

School Council

Council Executive

Chair
Lee Connell

Vice Chair
Mamjeet Shahi

Secretary
Rachel
Heimbecker

Treasurer
Lori Parkinson

Fundraising
Katya Lederman

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Walter Gretzky School Council is a team of parents and family members who represent all Walter Gretzky students and their families.

From the Chair

Hi! My name is Lee Connell. I accepted the role of Chair for our School Council in January. I have one child in Grade 6 at Walter Gretzky.

I spent a year on our PTA as Vice chair and then I decided I would take a break and just volunteer in my child's class. I have been fortunate enough to attend almost all of the trips and activities for the past three years now.

I also have a child who is 21 but when she was in elementary school I held positions on both the home and school association and school council.

I love spending as much time at the school as I can. I enjoy being connected to what is going on at the school and helping the teachers and staff to provide the best possible learning environment for our

children is a real passion of mine.

The last 20 days have been a whirlwind of activity.

There are two cultural events in the works: Shrove Tuesday on February 17th, a Christian event and Baisakhi on April 8th, a Sikh festival.

The school council will also be making and delivering hot chocolate to all students for Winter

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Cultural Event – Shrove Tuesday

During first block (9:15 to 10) on Tuesday, February 17th, a pancake will be given to every student to enjoy. The Sherwood restaurant is catering for us this year.

So.. what is Shrove Tuesday?

Also known as **Pancake Tuesday** or **Mardi Gras**, Shrove Tuesday marks the beginning of Lent. Certain Christian religions fast during the 40 days between Shrove Tuesday and Good Friday. Fasting in this instance is giving

up foods that are considered "rich" like butter, eggs, meat, or fat.

What does shrove mean?

When a person has been shaven, they have confessed their sins, been assured of God's forgiveness, and been given spiritual advice.

Why is it known as Mardi Gras?

Mardi is French for "Tuesday," and "Gras" is French for "fat." This expression refers to the

fact that Christian households did not use fats during Lent, so they would use up all the fats they had left in the kitchen on this day.

Where did Pancake Tuesday come from?

Along the same lines, butter, eggs and fats are used in making pancakes, so the traditional way of using up the fats in the house is to make pancakes.

Fun Facts:

1. The largest stack of pancakes was made up

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From the Chair cont'd

Carnival on Feb 13th.

Some other exciting things that are going on:

Bulletin Board - there will be a school council bulletin board going up soon in the front hallway and we will be posting information about upcoming events and volunteer needs. Be sure to come in and check it out often.

MAD Assemblies – coffee and tea will be made available to parents at every MAD (Making A Difference) assembly. Come on out and see what our amazing students have been doing to make a difference!

Council meetings – all meetings are open to all parents and guardians. **Child care** will be made available for parents who need it. Our next meeting

is on February 24th at 7pm. These meetings may run up to two hours but never over. Please email us at

wgschoolcouncil@gmail.com to let us know how many children you will need care for so we can be sure appropriate accommodations are made. Looking forward to seeing new faces!

Lee Connell

Chair
WG School Council

Voting Council Members

Did you know that anyone can be a voting council member?

In addition to the roles and expectations for all council members, all voting members shall:

- Attend 60% of the council meetings to maintain eligibility; and
- Share views of other parents and members of school community with the council. Email Lee or MJ

if you have any questions or would like to become a voting member.



“Sorry for any inconvenience... we are trying to change the world.”

Win a Book!

The last page of this newsletter is a feedback form. When you provide feedback, your family's name will be put in a draw to win a book!

So, let us know how we are doing.

What is and isn't working?

Do you have any time to volunteer?

Do you have suggestions for some fun events?

We want to hear from you!



Shrove Tuesday *cont'd from cover*

of 60 large round pancakes and measured an impressive 76cm tall. It broke the Guinness World Records in 2012.

2. It is widely believed that the tradition of pancake races began in 1445 in Olney in Buckinghamshire when a woman was making pancakes but lost track of time. Upon hearing the church bells to signal the beginning of the Shrove Tuesday service, she grabbed a headscarf and ran out of the door to church with both pan and pancake in hand, so not to spoil it

3. In Newfoundland, Canada, small household items are baked into the pancakes, such as rings, thimbles, coins and pencil stubs. The person who discovers a particular item interprets it as some form of meaning. For example a coin could mean future prosperity, a ring could signify marriage and a thimble, in the past, suggested that the owner might become a seamstress.

4. The largest pancake was created in Rochdale, Manchester, UK in 1994, by the Co-Operative

Union, Ltd. The pancake measured a massive 15.01 metres in diameter and was 2.5 cm thick. It also weighed a heavy three tonnes!

5. The highest ever flip was performed by Dominic Cuzzacrea. The pancake reached a height of 9.47 metres at the Walden Galleria Mall in Cheektowaga, New York, USA, in November 2010.



"Thoughts become things....

Choose the good ones!"

Meet Some of Your Council

Vice Chair:

My Name is Mamjeet Shahi (MJ) and I am the New Vice chair for the WGE School Council.

I have both my kids, Raveena Shahi and Harneil Shahi, attending school at WGE.

I am an Entrepreneur (Self-employed) myself with lots experience in Sales and Marketing. Due to having the flexibility in my schedule, I have actively participated in many volunteer activities within the school and our community. From volunteering on school trips to helping kindergarten teachers with class activities.

I am eager and excited to work alongside with great parents and the school Principal to make sure we thrive for more development and improvements in the near future.

Secretary:

My name is Rachel Heimbecker and I have held the role of Recording Secretary for 2 years. Just like most of us I am a busy working mom and wanted to find a way to be involved at the school and volunteer my time. My children are in grade 2 and 4 and we love the Walter Gretzky school community.

Seeing all the great progress and events that our PTA has been able to do over the years is all thanks to great volunteers. I look forward to continuing to volunteer over the next many years.

Milk Program Coordinator:

My name is Kerri Harrison and I am the Milk Program Coordinator and have been since we moved over to Walter Gretzky from Ryerson Heights. When our school opened in January 2012, I was also the Hot Lunch Coordinator until this year when I handed over the reins so that I could focus on getting back into the workforce.

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Volunteers Needed

Being a volunteer doesn't always happen during school hours.

Yes, the majority of volunteers are needed to put on events such as Hot Lunch or Hoops for Hearts, however, we do need volunteers with special skills like being a

writer or having a flair for gathering donations.

Maybe you are really good at a sport and have time to coach after school a few days a week.

Don't underestimate what you could bring to the table. The bottom line is, the more volunteers we have the better our school

can become and the more opportunities our children have available to them.

Please email our Volunteer Coordinators at wgschoolcouncil@gmail.com.

They are Laura Ryder and Seema Gill.

Council Members cont'd

I have two children that attend Walter Gretzky Elementary and I was a stay at home Mom (until this year) which is exactly why I volunteer my time, for the kids. I was also part of the reading program where I read with different students every morning for 30 minutes. I found this to be very rewarding, as I was able to see first hand how the students develop and learn.

I love seeing all the changes that our school and PTA have made over the past few years and look forward to volunteering as much time as I can in the future.

Volunteer Coordinator:

My name is Laura Ryder & I am one of the Volunteer Coordinators. I am new to Brantford in the past few years and I have 3 children @ WGES. Parent volunteers offer a huge resource and support base for the school community while showing our kids the importance of participating in the larger community.

By interacting with teachers, administrators, and other parents on a regular basis, I will be able to gain a better understanding of my children's daily activities. This will allow me to tap into trends and fads of school life that can help me communicate with my kids as they grow and change (all without intruding on their privacy or personal space). I look forward to working with other parents as we build up our school and make it the best for our kids!

Grants Coordinator:

Hello ☺

My name is Tricia Sawkins and I am the Grants Coordinator of the Walter Gretzky School Council. I have been a high school

teacher for the past 16 years, my eldest child recently graduated from Walter Gretzky and my youngest child is currently in grade 2.

I come to the coordinator position with enthusiasm and energy to search out and apply for grants that will allow our children to have an opportunity to enhance their educational, personal and social growth. These grants can allow us, as a school, to help promote student leadership, student creativity, healthy lifestyles and offer programs for parents to show us how to help our children further succeed in their learning.

Currently I am working on the Green Apple Grant, the Crayola Leadership Grant, the Lowes Toolbox for Education Grant, and the Parent Outreach Grant. These grants involve filling out applications, and submitting proposals for programs.

If you have any interest in helping out in this area, or if you know of any grants that are available for us to apply for, please send me an email at wgschoolcouncil@gmail.com or contact the school at 519-770-1288 and leave me a message. I look forward to meeting you at our next school council meeting. ☺

Next time:

Treasurer, Fundraising Coordinator, and Co Volunteer Coordinator.

Shout outs! And other stuff....

To all our friends at Walter Gretzky Elementary School that will be celebrating Chinese New Year on February 19 2015, we wish you:

Gōng xǐ fā cái "

献上节日的问候与祝福,愿你拥有一个充满生机和欢乐的新年。

Xiànshàng jiérì de wèn hòu yǔ zhùfú, yuàn nǐ yǒngyǒu yīgè chōngmǎn shēngjī hé huānlè de xīnnián

Season's greetings and sincere wishes for a bright and happy New Year!



Year of the Sheep

HELP OUR SCHOOL WIN \$10,000 IN BOOKS!

Go to <https://www.lor10.ca/en/schools/new> and Nominate our school. The more nominations the better our chances so get aunts, uncles, sisters, grandfathers, best friends, students, heck.. get the cat and dog to nominate us... our library will thank you!

Nominations are only being accepted until **FEB 28TH, 2015**.

FEBRUARY FEEDBACK

We'd like to know what you think. Please specify compliments, concerns, issues etc. for comment and response in next month's newsletter.

Compliments:

Concerns :

Recommendations:

Volunteering:

Name For Draw Prize : _____