

# YOUR P.T.A. NEWSPAPER

SEPTEMBER, 1984



Abingdon School ..... 931-3400  
Ginny Klarquist, PTA President ..... 931-7045  
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The CARDINAL is a monthly newsletter published by your Abingdon Parent-Teacher Association. Each issue will keep you informed of meetings, plans, and news important to your child's school. We invite all staff, parents, and students to submit items to share with our school community. Watch for the CARDINAL each month!

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## NEW PLAY AREA AND OUTDOOR THEATER AT ABINGDON

The Abingdon PTA is proud to announce that plans are underway to build a Robert Leathers creative play area at our school. On Thursday, October 25, Mr. Leathers will come to Abingdon to work with the children, parents, teachers, and community leaders in designing a special place to play. Featured will be climbing and balance beams, castles, bridges, outlooks, tire swings, and an OUTDOOR THEATER! That evening at 7:30 pm, Mr. Leathers will present Abingdon's unique play area design, show slides of his other play areas, and explain the construction process.

### WHAT IS A LEATHERS PLAYGROUND?????

Come to Back to School Night on Sep 18 to see slides of other Leathers play areas in Northern Virginia, discover where you can visit them, and learn what is involved in building one of these magnificent areas.

Many volunteers are needed between now and the 4-day construction period in the spring. PLEASE fill out the GOLD playground sheet that was in the first day packet and return it to your child's teacher. Call Barbara Effron (931-6186) or Kate Davis (820-7009) if you can donate time, materials, funds, or would like more information.

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## MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO PLAY AREA & OUTDOOR THEATER

ALL ABINGDON FAMILIES SEND A WARM "THANK YOU" TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY-MINDED BUSINESSES AND GROUPS WHO HAVE GIVEN OUR FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN AN EXCELLENT START!

### PATRONS (DONATIONS OF \$1000 OR MORE)

FAIRLINGTON PROPERTIES, INC. REALTORS

THE FAIRLINGTON CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

TOWER CONSTRUCTION CO. (PARK-SHIRLINGTON APARTMENTS)

### SPECIAL FRIENDS (DONATIONS OF \$250 OR MORE)

PRESTO VALET

### BOOSTERS (DONATIONS OF \$100 OR MORE)

NORTH FAIRLINGTON BABYSITTING COOP

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## ELECTION DAY BAKE SALE

The Abingdon PTA will be sponsoring bake sales on Election Day at the Fairlington Community Center, Abingdon, and Claremont Elementary Schools. These sales are a chance for busy parents to contribute to the play area fund by donating baked goods or by working at the sales (two hour shifts are still available from 6 am to 7 pm). Please call Alvina Hale (845-1430) to offer your help.

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# ABINGDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

3035 SOUTH ABINGDON STREET, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22206

## WE'RE BUILDING A PLAYGROUND AND WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The Abingdon PTA is sponsoring a community "playground raising" to build a creative area and outdoor theater. This project has generated unprecedented excitement throughout our community, which includes Fairlington, Shirlington, and Claremont.

Our unique proposal was designed by the parents and children working with the noted architect, Mr. Robert Leathers, who has pioneered the concept of community playground-raisings. Our highly successful Design Day program was covered recently on the front page of the Metro section in The Washington Post.

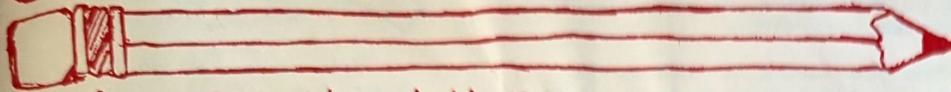
In the Spring, hundreds of community volunteers will gather to build the playground during our construction weekend, scheduled tentatively for April 18-21. This is a very ambitious project, which includes an outdoor theater, creative play equipment to challenge children of all ages, and special facilities for the handicapped. Even with volunteer labor, the costs will be substantial -- between \$25,000 and \$30,000.

Although the parents and residents of our neighborhood will be making significant contributions of money and time, we cannot make our dream come true without the help of our friends in the business community. The success of this project depends on financial contributions, volunteer manpower, donated materials, and loaned tools and equipment. Just as your business has relied upon substantial support from our community, the residents of our neighborhood are counting on your interest and willingness to support this unique community project.

All contributions are tax deductible, and donations in any amount are most welcome. All contributors will be recognized in the dedication booklet that will be distributed to the parents of our 637 children and at a community-wide festival when the playground is completed.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to call Barbara Effron at 931-6186. Many thanks for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

# ABINGDON CARDINAL



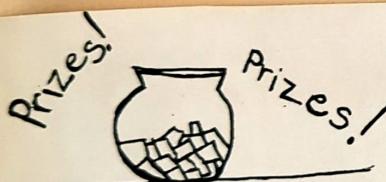
## Your PTA Newsletter



### CALENDAR

Oct. 24	No School/Conference Day
Oct. 25	Playground Design Day Evening meeting at 7:30 p.m.
Oct. 31 - Nov. 6	Book Fair No School/Conference Day
Oct. 31	Happy Halloween!
Nov. 6	Election Day Bake Sales
Nov. 12	No School/Veterans' Day Holiday
Nov. 13	PTA Executive Board Meeting 7:30 p.m. in library School pictures taken
Nov. 15	PTA Meeting at 7:30 p.m. Topic: Special programs and resources at Abingdon
Nov. 20	

OCTOBER, 1984



The PTA's Playground Preview Meeting on Thursday, October 25, will feature a raffle with many valuable prizes. Our successful raffle at the back-to-school night raised \$180 for the playground!

The Playground Preview Meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. in Abingdon's Multi-Purpose Room. Raffle tickets, priced at only \$1.00, will be available starting at 7:00 outside the Multi-Purpose Room.

Here are some of the great prizes we'll be giving away on the 25th:

- One month's free membership at Skyline Raquet and Health Club (worth \$100).
- A gift certificate for make-up and a designer umbrella from Merle Norman, Skyline (worth \$60).
- 10 Video Club Memberships at Venture Video (Bradlee), worth \$6.95 each.
- An Olympic Mascot from Little VIP, Skyline (worth \$14).
- A houseplant from Skyline Florist.
- Brightly colored child's wall hanging  
A private donation
- Portrait from Olan Mills Studio, Inc.

YOUR CHANGE CAN CHANGE OUR PLAYGROUND!



### ELECTION DAY BAKE SALE

The PTA needs your help on November 6, Election Day with three Bake Sales to be held at the Fairlington Community Complex, Abingdon, and Claremont Elementary Schools. These sales are a chance for busy parents to contribute to the play area fund by donating baked goods or by working at the sales. We need everyone's help to make this a success! Please call Andy Effron 931-6186 to offer your help.

## Thank you!

Many thanks from the Abingdon PTA to the following businesses and organizations who made major contributions to the playground fund last month:

### Patrons (\$1000 or more)

Fairlington Villages Unit Owners Ass'n  
(North Fairlington)

### Donors (\$500 or more)

Clayton Legg, Inc. (home improvements)

### Special Friends (\$250 or more)

Bonnie Blaszczyk (Merrill Lynch Realty)  
Fairlington Glen Condominium Association  
Fox Realty (King Street)  
Lindsay Cadillac

### Boosters (\$100 or more)

Morrison Realty (Quaker Lane)

Venture Video & Computer Center will donate to the playground 50¢ for each video membership sold between Sept. 18 and Nov. 10 at their Bradlee store. Thanks for this unique contribution!



Thursday, October 25, 7:30 p.m.

Join members of the School Board and County Board in welcoming playground architect Robert Leathers to Abingdon. After meeting with all the Abingdon students during the day and hearing their ideas of dream playgrounds, Mr. Leathers will present Abingdon's unique play area design, show slides of his other play areas, and explain the construction process. A chorus of Abingdon students will present a selection of original playground songs, and student drawings of "dream" playgrounds will be on display.

The meeting is open to the entire community. Invite your neighbors!!!

Don't miss this informative and entertaining evening!!! Please help make our playground a "dream" come true!!!

Babysitting will be provided courtesy of the playground committee.

# Volunteers' Work Is Child's Play

## Architect's Creative Playgrounds Built by Parents, Pupils

By Paul Hodge  
Washington Post Staff Writer

For the 640 children of Arlington's Abingdon Elementary School, the man in the red T-shirt with the long gray hair and handlebar mustache was Santa Claus come early.

"I'd like a castle with a dungeon, a bridge and tunnels," said one of a crowd of second-graders clustered around a cafeteria table with Robert S. Leathers, the Pied Piper of America's playgrounds. "I want a tree house with a swing and slides" . . . "an alligator" . . . "a dragon" . . . "a maze" . . . "a water slide and a roller coaster," chimed others.

"Well, I don't know about the water slide and roller coaster," said Leathers, whose arrival at Abingdon was heralded with school banners, songs written in his honor and classrooms filled with pictures of playgrounds.

Leathers, from Ithaca, N.Y., not the North Pole, was back in Northern Virginia recently to preside over the design and construction of eight more of his giant wooden "creative play areas."

That brings to about 50 the number of Leathers playgrounds in Northern Virginia, valued at as much as \$100,000 each and built by more than 25,000 suburban volunteers. In addition, thousands of children helped Leathers design the playgrounds.

"He's a genius, a playground artist," said Penny Wald, the volunteer who coordinated construction last spring of the Beverley Hills Cooperative Preschool in Alexandria.

"He not only got kids to help design the playground," Wald said. "But he got more than 100 people who'd never built anything in their lives cooperating . . . everybody working, friendly, productive. I've done a lot of things, but this is probably the most exciting, exhausting thing I've ever done in my life."

Leathers, an architect of custom homes who builds playgrounds as a hobby, was back home in Ithaca Monday "in a semicomatose daze" after his two latest Washington-area whirlwind visits. During the two four-day visits, timber playgrounds were constructed by volunteers at five schools and a synagogue—in Reston, Warrenton, Falls Church, Vienna and Arlington—and three other playgrounds were designed—in Vienna, Alexandria and Arlington—and will be built next spring.

Although he has designed more than 200 timber playgrounds, including many in California, Texas, Colorado and Iowa, there are more Leathers playgrounds in Northern Virginia than in any other single place. He has done none in Maryland or the District "for humans," he said. However, he recently designed the new wooden playground for the National Zoo pandas, Ling-Ling and Hsing-Hsing.

The zoo playground in the District is the only Leathers playground not built by local residents. But then, he notes, pandas are notoriously lazy.

While half of the playgrounds built in the United States are now made of wood, according to New York playground architect M. Paul Friedberg, few are built by volunteers.

"I don't know Leathers . . . but I think it's wonderful when a professional helps a community to build things. It sure sounds like a labor of love . . . It certainly doesn't sound like he's making a big profit out of it," said Friedberg.

Leathers said his fees have ranged from \$1,800 to \$5,500, including a design day visit, constant consultation on organizing and buying supplies and then overseeing by Leathers or his staff of the actual construction, which takes four days. Transportation and lodging for Leathers and assistants are extra, but then they usually stay in the homes of volunteers.

While the shapes of the playgrounds differ, the materials are all simple and similar: telephone poles sunk in the ground with a superstructure of large splinter-resistant wood (No. 1 grade southern pine) treated with a nontoxic preservative that should make the playground last at least 30 or 40 years, Leathers said. Old varnished tires are used for swings and coated cables support bridges.

At Arlington's McKinley Elementary School, a playground built by volunteers two weekends ago cost about \$19,000, although the school PTA estimated it would have cost \$75,000 to do what parents, friends and students did in four days and nights, working under floodlights provided by the county fire department.

McKinley seventh-graders Jason Watkins and Zachary Jocelyn, both 12, raised money for their playground and helped build it as well. "We got \$500 by knocking on about 200 doors. One person gave us three cents, but then another made up for it and gave us \$30. We almost fainted," Watkins said.

The food for all playground volunteers is usually donated, as are many tools and supplies. The Virginia Electric Power Co. and C&P Telephone Co. frequently donate the utility poles and crews to dig post holes for the playgrounds.

Not all of Leathers playgrounds involve schools with 600 pupils and work crews of more than 100 parents as the Abingdon one did. A Leathers playground on Cranberry Island, Maine, "was for a kindergarten to eighth-grade school with seven pupils in it," Leathers said. "The kids there wanted seven of everything, seven swings, seven slides, seven tunnels, and a tower so they could see all the other islands."

Building the Cranberry Island playground reminded Leathers of his first playground 14 years ago, which was for his own children's school in Ithaca.

"It was a barren playground with one basketball backboard and our PTA only had \$1,500." That's when he volunteered to design one from recycled materials, like old tires and wood, as was done with the "adventure playgrounds" of Europe made by children out of postwar rubble. Other schools soon asked if Leathers would do the same for them, with new wood, and his hobby began taking more and more of his time.

Modern wood playgrounds began to be built in this country in the 1960s and are a fantastic improvement over their barren jungle gym predecessors, said Friedberg, who has built close to 200 playgrounds and written two books on the subject.

"But while I don't know Leathers' playgrounds, I suspect his and mine, while more creative than the old playgrounds, still are too sanitized . . . and lack the vital, messy, changing environment" that children seem to love.



# WE'RE BUILDING A PLAYGROUND

## and

# WE NEED YOUR HELP

The Abingdon Elementary School PTA is proud to announce that plans are underway to build a Robert Leathers creative playground at our school. Working with children, parents, teachers, and community members, Mr. Leathers will design a special place to play, featuring climbing and balance beams, castles, bridges, outlooks, tire swings, and an outdoor theater. Such a play area will be a great asset to Abingdon School as well as the surrounding community.

Over a four-day period next spring, we shall gather at the site with all our materials and tools to put the playground in place. Much needs to be done in advance of this date, and we need your help. In order to proceed with this project, we must have a substantial commitment of support now from Abingdon's parents. Please indicate your support by checking one or more of the following areas in which you are willing to assist:

- Construction in the Spring of 1985: we need both skilled and unskilled labor from men, women, and children, involving a minimum of one day (weekend dates will be available).
- Childcare for volunteers working on the construction during the Spring of 1985, involving a minimum of one day.
- Fundraising: follow-up on letters we have sent to area businesses during the Fall of 1984.
- Fundraising: Provide food for an Election Day Bake Sale on November 6, 1984.
- Fundraising: Donate 2 hours on Election Day to sell food at the Bake Sale.
- Design: Serve on a committee that will begin work this Fall to help with the actual design of the play area.
- Materials: Serve on a committee that will begin work this Fall to procure lumber, concrete, nails, sandpaper, etc.
- Tools: Serve on a committee that will begin work this Fall to procure drills, saws, shovels, wrenches, sanders, etc.
- Food: Serve on a committee that will begin work in the Spring of 1985 to provide food to volunteers on construction days.
- Volunteers: Serve on a committee to recruit additional volunteers and to organize volunteers for the foregoing activities.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to school with your child or mail to: Abingdon PTA, 3035 S. Abingdon St., Arlington, VA 22206. If you have any questions, please call Barbara Effron (931-6186) or Kate Davis (820-7009).

TAKE YOUR COFFEE BREAK  
AT THE  
ELECTION DAY BAKE SALE



Tuesday, November 6



Sponsored by the Abingdon PTA

All proceeds go to the creative play area  
and outdoor theater we're building next spring.

Treat yourself to coffee and donuts,

Treat our kids to a playground!

Coffee: 30¢  
Donuts: 30¢ each,  
Coffee 'n donut special: 50¢

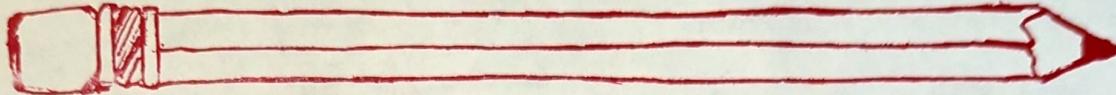
You need our bread for your kitchen,

We need your bread for our playground!

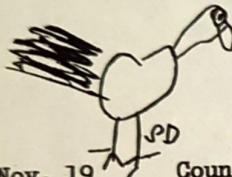
Fresh Baked Specialty Breads

Apple nut, cinnamon raisin, or sesame egg twist

# ABINGDON CARDINAL



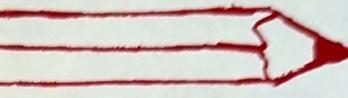
Your PTA Newsletter



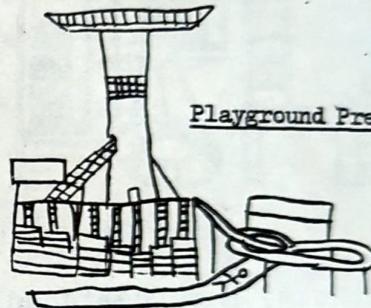
## CALENDAR

- Nov. 19 County Council General Meeting - 7:30 p.m.  
Nov. 20 PTA Meeting - 7:30 p.m.  
Special Programs and Resources at Abingdon  
Nov. 22-23 Thanksgiving Holiday  
NO school  
Dec. 4 PTA Executive Board Meeting  
7:30 p.m. - Library  
All interested adults are welcome.  
Dec. 7 Deadline for Dec. issue of the Cardinal  
Dec. 18 PTA Meeting - 7:30 p.m.  
Children's holiday music program  
Dec. 21 Last day of school for 1984!

NOVEMBER, 1984



## Playground Press



On October 25, Abingdon School was visited by Mr. Robert Leathers, the noted architect who has pioneered the concept of community playground raisings. Mr. Leathers and our Design Committee met with Abingdon's children, staff, and neighbors to design our creative play area and outdoor theater. An enthusiastic crowd of over 250 parents and teachers attended our Design Meeting that evening, which featured playground songs composed and sung by the children, and a display of student artwork and essays about the playground.

Our playground raising is scheduled tentatively for April 18-21. These dates are subject to final confirmation in January. Look for information on how to volunteer for this fun-filled event in future issues. If you have any questions or suggestions, please call Barbara Effron, 931-6186.

## Playground Contributions

Many thanks from the Abingdon PTA to the following businesses and organizations who made major contributions to the playground fund last month:

### Boosters (\$100 or more)

ESOL teachers, staff and intake staff in honor of Mr. Sananikone

Susan Amcham Piano Lessons

Yamaha Music School

Look for the "Buy-a-Board" form in this issue of the PTA news to see how you can contribute!

## Bake Sale Magicians Change Doughnuts into Dough!

The PTA is proud of the wonderful school spirit that made our Election Day Bake Sale a resounding success. We raised over \$1,700 towards our \$25,000 goal for the playground! We appreciate all who baked and served, and a special thanks goes to Suzanne Langsdorf, Nancy Buchanan, and Ginny Klarquist for organizing the sale at each of our three locations -- and to Sue Sticha for obtaining the donation of doughnuts from the Crystal City Sheraton.

IF YOU BUY A BOARD . . .



WE CAN BUILD A PLAYGROUND . . .



AND YOU CAN GET A TAX BREAK!



Here's a chance to give your children something special this holiday season -- a creative play area and outdoor theater at Abingdon, our neighborhood school.

Our unique playground has been designed by the parents and children of our community, working with the noted architect, Robert Leathers, who pioneered the concept of community "playground-raisings."

With your support, we can construct our play area and outdoor theater in the spring, using attractive, weather-resistant wooden boards. Each board will cost \$3.00, and we need to raise \$9,000 through this "Buy-a-Board" program in addition to the funds that we'll be raising from businesses and other sources.

We can reach our goal if our families, relatives, and friends donate these boards. Everyone who buys a board will be listed in our dedication booklet.

All contributions are tax deductible, an important consideration with the end of the tax year rapidly approaching.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please call Barbara Effron at 931-6186. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

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I'm enclosing a tax-deductible contribution to purchase:

- ( ) One board, \$3.00  
( ) An armful of boards, \$15.00  
( ) A wagonload of boards, \$30.00  
( ) A truckload of boards, \$60.00

- ( ) A trainload of boards  
and hardware, \$100.00  
( ) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of donor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Collected by: (Name of Abingdon family) \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to "Abingdon PTA". Mail donations to:  
Abingdon PTA, 3035 S. Abingdon St., Arlington, VA 22206.

Sus niños, que están trabajando con el Sr. Leathers, han diseñado un hermoso lugar para que los niños jueguen. Necesitamos reunir dinero para poder comprar materiales de buena calidad. Por favor utilice uno de los formularios "BUY-A-BOARD" (COMPRE-UNA-MADERA) que se adjunta, ofreciéndose con una contribución que puede deducir de sus impuestos anuales, para la construcción de este lugar de juegos para los niños. Reparta los otros formularios para que sus amigos, vecinos y familiares ofrezcan también contribuciones para (COMPRE-UNA-MADERA) "BUY-A-BOARD" para sus niños. El aula que devuelva la mayor cantidad de formularios participará en una fiesta con helados. Más detalles sobre esta campaña se podrán encontrar en el noticiero del mes de noviembre del PTA.

## VỀ VỤ SÂN CHƠI CHO HỌC SINH ABINGDON

Học sinh Abingdon cũng với ô. Leathers đã vẽ song một số đồ rất đẹp cho sân chơi. Nay mọi người chỉ còn lo làm sao kiêm ra tiền để mua vật liệu cần thiết hâu thực hiện song sân chơi đó. Kèm theo đây là những giấy kêu gọi đóng góp của phu huynh mà nhà trường thường hay gọi là "Buy-A-Board" có nghĩa là "Mua Một Miếng Ván". Xin quý vị giữ lấy một tờ và phát những tờ còn lại cho bá con, ban bè lối xóm để kêu gọi họ ủng hộ con em chúng ta. Lớp nào có được nhiều giấy ủng hộ nhất sẽ được thưởng một bữa cà-rem. Trong bản tin PTA tháng 11, tin-tức chi-tiết về sân chơi của học sinh Abingdon sẽ được phổ biến thêm.

**"ଶିଖୁଗାର" - ରାଜ୍ୟପାତ୍ରଙ୍କ ବିଷୟରେ ମହାନ୍ମହାଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ !**

# ABINGDON CARDINAL



Your PTA Newsletter



December

## CALENDAR

- Dec. 18 - PTA Meeting - 7:30 p.m.  
Holiday Music Program
- Dec. 20 - Child Safety Program - 7:30 p.m.  
(details on this page)
- School Board Meeting  
Education Center
- Dec. 21 - Last day of school for 1985!
- Jan. 2 - School begins
- Jan. 8 - PTA Executive Board Meeting,  
7:30 p.m.
- Jan. 22 - PTA Meeting, 7:30 p.m.  
Test Information Program (details  
in this newsletter)

## Playground Contributions

Many thanks from the Abingdon PTA to the following businesses and organizations who made major contributions to the playground fund last month:

### Patrons (\$1,000 or more)

The Oliver T. Carr Company

### Donors (\$500 or more)

Bonnie Blaszczyk, Merrill Lynch Realty

### Special Friends (\$250 or more)

Fairlington Amoco

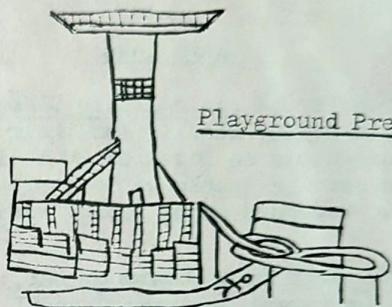
Fairlington Arbor Unit Owners Ass'n  
Holley, Hargett, & Spain Realtors (Bradlee)

### Boosters (\$100 or more)

Bed 'n Bath (Crystal City)

Fairlington Friends of the Environment

Look for the "Buy-a-Board" form in this issue of the PTA News to see how you can contribute!



We now have confirmed dates for our playground raising -- April 18-21. Please reserve these dates to join with friends and neighbors in making your children's dream come true!

Our children, working with Mr. Leathers, have designed a beautiful playground. We now must purchase durable, high quality weather-resistant wood for the playground. Each board will cost about \$3.00. The "Buy-a-Board" program enables parents, friends, neighbors, and relatives to make a tax deductible contribution towards the purchase of these boards.

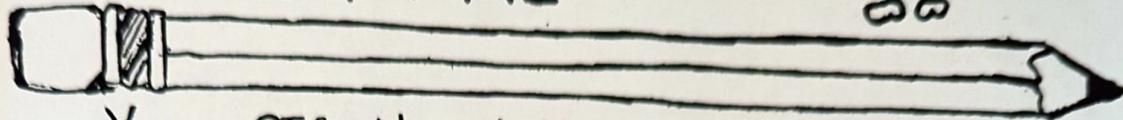
A "Buy-a-Board" form is attached to this issue of the PTA news. Please consider sending in a donation today. If you have already made a contribution, use this form to obtain a contribution from a friend, neighbor, or relative.

We've placed a large drawing of the playground on the main bulletin board in the school near the office. Each child can write his or her name on a popsicle stick (a symbolic "board") and place it on the playground drawing for each Buy-a-Board form donated or collected by his or her family.

As a special incentive, the class that returns the greatest number of "Buy-a-Board" forms by December 21, including donations from friends, neighbors, and relatives, will have an ice cream party! The top two classes will have the honor of being the first to play on the playground when it is completed! Remember, this contest ends December 21st.

Please feel free to call Barbara Effron at 931-6186 for more Buy-a-Board forms or if you have any questions about the playground.

# ABINGDON CARDINAL



## Your PTA Newsletter

### DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND "IN THE BUSINESS"?

The beautiful playground designed by the parents and children of Abingdon School will be constructed at a community playground raising, April 18-21.

We're grateful for the generous financial support we've received from the community. We also need your help in obtaining loans and donations of tools and materials. Please let us know if you have a friend or relative in the business of supplying or using tools and materials who might be interested in making a donation or loan of the following:

#1 Grade Lumber	Wrenches
Galvanized Steel Cable	Shovels
Sandpaper (lots)	Wheelbarrows
Nails	Saw Horses
Washers	Storage Van
Bolts	Pick Up Truck
Nuts	Rakes
Chain	Paint brushes
Conveyer Belt	
Concrete	
Stone Type 1A	
Miscellaneous Hardware	
Kerosene	
Trees	
Shrubs	
Chain Saws	
Circular Saws	
Power Drills	
Electric Sanders	
Bob Cat (Small bucket loader)	
High Wattage Emergency Lights	

There is also an immediate need for printing and photocopying services.

All who donate materials will receive free publicity in the education booklet we'll publish in May.

If you have any suggestions on obtaining tools and materials, please call Barbara Effron at 931-6186.



## JANUARY



Congratulations to the students of Abingdon -- and to our teachers, staff, parents, and friends -- for making the Buy-a-Board campaign such a success. During the contest period, we raised a total of \$5,016.00! Mrs. Byrne's 1st grade and Ms. Zialske's 2nd grade won the contest, and they will each have an ice cream party and will be the first to play on the playground when it is completed. Of course, the entire school is the real winner of this contest, because all the students will have a beautiful new playground in the Spring.

Although the contest has ended, the students can still place additional popsicle sticks (symbolic "boards") with their names on the large drawing of the playground near the office for each Buy-a-Board form that you return during the winter and spring. If you collected any forms over the holiday (or if you didn't have a chance to make a contribution in December), you are encouraged to send your forms to school.

Your playground committee is hard at work planning for our CONSTRUCTION WEEKEND, APRIL 18-21. Please mark your calendars now to reserve those dates.

If you would like more information about our playground raising, please call Barbara Effron at 931-6186.

# ABINGDON CARDINAL



Your PTA Newsletter



HAPPY  
VALENTINE'S  
DAY !!!

## CALENDAR

Feb. 18 - Washington's Birthday Holiday  
Feb. 21 - Abingdon Winter Concert - 7:30 p.m.  
Feb. 21 - School Board Meeting - 7:30 p.m.  
Education Center  
Mar. 1 - Kindergarten Registration Opens  
Mar. 5 - PTA Executive Board Meeting  
7:30 p.m.  
Mar. 26 - Abingdon Science Fair - 7:30 p.m.  
April 18 - 22 - Abingdon Community Play-  
ground Raising

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## PLAYGROUND COUNTDOWN

In just nine weeks, we'll have a beautiful new playground at Abingdon, thanks to the efforts of our teachers, staff, parents, friends, neighbors, and relatives.

Your playground committee is hard at work planning for our CONSTRUCTION WEEKEND, APRIL 18-21. Please mark your calendars now to reserve those dates. If you can take leave on Thursday or Friday, April 18-19, you can be of tremendous assistance in helping us get the playground started.

The playground-raising depends entirely on volunteer effort, and we have hundreds of jobs that can be performed by unskilled volunteers. Your children's dream playground can become a reality only if we all participate in this cooperative effort.

Volunteer forms will be sent home in March. If you would like more information about our playground-raising, please call Barbara Effron at 931-6186.



## PLAYGROUND PRESS

Thanks to the Arlington County Board for approving a \$5,000 grant for our playground-raising as recommended by the Park and Recreation Commission! We've reached 90% of our \$30,000 goal, thanks to your contributions and those of our neighbors and friends in the business community. If you haven't had a chance to participate in the Buy-a-Board program, your contribution can help us reach our goal. Your children can place a popsicle stick (a symbolic board) on the large drawing of the playground in the school for every form you donate or collect from a friend or neighbor. Everyone who buys-a-board will be listed in the Dedication Booklet that we'll publish when the playground is completed.

A special thanks to the following businesses and organizations who made major contributions to the playground fund last month:

Patrons (\$1,000 or more): Lancaster Landscapes, Inc.; Misner Development Corp. (Shirlington Gateway Hotel).

Donors (\$500 or more): Condominium Association of The Arlington.

Special Friends (\$250 or more) Venture Video and Computer Center.

Boosters (\$100 or more): United Virginia Bank; Universal Computers; Virginia Society of Professional Engineers, Northern Virginia Chapter.

# ABINGDON CARDINAL



## Your PTA Newsletter

### CALENDAR

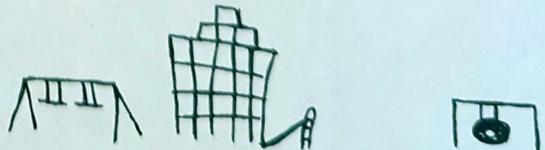
March 7 - School Board Meeting  
March 8 - Playground Volunteer Forms are due NOW  
March 12 - Public Hearing on Intermediate Schools - 7:30 p.m. Williamsburg Intermediate School (see newsletter for details)  
March 12 - County Board Meeting on School Budget 7:30 p.m., Kenmore Intermediate School  
March 20 - NO SCHOOL - Conference Day  
March 21 - School Board Meeting - 7:30 p.m.  
March 26 - Abingdon Science Fair, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.  
March 27 - NO SCHOOL - Conference Day  
March 29 - Cardinal Newsletter Deadline for April Issue  
April 18-21 - Abingdon Community Playground - Raising!

### ABINGDON PRESS

6 . . .  
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We're counting down to our new playground! In just 6 weeks we will begin construction and we need hundreds of volunteers to help build, and to provide meals and childcare for the workers. Mark your calendar now for April 18 - 21 to join your friends for FUN, FOOD, FITNESS, and FRESH AIR at our "playground raising".

This week each Abingdon family received a blue Playground Volunteer brochure. If you have not had a chance to decide how you can help, please do so this weekend and return the form to school on Monday. Additional forms are available in the office or from your child's teacher. If you would like more information about our playground raising, please call Barbara Effron at 931-6186.



TREAT YOURSELF  
AT OUR FESTIVE MEALS

You'll work up a great appetite building the playground, so we've arranged for wonderful meals, including donations from

Peking Gourmet Inn  
TGI Friday  
Casa Maria  
The Pawn Shop  
Heavenly Gate  
Popeyes Fried Chicken  
Krispy Kreme  
Atillas  
Atlantis Pizza  
Pizza Hut  
New Canton  
Four Seasons  
Roy Rogers  
McDonalds  
China Restaurant.



We'll also feature the specialties of your neighbors, and we'll have a great supply of drinks and snacks to keep you going between meals.

THANKS FROM THE ABINGDON PTA to area businesses and our many friends and neighbors who have participated in the "Buy-a-Board" program for the creative play area and amphitheater that will be built at a community playground-raising April 18-21. A special thanks to the following businesses and organizations who made major contributions to the playground fund last month:

**PATRONS (\$1000 or more):** Fairlington Properties, Inc. (their second donation as a Patron);

**SPECIAL FRIENDS (\$250 or more):**  
The Anden Group  
Shannon & Luchs  
Thomas & Fiske (Attorneys)



**BOOSTERS (\$100 or more):**  
Arlington Paraprofessional Association  
Potomac Psychological Resources  
Shirlington Texaco Service Center  
Washington Real Estate Investment Trust

We look forward to seeing you during construction weekend for fun, food, fitness and community spirit!



REMINDERS

\*\*\* We start each day at 7:30 a.m. Lunch break will begin just before noon, and we'll resume work promptly at 12:30. The evening meal generally will be at 6:30 p.m., but the time may vary.

\*\*\* We'll supply hammers, tape measures, work gloves, and all other tools and equipment you'll need. However, if you have any of these items, we encourage you to bring them with you.

\*\*\* In case of rain, we'll have a dry place for you to work. There is no rain date! We'll have vital jobs for you rain or shine.

\*\*\* We'll dedicate the playground at a festive ceremony, Saturday, May 4, at noon, cosponsored by the Abingdon PTA and the Fairlington Citizens Association. There will be food, rides, games, a craft fair, entertainment, and -- of course -- our beautiful new playground!

\*\*\* We will be sending you a reminder of your work shifts and an information flyer during the week of April 8 - 14. If you don't receive this by April 15, please call the school 845-7664 and request the information.

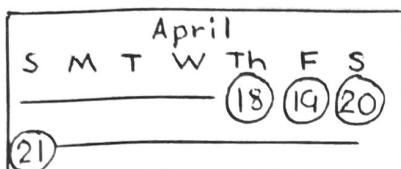


BALLOON LAUNCH

To celebrate the completion of our new playground, we will have a BALLOON LAUNCH on Friday, May 3. For \$1, students may launch a helium balloon with a card attached, requesting that whoever finds it send it back to Abingdon. The child whose card gets sent back from the farthest point will win a \$25 certificate to Toys R Us. Children may buy as many balloons as they wish; parents, friends and relatives may also purchase balloons.

On Friday afternoon Abingdon students will take all the balloons they bought out to the playground and we will release them all at the same time!!!

# THANKS TO YOU WE'RE READY TO BUILD!



## Abingdon Community Playground-Raising

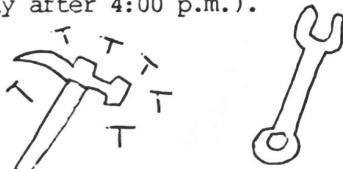
DATES: Thursday through Sunday  
April 18 - 21

TIMES: 7:30 a.m. until dark

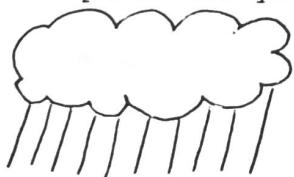
YOUR SHIFTS ARE ON THE ATTACHED FLYER.  
Please be prompt. If you are delayed, come as soon as possible and stay as long as you can. Lunch is at noon, and work will resume promptly at 12:30.

IF YOU HAVEN'T SIGNED UP FOR A SHIFT  
-- OR IF YOU CAN ADD ANOTHER SHIFT --  
WE NEED YOU! Please come early & stay as long as you can. We must fill 1200 four-hour shifts, and we still need men & women for all times. No skills or experience are required.

CHECK-IN for all volunteers (building, childcare, and food) will be outside the school, next to the gym (the place where you vote). 14-17 year olds may work on the site if checked-in and supervised by an adult. Signs in the parking lot will direct you to the Check-In Table. On Thurs. & Fri., the parking lot is used for staff & buses until 4:00 p.m., so please park on the street. You may use the parking lot on Sat. & Sun. (& any other day after 4:00 p.m.).



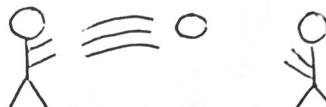
WHAT TO WEAR & BRING: Wear old clothes! If you can obtain work gloves, a hammer, and a tape measure, please bring them. If not, we'll provide what you need.



WE BUILD RAIN OR SHINE! There is no rain date. There will be a dry place to work inside Abingdon's gym. If you're willing to work outside, please bring raingear.

INFORMATION: Barbara Effron: 931-6186  
Abingdon School: 845-7664  
3035 S. Abingdon St.  
Arlington, VA 22206

DAY CAMP & CHILD CARE: Recreation specialists from Arlington County and parent volunteers will supervise a full schedule of crafts, movies, sports, games, and meals. The Day Camp is for children (ages 3-13) of parents working on the playground site. Children must be checked in & out of the Day Camp by their own parents.

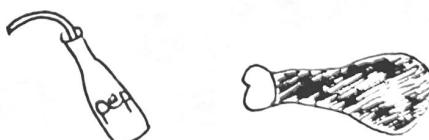


Thursday and Friday: Day Camp at the Fairlington Community Complex from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Children must bring a bag lunch and must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. After 6:00 p.m., childcare will be at Abingdon.

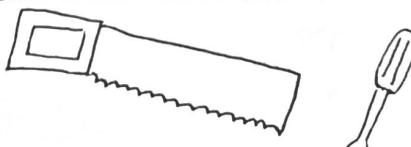
Saturday & Sunday: Day Camp at Abingdon from 7:30 a.m. until dark. Meals will be provided by the Day Camp. Children whose parents have signed permission slips will be able to help sand wood and wash tires in a safe, supervised location.

CHILDCARE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 3: If you requested care for children under 3 and have not yet been contacted, or if you have not made a request but would like to do so, call Susan Amchan at 931-8520.

DAY CAMP VOLUNTEERS. See the attached roster for assignments. If you signed up to help with childcare and a roster is not attached, call Dawn May (998-6510) or Susan Amchan (931-8520) to indicate when you can help.

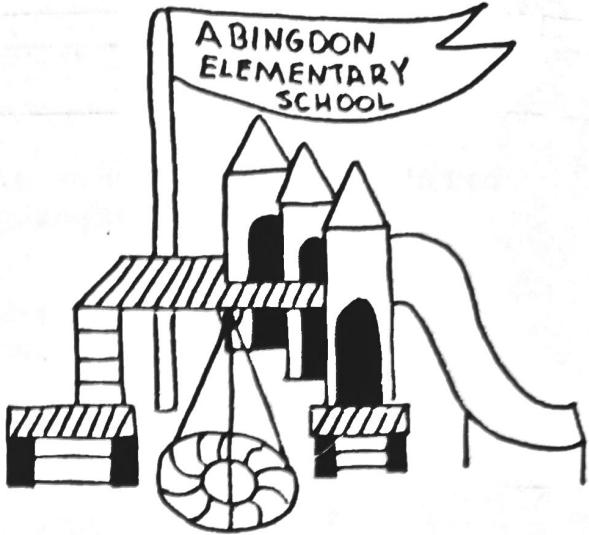


DONATIONS OF FOOD & SUPPLIES: Please bring all donations in disposable, throw-away containers only. Bring your donation to us at the time & place noted on the attached flyer. For information, call Linda Manson (379-2057).



TOOL CHECK-IN: April 13-15: Please review your pledge of tools on the attached list and bring your tools to the rear entrance of the Abingdon gym at the following times: Saturday & Sunday, April 13-14 (10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. each day). Monday, Apr. 15 (5:30-8:00 pm). There will be signs leading to the tool check-in from the parking lot. For information, call Peter Wyckoff (578-3633).

Abingdon Community  
Playground-Raising Committee  
Abingdon Elementary School  
3035 S. Abingdon Street  
Arlington, VA 22206  
Contact: Judi Garth, 931-3693  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



CHILDREN DESIGN A PLAYGROUND TO CELEBRATE  
THE UNION OF DIVERSE ARLINGTON NEIGHBORHOODS

From April 18-21, hundreds of residents in the Fairlington-Shirlington-Claremont area of Arlington will join together for a playground-raising at Abingdon Elementary School. In four days, volunteers from our diverse neighborhoods will transform the grounds of the school into a creative play area and amphitheater, featuring mazes, castles, slides, special features for the handicapped, and a variety of climbing structures to delight and challenge children of all ages.

At a time when many parts of the Washington area are undergoing the tensions of school closings and reorganizations, the community spirit producing our playground-raising demonstrates that neighborhoods can work together to produce a successful merger.

Only two years ago, we were informed that Claremont Elementary School, the vital center of Claremont for over 30 years, would be closed. Although saddened by this loss, we resolved to ensure that the Abingdon-Claremont merger would go smoothly to produce a strong school and a stronger community. Among the many programs we have initiated to unite Abingdon and Claremont, the most successful has been the proposal to develop a creative play area and outdoor theater.

The playground proposal has produced unprecedented excitement throughout our community. Hundreds of parents and neighbors already have participated in our planning and organizational activities, and many more have volunteered to join us for the playground-raising. Area businesses have generously donated funds to purchase high-quality materials for a durable playground, the Arlington County Board has approved a small parks grant, and we have received wonderful contributions from local restaurants to provide meals for volunteers during the playground-raising.

The playground project has provided a unique focus for the academic curriculum. The children have written essays about the playground, and the art and music programs have used the