



**Palmetto Middle School**

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305-238-3911

[www.pms.dadeschools.net](http://www.pms.dadeschools.net)

Lisa Noffo, Principal  
Randi Trazenfeld, PTSA President

April 2008 Volume 38 Issue 8

## PMS & PTSA Calendar April '08

- 3/28-4/4 No School (Spring Break)
- 4/10 Board Meeting 9:00 am
- 4/17 EESAC Meeting 8:00am
- 4/17 PTSA Annual Election Meeting 9:15 am  
Media Center Program – Preparing for  
High School and Beyond Presented by  
Miami-Palmetto Senior High School  
Counselors
- 4/18 Career Day
- 5/15 EESAC meeting 8:00 am
- 5/15 Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast and  
PTSA Installation of Officers

### Message from the PMS PTSA President

## Hello Parents, Students, Teachers and Community Members!

As we begin the last nine-week grading period, it is only natural to start thinking about summer plans and of course, for the eighth graders, the anticipation of High School. But we should not fast forward through the last two months of school without slowing down to give our attention to several important and exciting events.

The Legislative Session is underway in Tallahassee. You can become informed about pending bills and issues that affect every Floridian by logging onto [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov) or [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov). There you may follow bills, learn how to communicate effectively with your State Representatives and become active participants in our democratic system. The Florida PTA is also a valuable resource. Information is easily accessed at <http://floridapta.org/legislation.htm>. If you have questions about how to advocate and make your voice heard, please contact the PMS PTSA's Legislative Committee Chair, Eileen Faradji at [efaradji@bellsouth.net](mailto:efaradji@bellsouth.net).

Our PTSA's annual election meeting will be April 17 at 9:15 AM in the Media Center. Elections will be held for the incoming PTSA board as well as for EESAC parent positions. Anyone wishing to serve on EESAC should email me expressing their interest at [Randibrt@aol.com](mailto:Randibrt@aol.com). The next PTSA meeting will also feature a presentation of year-end reports by committee chairs. Much information about our organization will be conveyed so if you have friends who will be attending Palmetto Middle School next year, please encourage them to attend. Additionally, we will host the Miami-Palmetto Senior High School Counselors who will provide parents with valuable information on "Preparing for High School and Beyond."

Secondary School Reform (SSR) is upon us. Among other things, SSR requires students as early as ninth grade to consider their choice for a career or profession. The PMS PTSA is working closely with administration to create a Career Day, which will take place on April 18, designed to expose students to a variety of careers and professions. We still need presenters to introduce their career to our students. Please see the last page of this newsletter for Career Day flyer for additional information.

The Special Projects Committee is beginning their work as they fulfill the teacher requests approved by the membership. These include the purchase of four (4) SmartBoard packages, a laminating machine, a Classroom Performance System, software, an LCD projector, headphones for computers and many math manipulatives. Our goal is to get these items into the classrooms as soon as possible.

It was wonderful seeing so many Palmetto Middle School parents and students at the Taste of Pinecrest. The PTSA sincerely thanks parent Susan Montesino for being our representative to the "Taste of Pinecrest" Committee to prepare for this event. The partnership between the schools in Pinecrest, the Pinecrest Business Association and area businesses translates into successful students, involved parents and a supportive community. We extend a heartfelt "Thank You" to the PMS Fine Arts Department for their support, to the parents who volunteered and to the students who performed during the festival and submitted artwork to the exhibition.

Have a safe and relaxing Spring Break *-Randi Trazenfeld*



Please e-mail articles, dates and important information for the next Lancer Letter to [kfdesign@bellsouth.net](mailto:kfdesign@bellsouth.net) with PMS newsletter typed into the subject line. Thanks! Kim Foster

## A Note from Mrs. Noffo

A special thank you to all of the Palmetto Middle School parents for sending your children to school relaxed and confident for the FCAT test. You truly "rode the wave"!

As we move forward, after FCAT mode, let us not forget the three "A's" – academics, attendance and activities. There are many instructional days left in the school year and the rigor of our curriculum will continue to challenge our students. It is very important that we continue with good attendance practices and enjoy the many extra-curricular activities that are planned to close the 2007-2008 school year.

We thank you for your support through out the school year thus far and ask that you will continue to support your child and Palmetto Middle School. We invite you to attend some or all of the great performances that have been scheduled. To assist, the following dates have been confirmed:

- 4/09/08 Student Talent Show
- 4/16/08 Orchestra/Chorus Spring Show
- 4/23/08 Dance Show
- 4/24/08 Dance Show
- 4/29/08 Curriculum Fair
- 5/07/08 Drama Production
- 5/08/08 Drama Production
- 5/13/08 NJHS Induction Ceremony
- 5/15/08 Band Concert
- 5/21/08 Student Awards Night

Please mark your calendars. The school will continue to remind you of these events using the Connect-Ed telephone system and our marquee located in the front of the school.

## Teacher & Staff Appreciation Week!

**Get Ready for Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week May 5-9** The PTSA is planning an exciting week of recognition for our teachers and staff. If you would like to volunteer to donate food items, gifts or your time, please contact Paula Kivlahan at 305-234-3288 or e-mail [pkivlahan@msn.com](mailto:pkivlahan@msn.com) for details on how to get involved!

## Taste of Pinecrest a huge success!

The Taste of Pinecrest (TOP) was a huge success. We would like to thank Pinecrest Business Association, all the Restaurants who participated in TOP, and all of the volunteers from Palmetto Middle School: Cecilia Richter, Janet Bass, Mary Warrell, Sharon Hickey, Hope Phillips, Laura Schwartz, Lilly Sanchez, Hal Rosenfeld, Krista Lundquist, Melissa Montovino, Paula Kivlahan, Valerie Marquez, Randi and Natanya Trazenfeld, Amanda Marquez, Chelsea Lerna, Jill Rubin, Anne Orsillo and Family. Thanks to everyone involved, Susan Montesino



## Parent Donation Program Update

*The end of the year is near . . . thanks to everyone who participated!*

It is hard to believe that the 2007-2008 school year is coming to an end. We would like to thank the 239 Palmetto Middle School families who have donated over \$24,000 to our Parent Donation Program this past school year.

As you know, the PTSA relies on the support and dedication of our Palmetto Middle School families to continue our tradition of excellence. We will continue to accept donations through the end of the school year, so please think about making a donation now if you haven't already done so. Together we can "ride the wave of excellence"!

## Monthly Mailing Thanks

Thanks once again to the volunteers who copied, folded and stuffed the March *Lancer Letter*. A special thank you goes out to Conner Tamburino for helping out so much, each and every time he sees us there. Shifra Lipson, Mary Warrel, Claudia Gordon, Susan Montesino, Laura Schwartz, Heidi deLisser, Diana Tejada and Cathy Viola.

## Box Tops

The collection and counting of Box Tops for the 2nd 9 weeks has been completed and the winners are:

**Dr. Cruz**, who collected over 1800 Box Tops, will receive a \$25.00 Border's gift card.

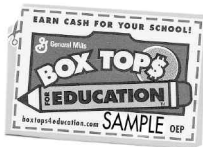
**Ms. O'Hara**, who collected over 1500 Box Tops, will receive a \$15.00 Border's gift card.

**Mr. Kaplan**, who collected over 900 Box Tops, will receive a \$10.00 Border's gift card.

The PTSA would also like to thank these teachers for their support: Ms. Beames, Ms. Fritz, Ms. Hopta, Ms. Iturmendi, Ms. Molina Rodriguez, and Ms. Schalit for a grand total of 4763 Box Tops.

We will continue to collect Box Tops throughout the 3rd and 4th grading periods. For more information, contact me at coristros@bellsouth.net.

Cori Strosnider



## Emerald Garden – Outdoor Classroom Update

Many exciting and new purchases have been made to the Emerald Garden. In order to help facilitate the idea of an "outdoor classroom" we have purchased the following items:

- 24 white plastic stackable chairs
- 1 heavy duty tarp & bungees to keep the chairs clean when not in use
- 30+ clipboards for the students to lean on and write
- 4 market umbrellas for added shade
- 1 portable white board easel with markers, eraser & cleanser
- 1 basket on wheels for transporting any extra teaching materials

A sign-in book has been made and will be kept in the media center. This will allow teachers to "reserve" the space, in advance, for a given day and period. **Teachers: please feel free to take advantage of this beautiful space... coordinate your times and please have the students re-stack and cover the chairs when finished.** The other materials will be stored in the media center. Please see Mrs. Wexler for the reservation book. The students really seem to enjoy being in the Garden and we hope you will too!

*The Beautification Committee:*

*Christian Armstrong, Sharon Biddix-Maessen, Cyndi Eisenberg and Lauren Mayer*

## Get Weekly PTSA E-Mail Updates

Each week, nearly 800 PMS families receive PTSA Link with valuable information for parents, students and faculty, plus links to the Lancer Letter and monthly calendar of activities. To receive PTSA Link, send an e-mail to [ptsalink@bellsouth.net](mailto:ptsalink@bellsouth.net), including your name and e-mail address. **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle** More than 100 families have opted out of our monthly mailing – saving nearly \$500 a year that can be used to better our school, such as underwriting the expenses for the Reading Department's Accelerated Reader program. That's in addition to the invaluable volunteer time and resources that can be used elsewhere. Help us save! The PTSA is collecting names of families that wish to forego receiving the monthly mailing which includes the Lancer Letter and school calendar. The PTSA Link includes a link where parents can read (or print out) the information online. To opt-out of receiving the monthly mailing, send an e-mail with your student(s) name(s) and your e-mail address to Mariela Ray at [mray@bellsouth.net](mailto:mray@bellsouth.net).

The PTSA Link is a wonderful source of information about what goes on at your child's school. It quietly "appears" in your e-mail box once a week without fail. Many of us rely on that information to keep us up to date on the happenings of PMS. This process would not happen without Martha Limner. Every week she gathers pertinent information to place in the link and send to you. Thank you so much Martha for all of your hard work throughout the year!!

## Sun Trust program extended until June 30 for benefit of our school!

SunTrust Bank is offering a program called "My Cause" which demonstrates their commitment to the community. SunTrust will donate \$100. to our PTSA for any person (age 15 or over) who opens a new checking account and obtains a SunTrust Visa Check Card by June 30, uses the debit card at least once before August 15, 2008 and submits an online redemption form. Go to any SunTrust Bank to open the account and tell them that the Palmetto Middle School PTSA is your "Cause." What a simple way to help Palmetto Middle School! Thus far the PMS PTSA has earned more than \$700 from this program

## Florida PTA Dad's Summit

**When:** April 11 & 12, 2008

**Where:** Florida PTA Headquarters in Orlando

The Florida PTA Dad's Summit will feature workshops such as "Dads: A Critical Part of Parent Involvement", as well as tips on how to recruit Dads to your organization. Presenters will include some of our own Dads on the Florida PTA Board of Directors along with Brian Davis from the All Pro Dad's organization. Make your reservations today for this exciting and informative weekend by contacting your local county council 305-995-1102 or by contacting the Florida PTA office at 1-800-373-5782.

## EESAC Elections — Parent Positions Available

Three parent positions and an alternate position are available for the Palmetto Middle School EESAC. Interested parents may submit their name to Randi Trazenfeld at randibr@aol.com for inclusion on the ballot. Elections will take place on Thursday, April 17, 2008 at 9:15 AM in the Media Center. If you have any questions you may contact EESAC chair Susan Parrott at sparrot@dadeschools.net or PTSA President Randi Trazenfeld at randibr@aol.com.

## Baby Sitter Course Kudos

In last month's Lancer Letter, when thanking all of the wonderful volunteer teachers at the Baby Sitters Course, I was remiss in not mentioning Village Councilman Nancy Harter. Nancy has taught the Baby Sitters course for us over the last few years and is always well liked by the kids. She is another one of those wonderful volunteers that comes to help out even though she does not have children at our school. Thank you so much, Nancy for all of your efforts on the behalf of Palmetto Middle School!

# Battle of the Books? What's That?

We are excited! The annual Sunshine State Young Reader's Battle of the Books is almost here. This year six middle schools will be competing and Palmetto Middle School is hosting the competition. This will be our third year of participation in the battle.

Students have been busy reading the 15 Sunshine State Young Readers Books. They have been on the top ten list of books checked out in the media center for the last six months. Thanks to the support of the PTSA we have at least ten copies of each book. Students are reading the books, taking the AR tests, and getting their yellow bookmarks punched. Those students who have read three or more of the books and have their bookmarks punched will be voting for their favorite in late April. Students who vote in the election will also be entered into two drawings for an iPod Shuffle. The book with the most votes across the state will be declared the Sunshine State Readers Book for the year. This year's books include:

*The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan

*Code Orange* by Carolyn B. Cooney

*Drums, Girls, & Dangerous Pie* by Jordan Sonnenblick

*The Anybodies* by N.E. Bode

*Gossamer* by Louis Lowry

*The Old Willis Place* by Mary Downing Hahn

*Princess Academy* by Shannon Hale

*Jackie's Wild Seattle* by Will Hobbs

*Under the Same Sky* by Cynthia DeFelice

*The Ravenmaster's Secret* by Elvira Woodruff

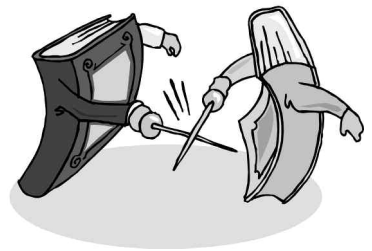
*Chicken Boy* by Frances O'Rourke

*Surviving Antarctica: Reality TV 2083* by Andrea White

*Listening for Lions* by Gloria Whelan

*House of Red Fish* by Graham Salisbury

*Heat* by Mike Lupica



The first six books above were chosen for the competition. Each school has a team of six students competing including one expert for each book. They will be asked questions by a panel of judges and the school with the most correct answers will be declared the winner. The bulletin board across from the main office has a synopsis of each book.

Last year five schools competed and the Palmetto Middle team won first place. This year, Palmetto, Southwood, and Jorge Mas Canosa middle schools will compete in the first round at Palmetto Middle School on April 24th. Ammons, Campbell Drive, and Homestead middle schools will compete in the first round at Ammons Middle on April 23rd. On May 8th the two winning schools will compete at Palmetto Middle School for the championship. It is truly a pleasure to see our students excited about reading.

We are looking forward to the PTSA's participation in this event. We will need volunteers to help make our visitors feel welcome, help feed students and parents lunch, and encourage our contestants. Please contact Ms. Parrott by April 11th if you can help. She can be reached at the school phone number, 305-238-3911 extension 2215.

## Friday Pizza Sales Thanks

Pizza Ladies, Thank you so much for the unending assistance that you provide to the pizza sales this year. A special "shout-out" goes to Susan Montesino, Laura Schwartz (and daughter Leia!) and Krista Lundquist who are our absolute pizza sales die hards. I (and the kids) thank you from the bottom of my heart. Melissa Montovino



# CAREER DAY

Is coming to

**PALMETTO MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 2008**

Please share your career with our students and help guide them toward a rewarding future. You have the knowledge and power to change their lives!

Yes! I'll be happy to share my job on Career Day!

Number of hours available       Morning       Afternoon       All Day

Sorry, I cannot attend but I might be able to recommend someone. Please call me.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Career \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Special needs \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this completed form to Mrs. Anderson-Dorsey  
or fax to 305.233.4849.**

If guest speakers have children that attend Palmetto Middle, they are not guaranteed to be assigned to their child's teacher.