



Palmetto Middle School

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www.pms.dadeschools.net

Lisa Noffo, Principal
Randi Trazenfeld, PTSA President

September 2007 Volume 38 Issue 2

PMS and PTSA September 2007 Calendar

- 9/7 School Pictures/Volunteer ID's
- 9/11 Resource Fair and Open House
- 9/21 Lancer Letter Deadline
- 9/26 Picture Make-Up Day
- 9/27 EESAC Meeting 8:00 AM Room 103
- 9/27 PTSA Meeting 9:15 AM Media Center
Coffee and Chat 9:00 AM
- 9/27 Volunteer Orientation 10:30 AM
Media Center
- 10/1 Monthly Mailing 9:00 AM
Media Center

Message from the PMS PTSA President

Hello Parents, Students, Teachers and Community Members!

I am sure that the first few weeks of school have been a hectic yet exciting time, but, hopefully by now, your family is settling back into the routine of the school year. I want to thank the multitude of parents who have stepped up and helped prepare for these past few weeks. I am always amazed at how much goes on behind the scenes. The strength of our PTSA comes not solely from its numbers but from the energy and ability of our members to be involved.

Volunteerism and membership are two different things but they work hand in hand. I am awed by the number and willingness of our volunteers and especially new volunteers that have joined our ranks. Thank you to Lilly Sanchez and Sharon DeWitt for recruiting, organizing and placing hundreds of volunteers in countless "jobs" to meet the needs of the school.

Our PTSA members give their time, talent and dollars to benefit every student at PMS. Here are just some of the ways in which our organization and its volunteers have impacted life at Palmetto Middle School in just the past few weeks:

- Under the direction of chair, Paula Kivlahan, we were able to welcome the teachers and show them our appreciation with a "Surf's Up" theme breakfast. Each teacher and staff member received a "Palmetto Middle School" insulated draw-string bag, complete with a healthy snack, compliments of the PTSA.
- 702 people have joined the PTSA during the first week of school. This number

includes students, parents, teachers, administrators, and even one of our security staff! With this fabulous response, membership is poised for another record-breaking year thanks to Marge Jenetopulos and Sherida Hunter. Each member strengthens our voice locally and statewide.

- So far more than 76 families have participated in the direct Parent Donation Program which allows us to provide services to the school throughout the year. Thank you to our chair, Ellen Widom, who is still accepting donations, hoping to reach our budgeted goal of \$20,000. The more we raise, the more we can do for our school and students.
- We have sold hundreds of PE uniforms and Spirit (Team) Shirts. (Students who need financial assistance for uniforms should contact their counselor.) Thank you to Chrissy Padron and Teri Trivisas for their hard work!
- Marie Insua and Julia Shestopalov are working diligently to accumulate information and ads for our Student Directory.
- The school store is open for business in the cafeteria every morning before school thanks to the tireless efforts of Linda Kon (now a high school parent) and Lesbia Lopez, a new 6th grade parent eager to learn the ropes. Additional help is needed. Please contact Darla March at (305) 498-3327.

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A Note from Mrs. Noffo

Surfs Up at Palmetto Middle this year.

There is nothing like a great slogan and we are sure that we have found the one that perfectly describes our students, teacher and parents. This year our Lancers are dropping their horses in favor of surfboards. That's right; we need to "Ride the Wave of Excellence" and in order to do that we need to be properly equipped. Working together is one wave we know we will conquer. So remember – *Surfs Up at Palmetto* – don't be left behind and catch the wave today!

The Palmetto Middle School teachers will be available on Friday mornings from 8:25 am to 8:50 am for any student that may need additional assistance with assignments.

The Parent Resource Center gets an upgrade. Located in our Main Office we have worked hard over the summer to enhance the resources and technology available to parents. Drop by and check out our parent book swap collection as well as literature that will provide a wealth of information in working with your child on his or her academic future. In addition, you will be able to log on to the new and improved District Parent Portal. Using this site you can access all of your child's information from FCAT scores to schedule and online textbooks. This site will also be your gateway to the online grade book. If you have not received your password for this site please ask for it today in the main office. Make sure you bring ID and you will be ready to go in no time.

Lisa S. Noffo
Principal, Palmetto Middle School



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

PTSA LINK

To receive weekly e-mail announcements from your PTSA – including upcoming activities, volunteer opportunities and “need-to-know” information – please send an e-mail to ptsalink@bellsouth.net; include your name, e-mail address, and grade(s) of your PMS student(s).

Change a Child’s Life... Become a Listener

Be an adult volunteer who provides a stable, non-judgmental environment for a child. Our goals are to encourage positive self-esteem, and good problem solving skills. We give kids the opportunity to meet with an adult once a week “just to talk”. You would be surprised at how powerful that connection can be and what a difference it can make!!!

The next training session will be held on Sept. 20, 2007, from 9 am to noon at Coral Gables Elementary School, 105 Minorca Ave, Coral Gables, 305-558-1731

For more information call:
*Linda Diamond, 305-661-1946, chairperson,
PMS Listener program*

Sun Trust program benefits PTSA

SunTrust Bank is offering a new program called “My Cause” which demonstrates their commitment to the community. SunTrust will donate \$100.00 to our PTSA for any person (age 15 or over) who opens a new checking account and obtains a SunTrust Visa Check Card by Oct. 12, uses the debit card at least once and submits an online redemption form by Nov. 15. All you need to do is 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! If you have any questions you may call Oscar Sevilla at 305-553-5505 or email Oscar.Sevilla@SunTrust.com

Connect With the Student Directory!

Homework questions? Missed classes? New friends?

The best way to keep in touch is through the PTSA published Student Directory. Directories cost \$5 each and can be pre-ordered. Only parent approved contact information will be included. Complete the yellow envelope that came home with students and **return by Sept. 19th.**

Advertise in the Directory! 3 lines for \$10, Business card size for \$25, and 5" x 8" full page for \$100. Information available in the office or email Marie Insua at ainsua@aol.com

Thank you Volunteers!



Summer Thanks

to those parents and students that surrendered the last days of summer to gather around a table and assemble 1,640 PTSA packets for distribution to the students. Volunteers include — parents: Raitza Iglesias, Sherida Hunter, Susan Fusfield, Luis E. Goicouria, Dawn Ratiner, Hope Phillips, and Darla March, and students: Luis A. Goicouria, Savannah Phillips, Grace DeWitt, Kristopher Iglesias, Alexander Iglesias, Eric Iglesias and Natanya Trazenfeld.

A very BIG thank you

from the monthly mailing committee co-chairs to the following parents and students who helped out with the summer mailing: Mary & Matthew Saleniekis, Mary Warrell, Laura Bork, Melissa Montovino, Hope Phillips, Sherida Hunter, Ivette Miranda, Marge Jenetopulos, Natanya Trazenfeld, Sofia Diaz de Villegas, Savannah Phillips, Annie, Rachel, & Maureen Piero, Victoria Trebbi Beatriz Marshall and Natasha DeGuten.

— *Mariela Ray, Dawn Ratiner,
Cathy Viola*

P.E. Uniform Sales Thanks Yous

A GIANT THANK YOU goes to Larry Blake our Dade Partner from DAIRY QUEEN who helped sell PE Uniforms all day during 6th Grade Orientation. Many thanks to the helping hands through the week in the “breezeway”: Darla March, Melissa Montovino, Mariela Ray, Glory Diaz de Villegas, Vicky Chait, Janet Bass, and Christian Armstong.

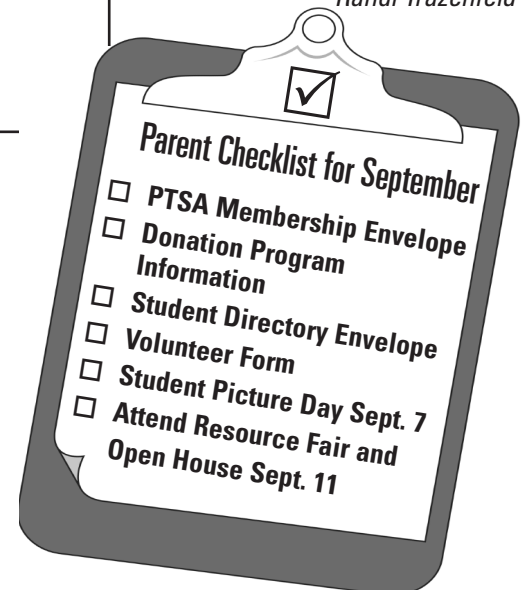
We enjoyed getting to know you all!
PE uniform vouchers and spirit shirts are available in the school store.

— *Chrissy Padron & Teri Trivizas
PE uniform/ Spirit Shirt Sales
Committee*

Thank You

to the following parents who were of enormous assistance the first day of school. These moms greeted students and made sure they found their classrooms: Dawn Ratiner, Martha Limner, Abbe Lieberman, Marge Jenetopulos and Maureen Piero. On behalf of all PMS Parents, thanks for helping to make our students’ first day easier!

— *Randi Trazenfeld*



Make a Difference by participating in



PMS REFLECTIONS 2007!

The PMS PTSA joins the National PTA each year by participating in its annual REFLECTIONS program. We want YOU and YOUR student to participate in REFLECTIONS!

REFLECTIONS provides students the opportunity to create art for fun and recognition. Students are encouraged to submit works of art in six areas: literature, dance choreography, film/video production, musical composition, photography, and the visual arts (which include but are not limited to, art forms such as drawing, painting, printmaking and collage). Entries are judged at the school level, locally, statewide and nationally. Last year, the REFLECTIONS program in Miami-Dade County had over 20,000 participants. Through the excellence and encouragement of our PMS teachers, six PMS students won at the County level and proceeded on to State competition.

Our PMS REFLECTIONS program will be on Wednesday, November 28, 2007 in the evening. All original student entries must relate to this year's theme: "I Can Make a Difference by..."

Please mark your calendars now and plan to join us. Further information regarding student entries and deadlines are forthcoming. Parents, please join the REFLECTIONS planning committee and help make a difference with this special program that highlights our students. For additional information, please contact REFLECTIONS Co-Chairs: Glory Diaz de Villegas (305-252-7531) or Susan Fusfield (305-255-5990). Thank you in advance for making a difference in REFLECTIONS 2007!

REFLECTIONS Co-Chairs: Glory Diaz de Villegas, Susan Fusfield

PTSA Membership

Welcome to all our new members for the 2007-2008 year and thank you for your support. We are off to a good start in making a difference at Palmetto Middle School by giving our students the best opportunities possible. We encourage all of the PMS families and teachers to participate. PTSA membership envelopes (GREEN) were sent home the first week of school with each student. Extra envelopes are available in the school office. Remember to include your e-mail address if you would like to be kept informed with important matters related to Palmetto Middle School.

Lets make this a 100% membership year, JOIN TODAY and SUPPORT PALMETTO MIDDLE SCHOOL!!! Thank you.

Marge Jenetopulos and Sherida Hunter, Membership Co-Chairs

A big THANK YOU to the following PMS Teachers and Staff who have already joined the Palmetto Middle School PTSA... Ms. Hopta, Ms. Iturmendi, Ms. Gordon, Dr. Cruz, Ms. Fritz, Ms. Hagan, Ms. Laughlin, Ms. O'Hara, Ms. Munsell, Ms. Kanzinger, Ms. Bogdon, Ms. Isaacs, Ms. Harrison, Ms. Castillo-Arguelles, Ms. Frost, Ms. Blanch, Ms. Williams, Ms. Mertens, Mr. Powell, Ms. Janata, Ms. Morales Ms. Smith-Ramsey and Kathy Richards

2007-2008 Parent Donation Program

The PTSA's primary fundraiser is through direct parent donations.

A donation letter and envelope was sent home with your child during the first week of school. The form can be returned to your child's home room or by mail. All donations are welcome! Last year, over **240 families** participated, with donations ranging from \$10 to \$2,000. Your donation is fully tax deductible. Please keep your donations coming! Already 76 families have directly contributed to the resources our PTSA need to achieve its goals.

Last year the Parent Donation program raised over \$30,000 which funded academic and enrichment activities including a Journalism/Media Video and Editing Suite (\$5,000) and an additional classroom Smartboard Package (\$3,100). Every penny of your donation directly supports the positive learning environment at PMS.

There are no gift wrap, catalogue or Entertainment book sales at PMS!

Thank you in advance for your support, *Ellen Widom, Chair, Parent Donation Program, widoms@aol.com*

Emerald Garden Update



Thanks to many volunteers this summer, the Emerald Garden has been given a new life! As you may have seen, the garden area off of the media center is in the process of becoming a beautiful garden once again for our students and faculty to enjoy. Special thanks to: Noelle Padron, Luis Goicouria, Tomas Goicouria, Daniel Goicouria, Elora Sarkar, Orko Sarkar, Hannah Justice, Joanne Justice (not only for your help but for the beautiful garden bench), Gio Lester, Rebecca Lester, Darla March, Tina Armstrong, Erin Mayer, Natanya Trazenfeld, Mrs. Hagen and any others we may have left out!

A special thanks to Sharon Biddix-Maessen who is not only a former PMS Teacher, but also put in countless hours of hard labor renovating the garden, and has agreed to join us as the 4th member of the Beautification Committee. Thank you!

We are also actively seeking Teacher / Club Sponsors to help oversee and maintain the Garden. Any questions, please contact one of the Chairpersons or Mrs. Hagen.

"Gardenly" Yours, Christian Armstrong armstrongclan2@hotmail.com, Sharon Biddix-Maessen, Cyndi Eisenberg gdesea@aol.com and Lauren Mayer laurenmayer@bellsouth.net



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Message from the PMS PTSA President

- Under the leadership of Marcia Choiseul and Lily Meyreles the copy room committee is copying all the work that teachers need for their students.
- The PTSA bulletin board around the corner from the Main Office is exciting and current thanks to Maureen Piero.
- The Monthly Mailing committee coordinated by Dawn Ratiner, Mariela Ray and Cathy Viola gets valuable information into each student's home,
- The PTSA Link (ptsalink@bellsouth.net) edited by Martha Limner provides current and timely information to all interested parents every weekend.

Our PTSA is an integral part of Palmetto Middle School life. Thank you to each and every parent, guardian, teacher and administrator that is part of this awesome team.

I'd like to express an extra special and heartfelt thank you to the PTSA officers, Hope Phillips, Melissa Montovino, Darla March, Hal Rosenfeld, Janet Bass and Sharon Hickey who are the leadership and backbone of our organization.

I look forward to hearing from you with any concerns or comments. Email me at Randibr@aol.com. We look forward to seeing you at Open House on September 11, at the New Volunteer Coffee at my home on September 14 and at the PTSA Meeting and Volunteer Orientation in the Media Center on September 27 at 9:15 AM. More details on these events appear in other articles. Read on . . . !!! Best Wishes to you and your students for a successful year!

– Randi Trazenfeld

Required Reading Book Sale

The Required Reading Book Sale is coming! An easy and convenient way for your student to get the books he or she needs for Language Arts and all their other classes! This year, the book sale will take place during the school day, sometime in late September. Your student will know in advance which books their teachers will require them to buy; students will get a book list with prices. Each class will have an assigned day to visit the sale. Parent volunteers (and we can use more of these) will help your student select their books that same day; students will need to bring a check or cash to pay for their purchases. Details to follow!

Jayne Brown, jaynethepirate@hotmail.com & Jill Rubin, jrubin@jud11.flcourts.org,
Required Reading Book Co-Chairs

Welcome Back Breakfast kicks off the new school year!

The PTSA hosted a breakfast for the teachers and staff on Thursday, August 16th. Everyone enjoyed a delicious buffet as we welcomed them back to school. Many thanks are to be extended to the following parents for their donation of food and/or time in preparing and serving: Randi Trazenfeld, Aury Sirven, Yvonne Ortiz, Dawn Jacobson, Deborah Davis, Abbe Sue Liebling, Diane Kramer, Nancy DeGunten, Lisa Romaguera, Monique Jimenez, Hope Phillips, Darla March, Melissa Montovino.

Thanks again for all your help! Paula Kivlahan - Teacher Appreciation Chair

Important Volunteer Policies and Procedures

All new volunteers should attend the New Volunteer Orientation on Sept. 27 at 10:30 am (following the PTSA Meeting which begins at 9:15 am)

All volunteers in the Miami-Dade County Public School System must be registered and cleared before they may begin serving. You may register by completing the M-DCPS Volunteer Registration form located in the main office. Once you have been approved, you will be given a volunteer identification number. If you have already registered and received an ID number, you do not need to complete the M-DCPS volunteer registration form again. If you do not know your volunteer number or are uncertain of your status, please call Palmetto Middle School's Administrative Volunteer Coordinator Allan Sosa at 305-238-3911.

Whenever you volunteer on campus you need to:

1. log your hours in the Volunteer Sign-In Book located on the security table in the breezeway.
2. wear a Volunteer ID badge or have your volunteer approval print out with you.

New Volunteer Meet and Greet

New and returning parents who are interested in becoming involved in the Palmetto Middle School PTSA are invited to attend a coffee reception on Friday, September 14 from 9:15 am-10:45 am to learn about rewarding volunteer opportunities in the PTSA. The reception will be held at the home of PTSA President Randi Trazenfeld, 7365 SW 134 Terrace. Join your PTSA officers and board members during this informative get-together. Please RSVP – randibr@aol.com.

Friday Pizza Sales

If you've been waiting to get your hands on a slice of pizza after school, wait no longer! Pizza sales are underway and will be sold each Friday after school in the breeze way. Slices are \$1 each, so bring your appetite and a little bit of cash. Parents interested in helping should contact Melissa Montovino at 305-793-3649.



Conference Table Needed

The PTSA is assisting with the creation of a Conference Room at Palmetto Middle School. This room will be used by the Administrative Team, students, families, counselors and teachers. If you have a conference table and chairs that you can donate to create this much needed space please contact Randi Trazenfeld at randibr@aol.com.

If you have not received the PTSA packet that went home the first week of school, please email Randi Trazenfeld at randibr@aol.com or pick one up in the main office.

If you put your PTSA packet aside please pull it out now. It contains important information that needs your attention!