



LANCER LETTER

Palmetto Middle School

7351 SW 128th Street, Pinecrest FL 33156
305-238-3911

www.pms.dadeschools.net

Lisa Noffo, Principal
Melissa Montovino, PTSA President

www.pmsptsa.org

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Message from the PMS PTSA President

Hello Parents, Students, Teachers and Community Members!

Happy New Year Everybody! It is hard to believe that we have already begun 2009 and the beginning to the end of the school year. For the PTSA, it means that the crux of our membership campaign is winding down (although you can still join until March 31st!) and fundraising is primarily behind us. We do, however, continue to accept parent donations, sell pizza on Fridays, collect BoxTops and offer the service of our school store. However, as we dive into 2009, we seek creative and innovative solutions to overcome any obstacles that may impede our children from reaching their full potential.

We turn our focus toward advocacy and planning for the future. As we all know, school budgets are tight; but did you know that we've been hit by nearly \$300 million in budget cuts to Miami Dade public schools to date! It is not only important, but our obligation to ensure that we all as parents let our Florida constituents know that we care and will not stand aside as education is thrown out the window. With the current funding crisis in Florida, our public schools in Miami Dade are struggling, we at Palmetto Middle School have lost significant resources (including an Assistant Principal just before the holidays!) and most of the school sports programs have been cut through the end of the year. Several of us met with Senator Dan Gelber recently. His advice? GET ANGRY, GET MEAN AND BE FOCUSED!!! Visit, write and petition our representatives with this message: "Invest MORE money into our schools or we will find a representative that will do that! Take a moment to contact our legislatures to let your

voice be heard. It is important that we take these steps to ensure that our children have a chance against other states and countries that value education. If we do not make changes, our children may struggle to get into colleges and universities, to compete in the job market and worse yet to succeed in their future. If you are interested in making your voice heard but don't know what to do, please contact Eileen Faradji, (efaradji@comcast.net) our legislative chair person; she can help to direct your energy in the most efficient use.

In addition to advocacy, the PMS PTSA is also focused on ensuring that our school is a better and more competitive institution to attend. At the last PTSA meeting we approved to spend over \$20,000 in SmartBoard technology, books, equipment and manipulatives for the teachers that submitted requests. Focus now is on ordering equipment and getting it in the classrooms.

Lastly, we must begin planning for next year. At the next meeting, we will look to appoint a nominating committee that will reach out to PTSA members to hold a leadership role in the 2009 – 2010 school year. With all of the wonderful leaders and workers that have crossed my path over the last few years, we should have no problem filling the slate with qualified individuals. Please contact me at melissamontovino@yahoo.com if you would like to serve on the nominating committee or assume a leadership position for 2009 – 2010. Thank you for your continued support and involvement. You help us to make a difference!

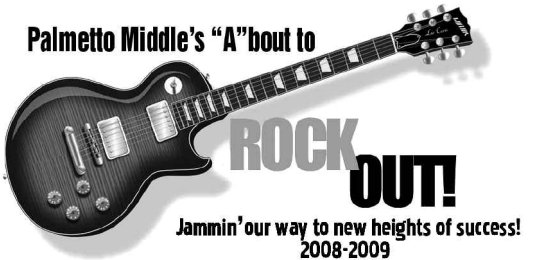
— *Melissa Montovino*

PMS & PTSA Calendar, Feb. '09

- 2-6 No School
- 2-6 Babysitters Course
- 2-16 No School
- 2-19 PTSA Meeting @ 9:15 am
- 2-19 Early Release Day at 1:30 pm
- 3-8 A Taste of Pinecrest
- 4-17 Career Day



PMS is again an **A+** School!!



A Note from Mrs. Noffo

As we start the second semester, I am so proud of our students. They continue to meet the challenges of the curriculum that is presented. Please be reminded that your child is part of a "TEAM" which includes a common group of teachers. Each team of teachers is available on Tuesday mornings for team conferences. As always, attendance is crucial to the continued academic success of your child.

In addition to the after school tutoring, our tutoring services will expand to include Saturday mornings. Beginning January 31, 2009 and running through March 7, 2009, tutoring in Reading, Writing and Math will be available from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. This is a great opportunity for your child to receive that extra assistance as the FCAT approaches.

Please encourage your child to take advantage of our "free" breakfast program. Students who have a good breakfast will perform better in class. Also, a hot lunch is available each day in our cafeteria.

***Remember, We Are "A" Bout to Rockout
Jammin' to New Heights of Success!***

— *Mrs. Lisa Noffo*



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

Get ready to storm Tallahassee on March 18, 2009.

The time is now. If you are interested in assisting our participation in Florida PTA's presence in the courtyard or for more information, contact Eileen Faradji at efaradji@comcast.net

Happy New Year!!!!

The P.T.S.A. welcomed back the teachers and staff with a surprise in their mailboxes. Special thanks to Bill at Amy's Hallmark store for generously donating the bag of goodies!!!

Career Day is April 17, 2009

Attention ALL PARENTS – yes, dads too! Do you have an interesting job or know someone who does? We need YOU to speak with PMS students about your field of work. Volunteers are needed as speakers and behind-the-scenes helpers for this one-day event.

Please get involved by calling Natalie Lemos at 786-543-1076 or send an e-mail to NLEMOS@LEINOFFANDLEMOS.COM.

Join the Palmetto Middle School PTSA

Due to the recent educational budget tightening, the Palmetto Middle School PTSA is working harder than ever to support our children and teachers. Becoming a member is a simple way to assist the school to address all students needs. The larger we are, the more prominent our voice is when addressing educational issues at the local, state and national level.

If you have not already joined as a parent, a grandparent, an aunt, an uncle, a teacher or a student, it is not too late!!! We need your support at this absolutely critical time.

You can fill out the form below and have your child give it to her or his 1st period / homeroom teacher or you can mail the form and your check to Palmetto Middle School PTSA, 7351 SW 71st Ave., Pinecrest, FL 33156"

Student's Name _____

1st Period Teacher _____ Grade _____

Student's Name _____

1st Period Teacher _____ Grade _____

Parent's Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Check here to receive current PMS and PTSA info via E-mail

Membership Dues

Dues are \$10 per Parent and \$5 per Student

Teachers \$7.00

2 parents/1 student \$25.00

1 parent/1 student \$15.00

Additional Student(s) \$ 5.00

Postage Donation \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

– Susan Montesino: Suprmom1017@yahoo.com, 305-234-3212

– Laura Schwartz: Leiasmom23@aol.com, 305-251-6330

December '08 Volunteer of the Month is Cindy Luksomboon

Cindy is a nurse at Jackson and works every day except Fridays. On Fridays she opens the school store, helps in the library, and then sells pizza in the afternoon. She has also helped to sell t-shirts/sweatshirts and for Teacher Appreciation activities. Cindy has definitely gone above and beyond.



January '09 Volunteer of the Month is Dawn Ratiner

Dawn Ratiner is recognized for all her incredible hands on work done at school and during Spirit Week. Dawn and her husband, Bobby, have two sons: Jake, a 7th grader at PMS and Jesse Bear, a 4th grader at McGlannan. Her sons are 8th generation Floridians and 3rd generation Miamians. Dawn comes from a long line of public servants in Miami and the Florida Keys dating back to the 1800's. Her grandfather was on the Dade County School Board, her dad was a City of Miami Commissioner for 29 years and her uncle was in both the Florida House and Senate. Dawn's motto: "Be the change you wish to see in the world." Mahatma Gandhi

Thanks to both our volunteers for their hours, spirit and enthusiasm.

Thanks to Panther for a Day Volunteers

Thanks to our volunteers who helped chaperone the 8th grade field trip to Palmetto Senior High school on January 21. They were: Vicky Chait, Yesim Darici, Sabina de la Torre, Elizabeth Escobar (Salmon), Susan Fallon, Becky Karousatos, Karen Ladis, Martha Limner, Susan Montesino, Melissa Montovino, Sherri Myers, Hope Phillips, Gae Shapiro, Nicole Toister & Jackie Wajner

Teacher and Staff Appreciation – a great success!

The teacher and staff holiday luncheon was held December 18. We went to an extra special effort this year to make them truly feel appreciated and it definitely showed!!

Everyone has been raving about the incredible variety and quality of food. Thanks to those who shopped for and cooked all that WONDERFUL food:

Winnie Angelillo, Brenda Archer, Helena Castillo-Arguelles, Lisa Askowitz, Monica Avalos, Alina Ballestas, Vicky Barrocas, Janet Bass, Mallory Batistas, Carole Bayer, Cindy Beamish Guilford, Eileen Benitez, Petra Bensoussan, Barbara Berg, Cristina Bissi, Carrie Boone, Raquel Bunce, Stella Carter, Maria Escoto-Castiello, Vicky Chait, Mercedes Chi, Marcia Choiseul, Lyn Cromer, Kim Foster Cosner, Marie Cupo, Janna D'Adesky, Lucy Danon, Patty David, Amy DeLaCruz, Sabina DeLaTorre, Heidi DeLisser, Debbie Dowis, Cyndi Eisenberg, Eileen Faradji, Kelly Foreman, Debbie Friedopfer, Susan Fusfield, May Ghraoui, Yani Giraldez, Alina Gonzalez, Claudia Gordon, Susan Harris, Marian Hasty, Carmen Hays, Julia Herdocia, Diana Husson, Lori Johnson, Arlene Junco, Karen Ladis, Maricel Lam, Dina Lara, Vicky Lawrence, Gio Lester, Martha Limner, Carmen Lucas, Cindy Luksomboon, Wen Liu-Mares, Valerie Marquez, Emilia Martinez, Annette McGilvray, Ann McMaster, Annette Puig Mena, Ivette Miranda, Angela Mirow, Melissa Montovino, Sherri Myers, Mindi Notrika, Cristina Obregon, Esperanza Olivares, Sue Palmer, Maureen Piero, Lisa Pires-Fernandez, Annette Puig-Mena, Dawn Ratiner, Mariela Ray, Cecilia Richter, Laurie Richter, Lupita Romano, Melanie Dernis Rosen, Marija Ruiz, Debbie Schleien, Rachelle Schneider, Gilat Schwartz, Cori Strosnider, Riva Steinman, Ruth Trier, Terri Vega, Adriana Vega-Ramos, Michele Velez, Gloria Villaamil, Mary Warrell, Ellen Widom, Wendy Wilson, Annie Pasquale-Wise, Marisol Colon Wu

Needless to say, we couldn't have done it without the most dedicated and hard working volunteer committee ever!!! These folks worked for hours setting up and serving and just about anything else that was needed to make this event such a HUGE success:

Christian Armstrong, Alina Ballestas, Janet Bass, Cindy Beamish Guilford, Cristina Bissi, Carrie Boone, Hunter Boone, Raquel Bunce, Maria Escoto-Castiello, Vicky Chait, Marcia Choiseul, Lyn Cromer, Janna D'Adesky, Sabina DeLaTorre, Debbie Dowis, Susan Fusfield, May Ghraoui, Susan Harris, Marian Hasty, Diana Husson, Karen Ladis, Maricel Lam, Vicky Lawrence, Gio Lester, Martha Limner, Cindy Luksomboon, Wen Liu-Mares, Emilia Martinez, Annette McGilvray, Ann McMaster, Ivette Miranda, Angela Mirow, Megan Moffet, Melissa Montovino, Sherri Myers, Cristina Obregon, Dawn Ratiner, Mariela Ray, Laurie Richter, Lupita Romano, Marija Ruiz, Debbie Scheien, David Schwartz, Gilat Schwartz, Cori Strosnider, Diana Tejada, Adriana Vega-Ramos, Mary Warrell, Rosemary Winters

We even had a volunteer group of students who stepped up to help us out!!! Thanks to:

Chris Fisk, Natalie Montesino, Brian Schwartz, Kevin Schwartz, Leia Schwartz

Getting gifts donated for 130 teachers and staff is a daunting task!! We pounded the pavement for months to do so. Nonetheless we could never have accomplished this overwhelming objective without the help and donations of the following people:

Debbie Albion, Winnie Angelillo, Lisa Askowitz, Colleen Beauregard, Raquel Bunce, Maria Escoto-Castiello, Marie Cupo, Lucy Danon, Debbie Dowis, Susan Fusfield, Tracy Gervais, May Ghraoui, Ruth Gordon, Marian Hasty, Sharon Hickey, Monique Jimenez, Sheri Keitz, Natalie Lemos, Martha Limner, Shifra Lipson, Darla March, Emilia Martinez, Annette Puig Mena, Molivar Family, Melissa Montovino, Hope Phillips, Dawn Ratiner, Mariela Ray, Cecilia Richter, Laurie Richter, Lupita Romano, Melanie Dernis Rosen, Dawn Schlesinger, Leslie Chassman-Smith, Jolynn Soden, Mercedes Soler, Ruth Trier, Adriana Vega-Ramos, Gloria Villaamil, Mary Warrell, Elizabeth Zosman

Special thanks to the following, who generously donated financial support for us to go out and buy even more goodies and gifts!!!

Kelli Cohen, Diane Kramer, Dina Lara, Gio Lester, Ivette Miranda, Annette Puig Mena, Lisa Romaguera, Kim Sterling

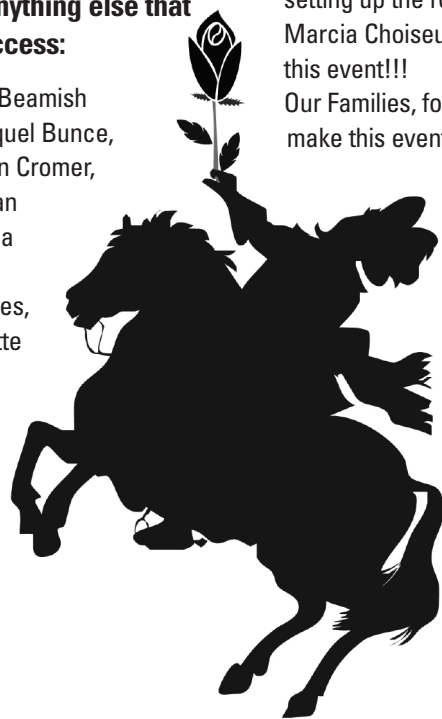
And an extra special thanks goes out to:

Carrie Boone, for doing such a beautiful job decorating and setting up the room!!!

Marcia Choiseul, who dedicated countless hours to support this event!!!

Our Families, for all the sacrifices they made so we could make this event such a huge success!!!

Laura Schwartz and Susan Montesino
Co-Chairs Teacher/Staff Appreciation Committee



Once again **Starbucks on Old Cutler and 168th Street** generously donated coffee service for all of our teachers and staff to enjoy. Many, many thanks to manager, Denesia Ramsunder, and all the wonderful staff at that Starbucks location for always being there for Palmetto Middle School Teacher and Staff Appreciation events!!!!!!

Our Community Supports PMS Teachers and Staff

Teachers: Your efforts to educate our children have been noticed, not only by the parents at our school, but by the entire community!!!!!!!!!!!!

Because of what you do, day in and day out, and all the sacrifices you make to better our children and our community the following businesses all generously donated gift certificates to our teacher and staff holiday luncheon:

Acqualuna Salon, Alf's Golf Shop, Art Thyme, Aruj Dadeland Spa, Beach Club Salon, The Big Cheese, Bud Stop, Cafe Pastis, Chef Aliza's Cooking School, Ciro's Italian Restaurant, Cocoa Couture, Cookies by Design, Cream on Sunset, Deli Lane, Delices de France Bakery, Dream Dinners. The Fish House, Five Sisters, Flanigan's, Fleming A Taste of Denmark, Fleming's Steakhouse, Footworks, French Bistro, FuegoVivo Brazilian Churrascaria, Gifts and Beyond by Lis, Dianne Glick Jewelry, GolfTec, GT Sports, Hole in the Wall Subs, Honey Baked Ham, House of Fitness, Ideas4Solutions, Joanna's Marketplace, Joseph's Salon, Kaliapy's, Kendall Bouquet Florist, Kings Bay Athletics, LA Fitness Palmetto Bay, LBV Salon, Lion Country Safari, Lots of Lox, Mainzer's Deli, Maruchi Palmetto Bay, Matisse's Hair Loft, Mendel's Jewelers, Miami Eurowax, Miami Metrozoo, Miami Seaquarium, Miss Saigon Bistro, Modern Nails, Morton's Steakhouse, My Derma Spa, New Chinatown, Nikita Paris Salon, Offerdahl's Pinecrest, Original Big Tomato, Papa John's Pinecrest, Papa Ricco's, Peter of London, Pinch-A-Penny. Pinecrest Bistro, Pizza Universe, Romi Dry Cleaners, Rotunda Jewelers, Sakura, Scrapbooks and Stuff, Scrappy Stamper, Sees Candy, Sir Galloway Dry Cleaners, Smoothie King Palmetto Bay, South Seas, Specs Appeal Optical, Starbucks (Old Cutler Road & SW 168 Street), Steve's Pizza, Sugar Shack, Surme Beauty and Rejuvenation Center, Sweet Art by Lucila, Taco Rico Tex Mex Cafe, Tango's Argentinian Restaurant, Times Square, Turleys Jewelers, Two Chefs, Ultima Med Spa, Wagons West, Walter's Coffee Shop

Special thanks to the following businesses who generously donated 130 gifts, one for everybody!

Amy's Hallmark Store, Edward James Aveda Salon, Elemis Spa and Melting Pot Restaurant

Palmetto Middle School's Parent Donation Program

Two more families contributed to helping make our school great in December bringing the number of contributing families to 187 for a total amount of \$21,193 in funds raised. We are still waiting for matching donations so that amount will go up some more. Make sure you have checked to see if your employer offers a matching donation program. We are still collecting funds from anyone who was unable to donate at the beginning of the school year or who is new to our school – every dollar helps – this year more than ever!! See this month's letter

from our PTSA President with information on how this money is being spent. Donation forms are available from the PMS PTSA website. Your recommended donation of \$30 per family is fully tax-deductible and once again, **there will be no gift wrap or catalog sales this year!**

–Gae Shapiro and Rachelle Schneider, Parent Donation Program

Thank you to these families that donated in December!

VEGA
MYERS

CONGRATULATIONS REFLECTIONS Finalists!

Congratulations to the finalists for Miami Dade County Council PTA/PTSA's "WOW" REFLECTIONS Contest.

The following students entries have been forwarded to the State of Florida PTA Reflection contest for the Middle/Jr Division:

LITERATURE

Jessica Tan
Jodi Palenzuela

VISUAL ARTS

HeeJin Kim
Grace DeWitt

MUSIC COMPOSITION

Chaitanya Lokireddy
Luis Goicouria
Prudhvi Lokireddy

DANCE

CHOREOGRAPHY
Talya Carness
Samantha Rosen
Heidi Castellanos

We wish them the best of luck in their future competitions. We are proud of all our entries.

HONORABLE MENTIONS included

Natasha deGuntun (Visual Arts), Sophie Wild (Literature) and Caroline Boone (Literature).

Our photography entries were up against several tough competitors from Southwood Middle's photography magnet and Herbert A. Ammons. We will get them next year with the 2009/2010 contest theme "Beauty is...." Thank you to all the teachers, students and volunteers that worked on REFLECTIONS!

Congratulations Mrs. Morales for PTSA 100% Class Membership

Marta Morales first period class achieved 100% membership in PMS PTSA and was served Dunkin Donuts to celebrate. Thanks to students: Maria-Jose Ayuso, Gillian M. Bayer, Alexis Berry, Jose E. Castro, Christine and Melissa Ellinburg, Gabrielle A. Forero, Warner Glass, Cedric Hankerson, Stephen J. Howard, Shuchang Jin, Hee-Jin J. Kim, Joshua A. Levey, Nicholas Limner, Alex Martini, Ricardo Monzon, Adrian A. Sainz, David A. Silvean, Julie Steiner, Albert Tacomal, Denis Tomazzo, Marcia Vidaurri, and Jason Z. Weiss. **Job well done!**

PTSA School Store

Open Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays,
8:20-8:50 am in the school cafeteria

Palmetto Middle Spirit hoodies

have arrived! Stylish and warm zippered hoodies with Palmetto logo on the back are perfect for cold classrooms. PMS logo T-shirts are required for the 8th grade field trip. T-shirts are \$10 and hoodies are \$20., available at the school store. Students also can conveniently buy pens, pencils, composition and blank books, and more.



March 8, 2009

11 AM - 5 PM

Pinecrest Gardens, 11000 SW 57 Avenue

FREE Admission

Food Samples from Local Restaurants

Rides and Activities for Kids of All Ages

New Business Marketplace

Students from Pinecrest schools will be participating in art contest and display, continuous entertainment and musical performances.

Benefitting Palmetto Elementary, Pinecrest Elementary, Howard Drive Elementary, Palmetto Middle and Miami Palmetto Senior High Schools.

For more information, visit www.PinecrestBusiness.com

Presented by Pinecrest Business Association



The Pinecrest Business Association invites you to Save the Date for the Taste of Pinecrest – Sunday, March 8, 2009

Save the Date for the Taste of Pinecrest on Sunday, March 8, 2009 from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The event, held once again at Pinecrest Gardens, attracts over 6,000 visitors each year for sensational samplings from area restaurants.

The Taste of Pinecrest features student art exhibits, jump rope, cheerleading and musical performances; rides, a petting zoo, face painting, and more. All proceeds from the event will directly benefit Pinecrest Elementary, Palmetto Elementary, Howard Drive Elementary, Palmetto Middle and Palmetto Senior High Schools.

The Taste of Pinecrest was developed by the Pinecrest Business Association (PBA) in 2003 and has raised more than \$181,000 to date for our local schools. The PBA is a volunteer

organization involving the Village of Pinecrest and more than 160 member businesses. Its leadership provides an annual college scholarship award to a local student; volunteers for Career Day at our schools, and sponsorship for charitable and community events to better serve the Pinecrest community and establish goodwill and recognition for its members.

The event is FREE to the public with ticket sales for food tastings and beverages ranging from \$2 - \$5 Sponsorship opportunities are available.

For sponsorship information, please contact Amy Simons at 305.662.8024 or by e-mail at adetailet@aol.com. For Pinecrest Business Association membership information please visit the PBA website at www.pinecrestbusiness.com.