

OCELOT OBSERVER

Volume XVIII, Issue 1, September 2009, a Monthly Publication of the Aldridge Elementary PTA

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Happy August & September Birthdays!

Kathy Manning
Marie Andrews
Lucy Salinas
Monique Ross
Jaime Tonche
Lani Adams
Karen Christensen
Kim Skipper
Pam Pham
Crystal Moncrief
Frank Hubbard
Sue Melton

Aldridge PTA

Parents and Teachers
Working Together for the
Children of Aldridge



ENTER .. LEARN. LEAVE .. SUCCEED.

A Word from our Principal ...

Welcome to the 2009-2010 School Year! We are so excited to start this year in our completely renovated and newly landscaped campus. There is energy and enthusiasm on the part of staff and students as we begin. From Sneak-A-Peek to the First Day, through the Parent Meetings, it has been a great start!

With the “new” building, there is a need to evaluate and rethink our campus arrival and dismissal procedures. Student safety is always our top priority. At Parent Orientation meetings during the first week, teachers and staff reviewed the new procedures, and you will find the procedures are posted on our website and the Aldridge *myPISD* page. If you missed your grade-level meeting, please contact your child’s homeroom teacher to get copies of informational handouts.

Student achievement is maximized when parents and teachers work together. We want you to be involved and stay involved with your child’s education at Aldridge. Each teacher can be contacted through e-mail or by phone. You’ll find helpful school-specific information on:

- Grade-level *myPISD* pages
- The Aldridge website: <http://k-12.pisd.edu/schools/aldridge>
- The Aldridge PTA website: <http://aldridgepta.org/>

The Plano ISD website is an excellent resource with links to *myPISD/Parent Portal*, *PayPAMS*, and the volunteer application. Bookmark and save this link in your favorite sites: <http://www.pisd.edu/>.

Joining PTA makes a positive statement about parents and teachers working together to educate children. Our PTA provides programs and opportunities for students, parents and families. If you have not yet joined PTA, please take a minute and join.

I look forward to a positive and productive year!

Mrs. Carruthers

From our PTA President

On behalf of our PTA, I would like to extend a huge welcome to all the new and returning families at Aldridge! I hope you feel the same excitement that I do with the onset of a new school year, especially as we begin the year in our beautiful “dressed up” new school.

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is an organization that is committed to providing our children with a positive elementary experience—and one with whom I am proud to be affiliated. Thanks to our generous and devoted members, we are able to provide many “extras” for our teachers, children and families, such as curriculum enhancements, parent education programs and family fun nights at the school. I consider my children lucky to attend Aldridge where the faculty and staff are truly second-to-none!

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2008 – 09 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
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Treasurer	Dawn Hunck
Parliamentarian	Pam Hainlin
Historian	Carla Getz

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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 at:
www.aldridgepta.org

Aldridge Ocelot Observer PTA Newsletter

Next Issue: Oct. 1, 2009
Submission Deadline: Sept. 18, 2009
To submit content, contact:
Kelli Peters 972.814.9255
kelli.peters@hotmail.com

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You'll see a common theme as you read this newsletter. Aldridge is a special place because of our PTA members—and that could be YOU! If you haven't already, please consider joining our PTA. Your generous financial donations and volunteer hours help ensure our continuous school support and dedicated commitment to every child at Aldridge!

Regards,

Tammie DeVoe

PTA Membership

Have you ever wondered how PTA funds are used? Here's a list of just a few of the "extras" provided each year by our PTA through membership dues and donations:

- Art supplies
- Student planners
- Monthly newsletters
- School directories for PTA members
- School environmental program, *Kids Saving the Earth*
- Curriculum enhancements
- Art Night, Science Night and other family programs
- Classroom parties
- Field Day T-shirts
- School support not provided by the district, such as playground equipment and field trips

PTA membership forms were included in take-home packets. If you haven't yet joined the PTA, please consider doing so. Aldridge PTA members receive a school directory (something many schools charge money for), and your PTA membership card allows you to receive additional benefits and discounts that can be viewed online at: <http://www.txpta.org/intranet/members/benefits-and-discounts>. Plus, your support helps us continue to provide the "extras" listed above. For additional information, feel free to contact **Kristina Rodriguez**, PTA membership chairperson, at krdriguez@tx.rr.com.

Welcome to the Aldridge Community!

Newcomers Breakfast

Tuesday, September 22

8:30 a.m.

Aldridge Cafeteria

This event is a great opportunity for new parents to meet other newcomers to Aldridge. Veteran parents will be available to your answer questions about the school. Mark your calendars and plan on joining us!



Volunteers Make All the Difference!

As the new school year begins, make the commitment to get involved with your child's education. If you haven't already turned in your Volunteer Opportunity Form, it's not too late. Moms, dads, grandparents and neighbors are all welcome to fulfill volunteer needs at Aldridge. Whether you can give an hour a day, one a week or even one evening a year, all family contributions to the school are valued and enhance our school.

To ensure our children's safety, all volunteers **must complete** the online application—you'll need to renew your application even if you were a volunteer last year. This can be done by going to the PISD website at www.pisd.edu/volunteer. If you want to help out but you're not sure how to get started or where you might be able to lend a hand, please contact **Karen Fleming**, PTA volunteer coordinator, at karenfleming@att.net.

The valued support of our volunteers is one of the reasons why our school is such a special place. Make a difference—and make good friends, too—through volunteering at Aldridge.



Annual Fund Raiser and Family Fall Festival

This year we are combining our annual Check Writing Campaign fund raiser with a Family Fall Festival Finale! The Check Writing Campaign will run October 15 – November 7.

On Saturday, November 7, we'll celebrate our fund-raising activity with a Family Fall Festival at the school from 2-5 p.m. Join us for kid-friendly games, ice cream treats, popcorn and a silent auction in the gym. The festival is free to all Aldridge families, but please keep in mind that this will be the PTA's major fund raiser. We would appreciate a donation—the amount is totally up to you. Your financial support ensures that we can continue hosting future family events.

Save the date and plan on attending this fun-filled event!

Important Upcoming Dates

Labor Day Holiday (No School)	Monday, Sept. 7	
Volunteer Orientation	Thursday, Sept. 17	8:30 a.m.
Family Math Night & PTA General Meeting	Thursday, Sept. 17	6:30 p.m.
Newcomers Breakfast	Tuesday, Sept. 22	8:30 a.m.
5 th Grade Adventure Camp	Sept. 23-25	
Early Release	Wednesday, Sept. 23	Noon
ELMS Meet-And-Greet (Adults only)	Wednesday, Sept. 30	2 – 2:40 p.m.

A Note from the Counselor

Welcome back to Aldridge! For those who are new to our school, I would like to extend a special welcome. I'm **Dawn Devillier**, and I will be your child's counselor again this year. If there is anything you need, please call me at 469-752-0015. I look forward to working with you. It's going to be a great year!

Aldridge Directory

Trying to set up a play date with your child's new BFF? It is much easier when you have a school directory at your fingertips. Aldridge PTA members receive a school directory as part of their membership. The new directory will be available in October, so be sure you get yours! Join the PTA and submit your contact information by September 18 to ensure it is part of this year's edition. For directory information contact: **Rebecca Ballard** at rebecca.m.ballard@gmail.com.

Privacy Consent Forms Needed

Privacy consent forms were included in the PISD Parent Handbook and should have been returned to school along with other forms from the take-home packet. In order to release your child's information for the school directory, yearbook and other communications (including this newsletter), you must complete the form and return it to the school.

2009-2010 Spiritwear

Have you seen the new spirit-wear styles this year? They're fantastic! You can choose from camo T-shirts for boys and girls, ocelot print crew neck tees and great gray or red zip-up hoodies for the fall. Order forms were included in take-home packets. For answers to your spirit-wear questions, please contact **Catherine Jones**: catherinejones2@tx.rr.com or **Donna Frohock**: donnafrohock@yahoo.com.

Silent Auction Donations Needed

If you have something you'd like to donate to the upcoming Fall Family Festival silent auction, please contact **Colleen Manders** at colleen.manders@att.net.



Gussied Up Green

Wow, look at Aldridge! It was transformed over the summer from brown to green. *Aldridge Kids for Saving the Earth*, our school’s environmental program, will continue the transformation with more “green” lessons, activities and events throughout the year.

The first big, green event of the year will be *International Walk to School Day* on Wednesday, October 7. We’ll also be holding our Texas Recycles Day Sale in November, and we’ll celebrate Earth Week in April. Plus, KSE will be hosting environmental education within the classrooms throughout the year. Don’t hesitate to do your green part all year long. Try some of these greenderful ideas:

Walk, Bike, or Carpool. No need to wait for International Walk to School Day—why not organize a walking school bus, hop on your bike, or catch a ride to school with friends when ever possible.

Bring a No-Garbage Lunch. Carry a lunchbox that can be re-used. Instead of buying snacks in small bags, buy a large bag, and put a small amount in a re-usable container. Better yet, bring snacks such as bananas, oranges, or apples that have their own natural wrappers. Put you sandwich in a re-usable container (if you cut a sandwich into four pieces, it will fit into most containers). Put your drinks in a thermos or a re-usable bottle.

No Idling. Ask you parents to turn off the car in the carpool lane whenever the Texas heat allows it. The general rule is to turn the car off if idling more than 30 seconds. This same rule applies to buses. Cars and buses give off a lot of the global-warming pollution.

Recycle and Buy Recycled. Remember to recycle paper, cardboard and plastic bottles in your classroom, in the cafeteria and at home. Also, whenever possible, buy school items that are made from recycled materials.

These little hints should get all of us started!

Gear up for another greentastic year at Aldridge and with Kids for Saving the Earth!

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Reflections Contest Coming Soon

Reflections is a National PTA sponsored arts recognition program that encourages artistic expression. The Reflections theme for 2009 – 2010 is “Beauty Is...”. Use your imagination to create a film, song, artwork, photograph, poem, short story or dance routine. You may enter as many times as you like in as many categories as you like, but be sure to **reflect the theme in your work**.

Submission deadline is Friday, October 23. Detailed rules and entry forms can be found at www.planopta.org and www.pta.org. Contact the Aldridge Arts in Education chairperson, **Diane Valdez** at dianevaldez@yahoo.com with additional questions.

Upcoming PTA Programs

We have a new year of programs planned at Aldridge ... some just for fun, some for education and learning (mixing in a bit of fun), and all will meet the needs of students, staff and families. All of these programs are made possible because of PTA fund-raising dollars.

This year we will again be looking at programs to bring to our campus, such as Skate Night, Science Night, Sci-Tech science program, Fall into Fitness, possible CPR certification, and many more ideas of programs of interest and need to our students, families and staff. There are many opportunities for parent involvement and volunteering at these upcoming events. If you’re interested in helping out, please get in touch with PTA volunteer coordinator, Karen Fleming (*see page 3 for contact information*).

Instead of our annual fall Ice Cream Social, we will work in conjunction with our fund-raising committee to bring you a fun, family fund-raising event in November. Plan on attending as many of these programs as you can this year. If you would like additional information about any of our planned programs, please contact **Karrie Ronk** at kbronk@msn.com.

Another Fund-Raising Idea

Tom Thumb & Randalls will be donating 10 percent of your grocery purchases of participating products to the school of your choice—we’re hoping that’s Aldridge—every time you shop August 12 through September 15. Here’s what to do:

- Look for the yellow school bus icon and purchase participating products.
- Use your Reward Card at checkout.
- Ask the cashier for your Receipt Tape from September 18 – October 9. Follow the easy directions listed for redemption.

For details, call 877-561-8048 or visit www.Backtoschools.escrip.com.