into your mailbox? Follow the instructions at www.catalogchoice.org, and within 10 weeks your mailbox should be clear of unwanted catalogs. Or, simply visit the websites of the catalogs you receive and request them to stop sending them.

That's just one green idea for a New Year's Resolution. Here are a few more to consider:

- Paper or Plastic? Neither – I have my own bags! Finally begin using those re-usable bags for your grocery shopping. And if you happen to forget your reusable bag (as we all do!), choose either paper or plastic and plan to reuse or recycle the bags.
- Stop buying bottled water. Did you know that it takes 26 bottles of water to produce the plastic container for a one-liter bottle of water, and that doing so pollutes 25 liters of groundwater? Try re-usable bottles instead.
- Switch to recycled toilet paper – it could change the world. If every household in the United States bought just one four-pack recycled toilet paper instead of typical toilet paper, it would eliminate 60,600 pounds of chlorine pollution, preserve 356 million gallons of fresh water and save nearly 1 million trees. And, it costs about the same as a four-pack of conventional toilet paper.

These are just a few ideas. Discover more Green ideas by visiting the website dailygreen.com. Let this be the beginning of a Greeniful year!

Student Council Update: A Note from the Student Council President

The Aldridge Student Council is made up of 5th graders who meet each month to talk about things that could benefit our school. Our faculty sponsor is Mrs. Nhem.

In December, the student council organized a canned food drive to support the Plano Food Santas. We had a great response! Aldridge students collected over 1,100 cans. Thanks to all students and families who donated canned food to this fund-raising event. And thanks to the 5th graders who helped count and organize the food each day.

The student council is looking forward to upcoming activities planned for the rest of the year. Look for them in the future.

Future Student Newsletter Correspondents

This is our second time to add news from special student correspondents. Newsletter articles written by students are encouraged but should be limited to Aldridge-related activities. Unfortunately, we don't have the space to feature sports-team achievements, scouting activities, etc. If you have a suggestion for an upcoming newsletter feature, contact **Kelli Peters** at kelli.peters@hotmail.com.

From the Library ...

Aldridge students love to read! Most don't need an incentive program to encourage them, but it is still fun to participate and reap the rewards. Your student will be bringing home information about the *Six Flags Read to Succeed Six Hour Reading Club*. Students can earn a free ticket to Six Flags just by logging six hours (360 minutes) of leisure reading time. This is great way to help students to see just how much they do read. It is also a great way to teach personal integrity as they honestly record their reading time. Homework reading does not count towards this goal, not even the 20 minutes of reading per night that some classes assign.

Have some fun and add a little extra to the program by setting a family reading goal! Student logs are due back to teachers no later than Tuesday February 23. Happy reading!