



**Palmetto Middle School**  
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Lisa Noffo, Principal  
Randi Trazenfeld, PTSA President

May 2008 Volume 38 Issue 9

## PMS & PTSA Calendar May '08

- 5/7, 5/8 Drama Production, Suessical the Musical
- 5/12 Registration for Summer Phys. Ed. at Palmetto High School. See Mrs. Toledo
- 5/5-9 Teacher Appreciation Week
- 5/9 Teacher Appreciation Luncheon
- 5/13 NJHS Induction Ceremony
- 5/14 EESAC Meeting – 8:00 AM Rm 103
- 5/15 Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast and PTSA Installation of Officers  
9:00 AM Media Center
- 5/15 Band Concert
- 5/21 Student Awards Night
- 5/22 Joint Board Meeting (outgoing and incoming board members) 9:00 AM
- 6/5 Last day of school. Have a great summer!

### Message from the PMS PTSA President

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

This final issue of the Lancer Letter for the 2007-2008 school year gives me a chance to reflect upon my presidency and the accomplishments of the past school year. I recall that at the beginning of the year the PTSA board set forth three year-long goals: to promote parental involvement, support school spirit and facilitate communication and to achieve these goals, not only within our school campus but by reaching out into the community. In reviewing the events, programs and activities that the PTSA supported this year it is clear that we accomplished our goals and more!

None of this would have been possible without the outstanding individuals who comprise the leadership of the PTSA. On behalf of myself and every student, parent and teacher at the school, I express heartfelt gratitude to the following amazing individuals:

**Hope Phillips:** 1st Vice-President and Safe-Sitter Course Chair;  
**Melissa Montovino:** 2nd Vice-President and Pizza Sales Chair;  
**Darla March:** 3rd Vice-President and Special Projects Chair;  
**Janet Bass:** Recording Secretary;  
**Sharon Hickey:** Corresponding Secretary and By-Laws Chair;  
**Hal Rosenfeld:** Treasurer extraordinaire and PMS Volunteer of the Year;  
**Lilly Sanchez:** Volunteers Chair;  
**Sharon DeWitt:** Volunteer Database Chair;  
**Marge Jenetopulos and Sherida Hunter:** Membership Co-chairs (of the largest PTSA in Miami-Dade County and second largest in the state!)

It has been my honor and privilege to work with this team of volunteers whose professionalism, positive attitude and willingness to put forth maximum effort have made this year a success. Palmetto Middle School is incredibly fortunate to have these dedicated volunteers who continue to give of themselves day in and day out.

The board cannot do it alone. We are dependent upon the many committee chairs who have each done their part to make this year successful. The names of each committee chair and their contributions are highlighted in articles written by the vice-presidents found within this issue.

While I am a little sad that my tenure as president has come to an end, I am delighted to be leaving the PTSA with an excellent leadership team! I would like to congratulate the incoming PTSA officers on their election:

<b>Melissa Montovino,</b> President	<b>Hope Phillips,</b> 1st Vice-President
<b>Darla March,</b> 2nd Vice-President	<b>Maricel Lam,</b> 3rd Vice-President
<b>Maria Castiello,</b> Treasurer	<b>Susan Fusfield,</b> Recording Secretary
<b>Sharon Hickey,</b> Corresponding Secretary	

Working with dedicated parents and caring teachers has made my two years as president not only possible, but incredibly rewarding and enjoyable. Thank you again for your support, involvement and participation in our PTSA and for giving me the opportunity to lead this organization!

—Randi Trazenfeld

## A Note from Mrs. Noffo

Please be reminded that there is still plenty of instructional time left and we will continue to “ride the wave” of excellence all the way to June 5th! Our teachers have prepared rigorous lessons and will assist your child in learning new material and will also be reviewing previous lessons to prepare for upcoming final exams.

Please continue to strive for perfect attendance. Unfortunately, Palmetto Middle School fell to 5th place in attendance rankings for the 3rd nine week period. Let's finish on top!

Our students will have an early release time for the last three days of school. **All students will be released at 2:30 pm on June 3, 4, and 5th.** Final exams will be administered June 2, 2008 through June 5th, 2008. As per MDCPS rule, no exams will be administered early.

The end of the school year brings expected joy at finishing another year, and perhaps some sadness at leaving behind a year filled with great experiences, teachers, and friends. Consider this time to be a bittersweet time for your child and help them celebrate as we ease into the end-of-school days.

Thank you parents for your continued support of Palmetto Middle School, it is only with all our stakeholders working together that we have been able to truly “ride the wave” of excellence!

## Show Your Appreciation to Teachers & Staff

### May 5 through May 9 is National Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week!

Please take a moment during this week to send a note or e-mail to your child's teacher and let them know they are appreciated! You can also get involved by volunteering to help at the staff luncheon hosted by the PTSA on Friday, May 9th. We will need food and drink donations and helpers for set up, serving and clean up. Contact Paula Kivlahan at Pkivlahan00@msn.com or 305-234-3288.



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

## Committee Chairs Wanted!

We are still looking for a few volunteers to chair PTSA committees for next year. These committees include:

- **PTSA Awards:** Become familiar with PTA award opportunities (County and State) and insure appropriate applications are filed.
- **Public Relations:** Notify the media of newsworthy events and activities at Palmetto Middle School.
- **Programs:** Coordinate programs of interest to parents (utilizing community resources such as The Parent Academy and other organizations)
- **School Store:** Manage the PTSA school store including ordering of supplies to be sold and scheduling of volunteers. The School Store is in the cafeteria and is usually open daily from 8:30-9:00 AM

If you are interested in chairing or co-chairing any of these committees, please contact Melissa Montovino at [melissamontovino@yahoo.com](mailto:melissamontovino@yahoo.com).

## Monthly Mailing Thanks

The Monthly Mailer committee would like to extend a very big thank you to all the ladies that helped throughout the school year to make the monthly mailing happen. You all know who you are, and I hope you understand our level of gratitude. We would also like to thank the copying and folding committee and helpers without whom this mailer would not be possible.

I would like to personally thank my wonderful partner Dawn Ratiner, for making the task we took on seem a lot less painful. Dawn, you are a wonderful lady!!! Thank you... thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

– *Mariela Ray*

## Thank you Carrie!

The Palmetto Middle School PTSA Board expresses its sincere appreciation to Carrie Boone and "**Carrie'd Away Events**" for hosting beautiful breakfasts for us all year that she served with grace, style and her incessant smile. If you'd like to contact Carrie to help you with a small party, she can be reached at [rboone1061@msn.com](mailto:rboone1061@msn.com) or 305-301-6542.

## Thanks Kim

Month after month, Kim Foster-Cosner, spends hours designing this newsletter. A graphic designer and art director, Kim may be reached at 305-669-6874 or [kfdesign@bellsouth.net](mailto:kfdesign@bellsouth.net) for corporate or institutional design projects.



## PMS PTSA Membership #1 in Dade, #2 in Florida!

A big thank you to our Palmetto Middle School Administration, Teachers, Parents and Students for their support with PTSA membership. We are proud to announce that Palmetto Middle School has the LARGEST PTSA in Dade County and the 2nd Largest PTSA in the State of Florida. This allows us a big voice in Tallahassee.

Congratulations to Mrs. Morales for achieving 100% membership in her 4th period. She and her students recently enjoyed their pizza party to celebrate. Thanks to Ricky Warman and PAPA JOHN'S for their continued support of Palmetto Middle School.

## Career Day

The 2008 Palmetto Middle School Career Day was a great success. It would not have been possible without the amazing coordination of Palmetto's very own Mrs. Anderson, and Career Specialist, Tara Turner. A big thank you to the moms who donated food: Lourdes Arata, Maria Atkinson, Rose Boise, Sheri Keitz, Ivonne Ortiz, Cristina Robinson, Bonnie Rollo, Martha Salazar, and Arlene Junco. The fabulous brunch was put together by the wonderful and talented Carrie Boone and Lilly Sanchez, thank you very much ladies! Another thank you goes out to the PMS Cheerleaders and 5000 Role Models for helping escort our speakers around school. I would personally like to thank Susan Montesino, Melissa Montovino, and Gio Lester for helping to put this day together. Thank you to the parents who took the time out of their busy day to come and spend the day with us and speak to our students. The day was filled with great speakers and wonderful field events. Power 96 came out and had some fun with the students. They even went live on the radio with our kids. All in all it was a very educational day at Palmetto Middle School!

– *Monique Patino-Jimenez*

## Limited Number of Yearbooks Available!

First come, first served. To purchase one of the few remaining yearbooks, come to room 232 before or after school.

## EESAC Parent Members Elected

Congratulations to the following parents who were elected to EESAC: Sharon Hickey, Darla March, Melissa Montovino, Laura Schwartz, and Riva Steinman. Diane James and Diana Tejada were elected as parent alternates. Thank you for your willingness to serve on this important committee.

## 8th Grade Dance on May 10th

A limited number of tickets for the 8th grade dance are still available. The cost is \$40. (See Mrs. Anderson to purchase) If anyone has Mardi Gras themed decorations to donate or would like to add their name to the list of parents volunteering to help with the event, please contact Mrs. Anderson at [tdanderson@dadeschools.net](mailto:tdanderson@dadeschools.net)



## Seussical the Musical

Don't miss the PMS drama production on May 7th and 8th at 7:00 PM. \$5.00 tickets at the door.

# First Vice President Committee Report

**BULLETIN BOARD:** Maureen Piero continued to keep the bulletin board across from the security desk in the breezeway updated with our newsletter, community events and general PTSA information.

**COPY ROOM:** – These dedicated volunteers spent countless hours, not to mention a lot of paper making copies for the teachers. This service is so valuable because the teachers time should be spent teaching! They also copied the Lancer Letter and school calendar for the Monthly Mailing. Thank you, Marcia Choiseul and Lily Meyreles for coordinating the copy room volunteers and always getting the job done timely and efficiently.

**E-MAIL DIRECTORY:** Affectionately known as the PTSA Link this email news letter is sent to nearly 800 families every week. Martha Limner has done a fantastic job in keeping us informed of “this weeks important events”. The Lancer Letter, School Calendar and other important documents are found on the link making it easy for parents to have this information at their finger tips.

**HOSPITALITY:** Again this year Carrie Boone has truly “catered” our PTSA Meetings. Many of you have enjoyed her wonderful presentations and home made goodies. And the good news is.... She’s doing it again next year!

**LEGISLATIVE:** This valuable committee was a committee of one. But under the leadership of Eileen Faradji there are now several members working to keep us informed. Progress is being made on many fronts both locally and statewide. With tax cuts sure to affect our school, this service is essential.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Marge Jenetopulos and Sherida Hunter have led our membership to being the LARGEST PTA in Dade County and the second largest in the state. We are 1625 members strong. With numbers like that, the “powers that be” pay attention!

**MONTHLY MAILER:** This committee, lead by Mariela Ray and Dawn Ratiner, consists of a group of dedicated ladies that stuff the monthly newsletter and other important information in envelopes to be sent to every family at Palmetto Middle School. Along with Martha Limner, they began the initiative to “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Save”. Now, families that would like to receive this valuable information by e-mail only can do so. This saves money, paper and time. Consider “opting out” by sending your email to [ptsalink@bellsouth.net](mailto:ptsalink@bellsouth.net)

**NEWSLETTER:** Kim Foster has made our Lancer Letter an anticipated event. She is responsible for laying out, editing and publishing our newsletter on a monthly basis.

**SCHOOL PROJECTS:** This is the committee that gets to spend the money that the Ways and Means Committees make. This year, under the direction of Darla March, a committee was formed to help spend the money. As we speak, important items are being purchased to directly impact our children in the classroom.

**TEACHER APPRECIATION FUNCTIONS:** Welcome Back Breakfast, End of Year Luncheon and everything in between. We like to let our teachers know that we appreciate all they do. Paula Kivlahan has done a fantastic job planning and implementing these events.

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATION:** Volunteers are the foundation for what we all do. Without volunteers this PTSA would not be as productive as it is. Lilly Sanchez and Sharon DeWitt have gathered the names of all of our wonderful volunteers and recruited them for various activities throughout the year.

# PMS PTSA Ways & Means 2007-08

## Thanks to the Chairpersons and Volunteers for making great things happen!

**PARENT DONATION PROGRAM:** Ellen Widom, Chair. Thank you to the 240 families that donated a total of \$25,382 this year. These direct donations are the largest means of funding the PTSA goals: to increase parental involvement, support school spirit and facilitate communication.

**REQUIRED READING BOOK SALE** – Jayne Brown and Jill Rubin, Co-chairs. The sale allowed students and parents to purchase the required reading books assigned in participating Language Arts and Spanish classes.

*PTSA provided:*

- Financial assistance: \$450 worth of books provided to students
- \$1600 worth of books donated directly to the classrooms
- \$300 worth of requested books given to the Media Center for use by all students

**BOOK FAIR:** Carolyn Seckinger and Kelly Foreman chaired a highly successful Scholastic Book Fair.

- Sold \$6850 worth of books to students, teachers and parents.
- Net profit of \$1000.
- \$2400 worth of books and Scholastic vouchers were donated to the Media Center.

**GENERAL MILLS BOXTOPS:** Cori Strosnider, Chair, earned \$2,883.10

- Over 28,831 labels cut, counted, bagged and sent to General Mills.
- Keep’em coming! Continue to save all “Boxtop for Education” labels. GM donates 10 cents for every label. Search your cupboards! Ask friends and grandparents to save them too! Teachers will collect them at the end of this 9-weeks or they can be brought to the office.
- The top 3 collecting teachers also receive gift cards as a thank you for their efforts.

**PIZZA SALES:** Melissa Montovino, Chair, sells pizza after school on Friday in the breezeway for \$1. a slice. She has a following and has sold over 5,557 slices so far.

**CLASS/SPIRIT TEE-SHIRT AND PE UNIFORM SALES:** Every grade has a specific colored shirt to enhance class pride at school and for group identification when on field trips. Co-chairs Chrissy Padron and Teri Trivizas handled the ordering, purchasing and sales beautifully.

**SCHOOL STORE:** The Chair, Lesbia Lopez, has been in the Cafeteria every morning to be sure our students have the pens, folders, and supplies they need for class, as well as cute and fun items they enjoy. Lesbia has also been the backbone of T-shirt and PE uniform sales throughout the year.

**STUDENT DIRECTORY:** Our professional-looking directory was produced thanks to the combined efforts of co-chairs Marie Insua and Julia Shestopolov. Thank you to all the additional volunteers who pitched in with data entry at the 11th hour. Their efforts contributed to creating a high quality product that addresses our goal of enhanced communication. It is of incalculable value for homework questions, making up work after sick or missed school days or knowing where new friends live. Combined efforts led to a significant increase in student inclusion and ad/acknowledgement sales.

Job well done!!!

# 2nd Vice President Year End Committee Report Submitted by Melissa Montovino

**SAFE SITTER COURSE:** Hope Phillips, Chair. 65 kids were trained to great reviews!

**CAREER DAY:** Monique Jimenez, Chair. More than 60 presenters and PMS PTSA member Carrie Boone of Carrie'd Away Events catered breakfast and lunch.

**RED RIBBON WEEK:** Jeff Agron, Chair

Decorated school in Red Ribbons, banners, etc. Kids, teachers and staff wore red, mismatched attire and surfer duds and took a pledge to be drug and alcohol free while "riding the wave of excellence in education."

Throughout the week, guest performers were showcased via the closed circuit television system about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Informative flyers, pamphlets and posters were available in the attendance office. The Media Center had a creative display of books concerning the effects of alcohol and drugs.

**REFLECTIONS:** Glory Diaz de Villegas and Susan Fusfield, Co-chairs. The PMS Reflections program was held in November and was most successful and featured the talented work of our students featuring the theme "I Can Make a Difference By...." A big "congratulations" to each of our participants and our finalists. The few students who moved on to compete at the State level are:

Literature finalists: Leah Singer and Joelle Deleveaux

Visual Arts finalist: Jenny Hee-Jim Kim

Music Composition finalist: Trevor Lundquist



We are proud of all participants and greatly appreciate the teacher, student, faculty and volunteer participation. Next year's national theme for Reflections is "Wow...." Further information will be announced in the Fall or you can visit the national PTA at <http://www.PTA.org>.

**RECOGNITION NIGHT:** Christian Armstrong, Chair. upcoming on May 21.

**SPIRIT WEEK:** Monique Jimenez, Chair. The school was decorated and the students celebrated their spirit with Twin Day, Mix N Match / Hat Day, and Sports Day. Mid week, there was a DJ playing music while the students mingled on the field or participated with field events. Popcorn was provided to all.

**BEAUTIFICATION:** Christian Armstrong, Sharon Biddix-Maessen, Cyndi Eisenberg and Lauren Mayer, Co-chairs. The Emerald Garden Dedication was on November 29th and was a beautiful ceremony. Since then the Emerald Garden has been well established as an official outside classroom with foldable chairs, lap pads, and easel boards. The teachers and students love this outdoor oasis!

**LISTENERS:** Linda Diamond, Chair. Had a tremendously successful year with 8 "listeners" (6 of whom are brand new to the school)!! They saw and listened to a total of 14 students. The listeners have all reported great and challenging experiences with their students.

**MEDIA CENTER:** Vicky Chait, Chair. The Media Center had a number of volunteers to support the work throughout the year. As Ms. Parrot mentioned at last meeting, The Sunshine State Battle of the Books is next Wednesday, April 23th .

**PROGRAMS:** The PTSA hosted 7 informational programs at both morning and evening meetings. They included: The Parent / Student Portal, Bullying & Cyber Bullying, Legislative Update, Making your Voices Heard / Advocating for Children, Update from School Board Member Evelyn Greer, Debate Team Demonstration and Preparing for High School & Beyond.



## Thank You Legislative Committee for being so dedicated to the issues affecting our children!

Maricel Lam  
Susan Montesino  
Laura Schwartz  
Wendy Wilson

Darla March  
Sue Parrot  
Randi Trazenfeld  
Jennifer Wollmann

We are working on several fronts to advocate for our children. The reauthorization of the Children's Trust is coming up to be voted on, so please get out and vote on August 26th to reappoint the Children's Trust. So many wonderful, needed programs depend on it! Don't forget to visit [myfloridahouse.gov](http://myfloridahouse.gov). There is a link to the FL Senate on the House of Rep's homepage, and you can easily find your legislators by zip code. Let them hear from you! – *Eileen Faradji*

## "We Love Our Volunteers" Appreciation Breakfast

All volunteers are invited to attend the Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast sponsored by Merrill Lynch and Installation of PTSA Officers on **Thursday, May 15 at 9:00 AM** in the Media Center. RSVP to Ms. Escalona in the main office. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend! There will be a short meeting to vote on the by-laws and allocation of special project funding.

## Miriam L. W. Williams, T.R.U.S.T. Specialist retiring in June

Dedication and insight are attributes which succinctly and accurately describe Miriam L. W. Williams, who not only met but exceeded the standards of excellence for her profession for the past 38 years. We will miss you!

## Heartfelt Thanks...

I wanted to give a special heartfelt THANK YOU to all of the PTSA members, parents, teachers, students and others, who so graciously opened their hearts to the Alford family who lost everything due to a fire in their home. You were a blessing to them. They send their appreciation which words cannot express.

*Sincerely, Mrs. Karen Beasley-Brown*