

DOGWOOD
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Dogwood Dolphin Echo

FEBRUARY 2012

From the President . . .

I can't believe it is February already! Please join us for Winterfest on February 25th! The Winterfest Committee, Room Parents and many other volunteers have been working very hard to make this a successful and very fun event. We have many exciting additions this year so don't miss it! I would like to thank everyone who has donated an item for our auction. Friend our Facebook Page, Winterfest at Dogwood, to see what has been donated and please thank these individuals and businesses.



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After Winterfest, our next big PTA event will be Teacher Appreciation Week, March 5th - 9th. Our Teacher Appreciation Committee is already at work planning great events for our teachers. Look for more information to come from your room parent.

Things are really heating up with talk over school consolidation and the option of forming a Germantown Municipal School District. Our PTA Legislative Chair, Melanie Beckham, is doing a great job attending as many meetings as possible and submitting reports to keep us informed. Melanie submits a report each month at our PTA Meetings and usually has a report in our Echo Newsletter. Please note that the Dogwood PTA cannot take a position on one side or the other as it pertains to the consolidation of schools or the establishing of a municipal system. The position of the PTA is to always advocate for what is best for every child. We will do our best throughout this process to keep our families informed, but we also encourage parents to attend the meetings offered by the city and school board.

We are accepting nominations for our 2012-2013 PTA Board. Forms were sent home on January 31st and can also be found on our website. Nominations are due by February 17th.

*Laura Clausen
Dogwood PTA President*

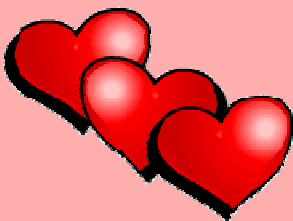
COUNSELOR'S CORNER . . .

The National School Counseling Week is celebrated during the month of February. Encourage your child to reflect over his or her most memorable classroom lessons and the messages that have been learned. It is imperative that students understand the importance of having reinforcement in the following areas: academic, social, and career development.

Here are a few tips to help strengthen your child's school motivation:

- Help your child make associations between what he or she is learning and how it is associated with the real world.
- Encourage your child to discuss what he or she has learned and how it could benefit him or her.
- Assist your child with making connections between your child's interests and academics.

*Brandi Fitchpatric
School Counselor*



Don't miss
out on
these great
fundraising
restaurant
nights!

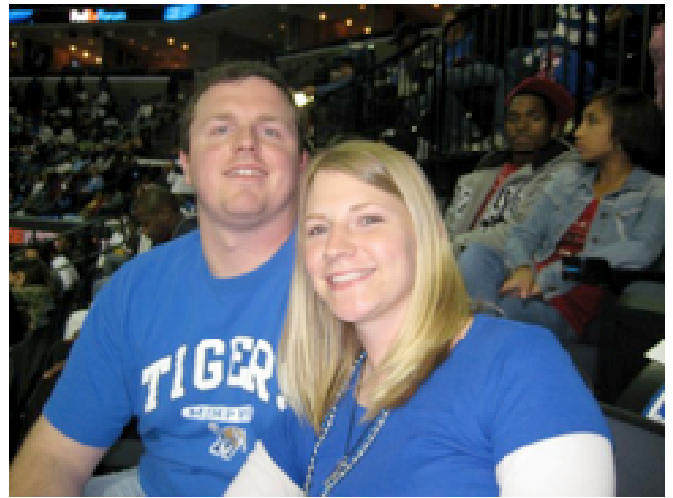
Thursday,
Feb. 9th
Pizza Pro
Night

Wednesday,
Feb. 29th and
Thursday,
March 1st
Katie's
Kitchen



Teacher Feature . . . ROBIN SNIPES

This is my 4th year teaching 5th grade at Dogwood. Dogwood has always felt like home because I did my student teaching here with Mrs. Korowin. After graduating from The University of Memphis with a Bachelor's Degree in Education, I spent the following year substitute teaching at Dogwood. The following year, I received a full time position and have been at Dogwood since.



I currently teach math to 4th and 5th graders and Language Arts. I enjoy teaching math because I love to see the “light bulb” go off when a student begins to understand a concept. It is fulfilling to see a student gain confidence in themselves by continuing to persevere even in a frustrating situation, like math can sometimes be.

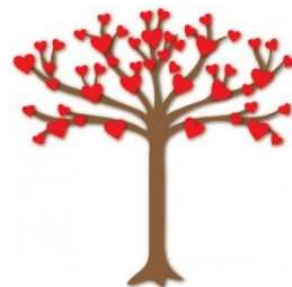
Last year I married my husband. We have three cats: Phoebe, Suzie, and Sammy. We also have a dog, Reba. The house can be crazy sometimes, but they always give us something to smile about.

Memphis Tiger Basketball is a passion of mine. I attend all of the home games and travel when I can. In 2008, I went to San Antonio for the Final Four (Yes, it did happen, even if it is not in the record books!) Although we didn't get the win, I am still happy I went to show my support.

Dogwood is such a wonderful place to teach. I feel lucky, and I'm thankful that I was able to begin my teaching career in this school. I hope to continue to challenge the students of Dogwood while also giving them a rich elementary experience.

KIDS KAN WEEK . . . February 13-17

We will be collecting canned food items during a county wide food drive the week of February 13-17 to support The West Tennessee Food Bank. To make it fun for the kids, we are having a theme each day, BUT any acceptable canned item can be brought in each day. Cans without labels, soda and glass bottles cannot be accepted. Canned goods will be collected from the classrooms each morning by Dogwood's Student Ambassadors.



We will also need boxes!! Girl Scout cookie boxes, diaper boxes and paper boxes are great sizes. Boxes can be left on the stage in the cafeteria.

We will also need volunteers to help box and count all the cans each morning that week! We will meet in the cafeteria at 9:00a and should be finished by 10:00a at the latest. If you can help, please contact Brandy Blank at blankb@bellsouth.net.

DAILY THEMES

Monday

Bring tuna and wear your Dogwood Dolphin T-shirt

Tuesday

Bring tomato productions (no glass) and wear red or pink

Wednesday

Bring green vegetables and wear green

Thursday

Bring fruit and canned fruit juice and wear yellow or orange

Friday

Bring peanut butter and jelly (no glass) and wear a jelly colored top & khaki pants

*****Cans without labels, soda and glass bottles cannot be accepted*****

Ways and Means



We have some exciting upcoming restaurant nights. Thursday, February 9th will be our February's Pizza Pro Night. We will be teaming up with Katie's Kitchen for a 2 day event on Wednesday, February 29th and Thursday, March 1st. Thank you to those that participate in these Dogwood/ Restaurant Events. Dogwood helped Chili's bring in \$730.00 this past month, Dogwood PTA receives \$80.00 of that. Way to go Dogwood!

Important Upcoming Dates

February 13th, 23rd &
March 5th

Reading of the ordinance that will be the subject of the Municipal School Referendum

April 20th - May 5th

Early voting on the referendum to create Municipal School Districts and raise the necessary taxes

May 10th

Referendum on the creation of Municipal School Districts in Germantown and Collierville (probably Bartlett as well)

August 16, 2012

If referendum passes, deadline for applications for those persons interested in running for positions on Germantown School Board

November 2012

If referendum passes, election for Germantown School Board

Transition Planning Committee Meetings

On January 10, 2012, the Transition Planning Committee ("TPC") held what will be the first of numerous community listening sessions at Collierville United Methodist Church in Collierville. The second of the scheduled listening tours was held in Germantown at Houston High on January 23, 2012. At both meetings, a member of the committee presented a power point presentation on the acts that led to consolidation, the Norris-Todd law that created the TPC, the purpose of the TPC, and the appointments made to the TPC. The TPC also set forth their guiding principles which they stated as follows:



- *The academic success and well-being of our students come first*
- *Educators and staff are our most important resource*
- *We have high expectations*
- *We are all in this together*
- *We aim to enhance our district by balancing stability with needed change*
- *We desire excellent community schools and options for all*
- *We believe parent engagement is essential*
- *We must save where we can to fund what we need*
- *We value strong leadership*
- *This is our once-in-a-lifetime opportunity*

After the presentation, the committee opened the floor up to comments for over an hour. Moderator, Barbara Prescott, requested that attendees express their hopes, concerns and aspirations for a new consolidated system. There were too many comments to summarize in this article. However, two prevailing sentiments expressed by the people who commented were the lack of representation Germantown and Collierville will have in the new system and the fear that the quality of education will decline in a new consolidated system. Prescott encouraged anyone who did not want to speak up at the meeting, but who had a question, concern, hope or aspiration regarding the new system to contact the TPC. The e-mail for the commission is transition.commission@shelbycountyttn.gov. The website for the commission is <http://www.shelbycountyttn.gov/index.aspx?NSD=1992>. Dates and locations for upcoming community listening sessions that will be held by the TPC are posted on the website.

Municipal School District Developments

(This article was written on February 3, 2012. The news regarding this issue is fluid and fast moving, so expect developments on a daily/weekly basis.)

On January 16, 2012, Southern Educational Strategies, LLC delivered its Feasibility Study Regarding the Creation of a Municipal School District to Germantown officials. A copy of the report in its entirety can be found on the city's website, www.germantown-tn.gov. The report concludes that Germantown can form its own municipal school district if it desires. Two key issues addressed in the study were the additional tax that would need to be levied in order to form a municipal school district and the ownership of the existing school buildings in Germantown. The report cited state law that requires a municipality to raise additional tax money to fund a municipal district even if that district is able to run on the existing funds it receives from the county and the state. This demonstrates that the municipality is willing to make an investment in its district. The report noted that Germantown could raise the additional tax required by increasing the city property tax by 15 cents (Germantown City tax rate is currently \$1.485, so this is about a 10% increase) or by implementing a half cent increase in the local option sales tax. The other important finding of the study is that the vast majority of the law favors the buildings in a new municipal school district passing to the municipality at no cost. In addition to numerous legal cases cited, the study notes that while Memphis operated Memphis City Schools as a special school district the district obtained 44 buildings from Shelby County through annexation at no cost and was not required to assume the debt on that property. The study went on in detail to lay out what is needed to form a municipal district including electing a school board, hiring a superintendent, teachers etc. The study relayed that state law dictates that teachers in the new system would have to have comparable experience and expertise as teachers in the county system and that teachers would have to be compensated at least as well as teachers in the county system. It concludes that it should not be difficult to attract qualified teachers to a new district.



Germantown held a town hall meeting on February 1, 2012, so that city leaders and the authors of the study could address questions from the community and receive input from the community. At this meeting Germantown Mayor Sharon Goldsworthy noted that the decision on whether or not to create a municipal school district was probably the most important decision Germantown would make in the next 50 to 100 years. The taxing system and revenue stream needed for the new system were discussed including the revenues the city would receive from the county and the state. It had been determined that the amount of additional revenue required from the city of Germantown was approximately 2.1 million dollars. It is projected that a half cent local option sales tax will generate 2.5 million in revenue per year. So, the proposal by the Mayor and Aldermen is that if Germantown elects to have a municipal school district it should raise the money through the local option sales tax. Mayor Goldsworthy stated that Germantown will have a referendum on May 10, 2012 in which it will ask voters to vote on whether they want a municipal school and on whether they will approve the additional tax. Mayor Goldsworthy said that she expected Bartlett and Collierville to have similar referendums on the same day. The proposed ordinance has not yet been drafted, but will be drafted in time for the first reading at the Board of Aldermen meeting on February 13, 2012. Subsequent readings will occur at meetings on February 23rd and March 3rd. If the ordinance passes, the city of Germantown will proceed to elect a 5 member school board in November 2012 when the presidential elections take place.

On February 3, 2012, the City of Collierville announced that it plans to have a referendum on May 10, 2012. Also on February 3, 2012, the 23 member Unified School Board announced that it will have a meeting on Tuesday, February 7, 2012 to discuss its position on municipal school districts and what to do with "surplus" buildings that may exist if municipal school districts are created. The board's attorney has advised them that they need to take a position, so that lobbyists hired by the Unified Board in Nashville can respond if legislation forcing the Unified Board to transfer the buildings is proposed.

New To Winterfest This Year!!

Winterfest plans are well underway, we can't wait to see you all on Saturday, February 25th. From 10:00 to 3:00. Not only is Winterfest a day of fun and games, it is also a MAJOR fundraiser for Dogwood and with your help this event will be a HUGE success. There are many ways you can be involved.

1. Volunteer for a shift for the games.
Contact your room mom!
2. Pretty Committee – help make the baskets for the auction. Contact Tricia Atkins at 901-238-5990 or triciaatkins@comcast.net
3. DONATE an auction item. We will be in the Winterfest Auction Room each morning from 8:45 to 9:30 or leave it at the front desk.
4. Be a Vendor. Contact Catherine Arick at Catarick@comcast.net or 753-0585 for details!
5. Like us on Facebook, Winterfest at Dogwood, to see many of our auction items.



If you have any questions please contact Catherine Arick, atarick@comcast.net or 753-0585 or Shelli Gentleman at Shelli.gentleman@yahoo.com or 850-1971.

We can't wait to see you all at Winterfest!

Saturday,
February
25th
10:00am
to 3:00pm

Mark your
calendars!

UPCOMING EVENTS

-  Tuesday, February 7 - PTA meeting
-  Thursday, February 9 - Parent-Teacher Conferences
-  Thursday, February 9 - Jump Rope For Heart
-  Thursday, February 9 - Pizza Pro Fundraising Night
-  Friday, February 10 - NO SCHOOL (Teacher in-service)
-  Monday-Friday, February 13-17 - Kids Kan Food Drive
-  Tuesday, February 14 - Valentine's parties
-  Friday, February 17 - Spring portraits
-  Monday, February 20 - NO SCHOOL-President's Day
-  Saturday, February 25 - Winterfest
-  Wednesday, Feb. 29th-Thursday, March 1 - Katie's Kitchen Fundraising



Dogwood Dolphin Echo

Dogwood Elementary School
 8945 Dogwood Road
 Germantown, TN 38139

Phone: 901.756.2310
 Fax: 901.751.7852
 E-mail the editor: jmcomas@comcast.net



Shelby County Schools offer educational and employment opportunities without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex or disability.

PTA BOARD 2011-2012

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- Yearbook Nancy Yenser