

G.D. Jones PTO 2011-2012



**Guide to Everything PTO:
Who, What, When,
Where, Why and How**

Welcome to another new school year at G.D. Jones Elementary! And welcome to another busy year for the G.D. Jones PTO!

As a parent or guardian of a G.D. Jones student, you are automatically a member of the G.D. Jones PTO. There are no fees or requirements to being a member, other than to have a student here. You are not required to attend any PTO meetings or participate in any PTO events, but I encourage you to become involved in your child's school, and PTO involvement is a great way to do so. Numerous studies have shown that when their parents are involved in their children's education, their kids do better in and out of school. I believe part of this is leading by example – that if a child sees you involved in their school, it shows you believe in the importance of school and they want to do better as they will see the importance too. What better way to become involved than through PTO.

Some people may think that PTO just means fund-raising. While fund-raising is a large and important part of what we do, PTO is much more than that. With what seems like never ending budget cuts, the money PTO generates becomes more important to help fill the gap to continue to provide the tools and experiences each student needs in order to succeed.

But PTO also serves as a great tool in developing a network of parents and teachers working together to make our school even better for every child who attends. PTO meetings and activities are great places to meet, talk and work with fellow G.D. Jones parents and G.D. Jones staff members, and have a great time doing so.

This guide is intended to give you all the information you need to know about G.D. Jones PTO. Included is a listing of the meeting dates for this year, a general calendar of major PTO events/activities, results of last year's budget so you can see where the money comes from and where it is being spent, a section with explanations of the events we conduct and the school activities/expenses we help fund, and finally a section showing all the areas within PTO where you can help and a checklist you can complete to let us know areas in which you would like to help or are interested in learning more about.

Please take the time to review this and if you have any questions on it, or anything PTO, please do not hesitate to contact me. My phone number and email are at the bottom of this page.

I look forward to meeting and working with you this year. Let's make it a great year together!

Beth Murkowski
G.D. Jones PTO President
(715) 571-9306
bethlbri@yahoo.com

How can you get involved?

As you can see from the previous pages, the G.D. Jones PTO conducts many activities throughout the year to raise money for school activities and needs. To do all these things, we need everyone's help in whatever ways they can.

The next few pages of this handout include a spreadsheet listing all of the volunteer opportunities that are associated with G.D. Jones PTO events/projects, when the event/project is typically held, a specific job/volunteer position for the event/project, how many volunteers are needed for that job and the duties/responsibilities of that job. As you can see there are many opportunities to help – at different times of year, times of week, and times of day. Hopefully at least one will fit into your schedule.

Please review the spreadsheet and complete the checklist following any and all areas where you think you would like to help or are interested in learning more about. Then put your name and phone number on the checklist and return it to school.

Every little bit helps, so please consider the list carefully and help out wherever you think you can.

Thank you!

G. D. Jones PTO – Fundraising Activities

Carnival and Raffle:

This event is currently held in the fall of the school year, usually the 1st or 2nd weekend in October. The event is held at G.D. Jones School from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. There are carnival-type games, including a cake walk and a dunk tank, food for sale in the cafeteria, and a prize store where children can redeem tickets earned from playing the games for larger prizes. In conjunction with the Carnival is our annual raffle, with the top prize being \$200 cash, provided by the PTO. There are also many other great raffle prizes which are donated by local businesses. This event is one of our major FUNd-raisers of the year, but just as important, it is a great social event for the students and families of G.D. Jones. A FUN time for all!

Family Winter Dance

This is a brand new event this year. It is mainly held as a way to bring families together to have fun, relax, and enjoy the evening together. The Family Winter Dance was held in February, complete with a profession DJ and photographer. Families who attended danced the night away, did the limbo, the hokey pokey, the cha cha slide, and the chicken dance. There was also a mummy-making contest! The event was a success and fun was had by all.

Thrifty Treasure and Bake Sale:

Only four years old, the Thrifty Treasure Sale has quickly become a very good fundraiser for G.D. Jones PTO. G.D. Jones families are asked to donate any unwanted but still in good condition items for this community-type rummage sale. The sale is held on a Saturday in April, at the beginning of the rummage sale season. All items donated are displayed on tables/racks in the gym at G.D. Jones School and unless otherwise marked, patrons can fill a grocery bag of items for just \$5. In 2009, the Bake Sale was added to this event, which was very popular. Baked goods of all kinds are donated by families of G.D. Jones and offer a nice treat to the rummage salers.

Cookout at County Market:

Held off-site in the parking lot at Crossroads County Market, the G.D. Jones PTO holds a brat fry the Friday before Memorial Day. Using members' equipment and all supplies purchased from County Market, we grill brats and hot dogs, served with chips, sauerkraut, condiments and soda and water. PTO members man the booth, and while it is work, it is also a fun and enjoyable way to spend time with fellow G.D. Jones parents.

Concert Night Supper:

In an effort to help ease the potential stress of getting ready to attend the annual G.D. Jones Spring Concert in March, the PTO offers a supper at school just prior to the concert. Very popular the last several years, Build Your Own Nachos and Hot Dogs with chips are an easy supper with little clean up on a busy day.

G.D. Jones PTO – Fundraising Activities

Concert Night Ice Cream Social:

A tradition at G.D. Jones, the Ice Cream Social is a special after concert activity. The PTO offers a variety of ice cream treats at a small cost. It is a great way to end a special evening with fellow G.D. Jones families. And tradition has it that any grandparents in attendance should buy ice cream for their special musicians!

Box Tops for Education:

The G.D. Jones PTO participates in the Box Tops for Education program, which brings in several hundred dollars each year. A collection station is set up at G.D. Jones across from the office where students/parents can drop off the Box Tops for Education coupons they have clipped/collected from participating product lines. PTO volunteers then gather the coupons from the collection station, trim them as needed, sort, package and ship them as required by the program guidelines. Box Tops are normally worth 10 cents each, but the amount earned quickly adds up.

Spring Pictures:

As part of our agreement with Lifetouch (who does fall pictures for G.D. Jones), spring pictures are taken of all students at G.D. Jones. Packets are then made up for each student and are sent home with the students. Parents are given the opportunity to purchase part or all or none of the packets as they choose. There have been many good comments on the quality of these packets in the past two years. In return for allowing Lifetouch to take the pictures/distribute the packets, the PTO is given \$2 per student whose picture was taken, regardless of how many families actually purchase the finished product.

Chrysler Drive for Kids:

This even was held in conjunction with the Fall Carnival in 2008. A Chrysler representative was on-hand with several new model vehicles from Brickners of Wausau, giving anyone with a valid driver's license an opportunity to test drive any or all of the vehicles available. In return, Chrysler donated \$5 per licensed driver. We had a great turnout for this event, but unfortunately because of the recent economic hardships Chrysler has endured, this is not a program that will be available to us again until further notice.

Popcorn Sales:

This is held in conjunction with Spirit and Pride Days, held approximately every other Friday during the school year. The price per bag of freshly popped popcorn is 25 cents and students place their orders with their teachers. PTO members will pop the corn, put together the number of bags needed, sort them by classroom and deliver the bags to the classrooms where teachers then distribute to those students who ordered them.

G.D. Jones PTO – Fundraising Activities

Elf Shelf/Santa’s Secret Shop:

Offered as primarily a service to the students of G.D. Jones School, the Elf Shelf/Santa’s Secret Shop is held on a Saturday in early December to give students the opportunity to purchase inexpensive Christmas gifts for their families in secret if they choose. Members of the PTO will set up the sale and then assist the students in picking out appropriate gifts for those on their lists. This allows them to shop in ‘secret’ for members of their families. This is not considered a fundraiser for the PTO. There is a small profit made primarily from the sale of items that were donated and from rounding up the cost of items for ease in calculating the amount spent.

Milk Caps:

The G.D. Jones PTO participates in the Kids for Cash, Nickels for School and Milk Moola programs sponsored by Golden Guernsey, Kemps and Kwik Trip. A collection station is set up across from the office at school where students/parents can drop off milk jug caps and Milk Moola coupons. PTO volunteers then gather the caps/coupons from the collection station, sort, package and ship them as required by the program guidelines. Milk caps and coupons are worth 5 cents each, but can add up to be a nice fundraiser.

Campbell’s Labels for Education:

The G.D. Jones PTO participates in the Campbell’s Labels for Education program. A collection station is set up across from the office at school where students/parents can drop off UPC labels from participating products. PTO volunteers then gather the UPC labels, trim as needed, sort, package and ship them as required by the program guidelines. Please note that this program has changed in recent years where now to receive credit, the UPC label is what is needed, not the front of the label as it used to be. This program does not provide monetary reimbursement, but instead each UPC submitted adds 1 to 5 points to our school’s account with Campbell’s. The points can then be used to purchase various school-related items from their catalog to help supplement equipment and activity needs at G.D. Jones.

G.D. Jones PTO – Funded School Activities

Teacher and Specialist Incidentals:

To help combat the effects of budget cuts, the G.D. Jones PTO provides money to the teachers and specialists at G.D. Jones to be used for items needed in their classrooms/teaching areas they might not otherwise have, to enhance the learning experiences for all students.

Author Visit:

The G.D. Jones PTO helps to fund the costs of the annual author visit, where an published author is invited to our school to spend a full day with the students, holding workshops and activities at all grade levels.

Level Library:

The G.D. Jones PTO provides funds to purchase books and materials to enhance the Level Library at G.D. Jones. Reading ability is identified by levels – A-Z. By providing materials at all levels gives students the tools needed to constantly improve their reading skills.

School Fund:

As designated by the office.

Library Books:

In addition to providing funds for the Level Library, the G.D. Jones PTO provides funds annually for the purchase of new books/materials to be added to the G.D. Jones Library.

Staff Appreciation Luncheon:

To show the staff at G.D. Jones how appreciative we are of all their efforts on our children's behalf all year long, the G.D. Jones PTO sponsors the annual Staff Appreciation Luncheon in May. The PTO provides the main course which is enhanced by side dishes, deserts and other treats donated by G.D. Jones families. The PTO also provides funds for door prizes and other special gifts as money allows.

Patrol Trip:

As a thank you to the students at G.D. Jones who were part of the Safety Patrol, helping students safely cross the streets at the corners near school, the G.D. Jones PTO covers the costs of their annual trip to the Weston Aquatic Center, including bus transportation and center admission.

5th Grade Trip:

The G.D. Jones PTO covers the cost of the annual 5th grade end of year class trip to Green Bay where students visit Heritage Hill State History Park and Bay Beach.

G.D. Jones PTO – Funded School Activities

4th Grade Trip:

The G.D. Jones PTO helps to cover part of the cost of the 4th grade trip to Madison to visit the state capitol during their government unit.????

High School Scholarship:

Each year, a \$200 scholarship is funded by the G.D. Jones PTO and awarded to a graduating Wausau West High School Senior who had attended G.D. Jones Elementary School and will be going on to post-secondary school. The recipient is selected by the G.D. Jones PTO in an anonymous review of all applications, with financial need and years attended G.D. Jones being top considerations. A member of the G.D. Jones PTO then presents the winner with the scholarship at the annual Wausau West Senior Recognition program held in May.

PTO Meeting Babysitter:

To make it easier for parents to attend monthly PTO meetings, a babysitter is provided at every PTO meeting to watch the children while parents meet. The babysitter is paid by the G.D. Jones PTO so parents do not need to incur this cost on their own.

Recess Fund:

The G.D. Jones PTO provides funds for equipment used by students during recess, including various kinds of balls and jump ropes.

Track Meet Awards:

The G.D. Jones PTO provides funds to cover the cost of awards presented to students placing in events in the annual spring track meet.

Thanksgiving Baskets:

The G.D. Jones PTO provides Thanksgiving Baskets, complete with all the items needed for a traditional Thanksgiving meal, to two families of G.D. Jones as selected by the school's social worker and principal.

Accelerated Reader Program:

To encourage reading and motivate students to challenge themselves to read more, the G.D. Jones PTO provides money to purchase incentive items for the Accelerated Reader Program.

Sunshine Fund:

To help spread a little sunshine in good times and bad, the G.D. Jones PTO allocates funds for such things as staff appreciation, retirement of a G.D. Jones staff member, memorials in the event of a death in the family of a G.D. Jones Staff member, and tragedy within a G.D. Jones family.

G.D. Jones PTO – Non-Monetary Activities

Fall Pictures:

The G.D. Jones PTO contracts with professional school photographers for our annual fall pictures, and also provides the volunteers to assist the photographers on picture day. This year, pictures will be again be taken by Lifetouch, Inc.

Vision and Hearing Screening:

In February, nurses from the Marathon County Health Department visit G.D. Jones school to provide free vision and hearing screenings for all students at G.D. Jones with the exception of 4th graders. The G.D. Jones PTO provides volunteers to assist these nurses by getting the students from their classrooms to the testing area and back again, and also with performing one of the vision tests, with instruction/guidance from the nurse.

Yearbook:

The G.D. Jones PTO sponsors the production of the annual G.D. Jones School Yearbook. This is a small fund-raising project, with the sell price set just above the cost of the yearbook. For the past few years, a group of 5th grade students have been selected (based on applications they completed) to be a part of the 'Yearbook Committee' and are guided by a PTO representative through the process of designing and selling the yearbook.