



**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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## PMS & PTSA Calendar, May '09

- 5-6 PTSA Teacher Luncheon
- 5-8 PTSA Teacher Breakfast
- 5-12 Spring Orchestra Concert, 7pm in Auditorium
- 5-14 EESAC Meeting, PTSA Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast
- 5-14 Band Concert, 7pm in Auditorium
- 5-21 Student Awards Night (invitation only!)
- 5-25 Memorial Day, No School
- 6-1, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4 Final exams
- 6-2, 6-3, 6-4 Early dismissal at 2:30 pm
- 6-4 Last day of school

For more dates, see Mrs. Noffo's note, below.

### Message from the PMS PTSA President

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

This final issue of the Lancer Letter for the 2008 – 2009 school year allows me to reflect upon my presidency as well as the many PTSA accomplishments that we have achieved. In the beginning of the year, we committed ourselves to three overarching goals: to promote parental involvement, support school spirit and facilitate communication. It's clear that as you read through this newsletter that despite the economic and educational challenges that we have had this year, we have accomplished our goals and more!

None of this would have been possible without the outstanding individuals who lead the PTSA. On behalf of myself, the teachers and students, I wish to express my most sincere gratitude to the following individuals that have continuously amazed me throughout the year:

**Hope Phillips:** 1st VP and Safe Sitter  
Course Chair

**Darla March:** 2nd VP, Special Projects and  
Programs Chair

**Maricel Lam:** 3rd VP and  
T-shirt Sales Chair

**Susan Fusfield:** Recording Secretary

**Sharon Hickey:** Corresponding Secretary  
and By-Laws Chair

**Eileen Faradji:** Legislative Chair

**Mary Warrell:** Volunteers Chair

**Sharon DeWitt:** Volunteers Database Chair

**Susan Montesino and Laura Schwartz:**  
Membership Co-chairs

Additionally, there are several volunteers that are moving on who have put countless hours and energy into ensuring that the back engine and support ran smoothly in the operations of the PTSA.

**Martha Limner:** PTSA Link Chair

**Kim Foster:** Lancer Letter Newsletter Chair

**Carrie Boone:** PTSA Hospitality

**Susan Montesino:** Membership, Teacher  
Appreciation and ability to step in  
wherever necessary

It has really been an honor and a privilege to work alongside this team of volunteers whose professionalism, can-do attitude, dedication and energy have made this year an absolute success. These ladies (as well as every single person who helped out in one way or another) deserve a round of applause, a hug of thanks and a pat on the back as well. We are incredibly fortunate to have such a great PTSA team here at Palmetto Middle School!

Thankfully, many of these great volunteers are coming back to lead our PTSA Board next year. I am delighted to serve once again as the PTSA President and will have the following team in place alongside me:

**Monique Jimenez:** 1st VP

**Darla March:** 2nd VP

**Maricel Lam:** 3rd VP

**Maria Castiello:** Treasurer

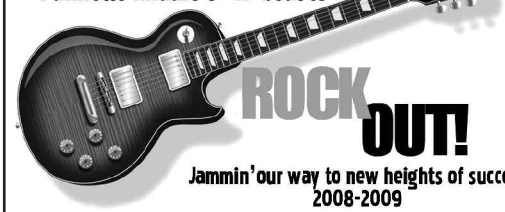
**Susan Fusfield:** Recording Sec.

**Mary Warrell:** Corresponding Sec.

This past year has been an incredible experience and as I have one year under my belt, I look forward to the challenges and opportunities that we have in front of us for the upcoming year. Thanks to everybody for your support, involvement and participation in our PTSA and for giving me the opportunity to lead this organization!

— *Melissa Montovino*

### Palmetto Middle's "A"bout to



## 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 Rock!

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 2008-2009 school year.

We thank you for your support throughout 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:

- 4/30/09 Drama Production
- 5/01/09 Drama Production
- 5/06/09 Dance Show
- 5/07/09 Dance Show
- 5/11/09 Chorus/Orchestra Spring Show
- 5/12/09 Chorus/Orchestra Spring Show
- 5/14/09 Band Concert
- 5/18/09 Student Talent Show
- 5/19/09 NJHS Induction Ceremony
- 5/21/09 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.

— *Mrs. Lisa Noffo*

# Thanks to our Volunteers!

## Thanks from Mary Warrell, PMS PTSA Volunteer Coordinator:

**Thank you** to the following volunteers who sold T-shirts for the 8th grade trip: Jackie Wejner, Debbie Dowis, Tracy Alvarez, Susan Montesino, Amely Robles, and Carolina Saverin

**Thank you** to all of our wonderful volunteers who have volunteered and pitched in to help throughout the year. It is because of all your hard work and dedication to our school and students that Palmetto Middle is such an excellent school. You really make Palmetto Middle Rock.

## Thanks from Hope Phillips, PMS PTSA 1st Vice President:

**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. She will continue this endeavor next year.

**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 **Claudia Gordon** 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 e-mail 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. Martha is moving on to help us in other areas and we are in need of a new chair person. Anyone interested should contact someone from the nominating committee.

**HOSPITALITY** – Again this year **Carrie Boone** has truly “catered” our PTSA Meetings. Many of you have enjoyed her wonderful presentations and home made goodies.

**LEGISLATIVE** – This valuable committee has grown in leaps and bounds this year under the tutelage of **Eileen Faradji**. Progress is being made on many fronts both locally and statewide. Eileen and her group organized several town hall type meetings that brought legislators, school board members and parents together to talk about the issues, especially the budget. The “Rally to Tally” brought bus loads of parents, students and teachers to the State Capital to bring the message that any more cuts to the education budget would not be tolerated.

**MEMBERSHIP** – **Susan Montesino** and **Laura Schwatz** worked tirelessly to promote the PMS PTSA. We continue to be a strong voice with almost 1200 members.

**MONTHLY MAILER** – This committee, lead by **Diana Tejada** consists of a group of dedicated ladies that stuff the monthly newsletter and other important information in envelopes to be sent to those families that prefer to have the “paper” version of our monthly communication. We continue to encourage families to receive this information via the web by signing up for the PTSA link at [www.ptsalink.com](http://www.ptsalink.com)

**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. Kim is “moving on” to the high school this year and we will truly miss her!

**PUBLIC RELATIONS** – **Karen Ladis** has tirelessly worked to get our events in the media. From the *Neighbors* to the *Herald*, Palmetto Middle School events were highlighted for the community.

**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**, important items are being purchased to directly impact our children in the classroom. From Smart Boards to Math Manipulatives the money you donate goes directly towards benefiting the students at PMS.

**RECOGNITION** – This year we were lucky to have **Riva Steinman** begin a great program that recognized the awesome achievements of our students. This bulletin board that was located in the main office specifically highlighted our PMS students that had outstanding achievement in sports, music or other special events.

**TEACHER APPRECIATION FUNCTIONS** – **Susan Montesino** and **Laura Schwartz** were responsible for the awesome events that were held in honor of our staff, teachers and administrators. From the Welcome Breakfast to the End of the Year Luncheon, these ladies recruited food, gifts and man hours to make our school “staff” feel special. They instituted something new by giving the teachers a little “something special” in their boxes when a special occasion was looming. Susan is moving on to the High School next year and we send her with our best wishes. Laura will continue to work in other areas of our PTSA.

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

online database that made it much easier to collect the names and numbers of our many volunteers. She also created our incredible website, [www.pmsptsas.org](http://www.pmsptsas.org).

Visit it to see all of the wonderful activities that the PMS PTSA is involved in. Thank you Sharon. You have created a legacy!



# EESAC Positions Available! (Educational Excellence & School Advisory Committee)

If you would like to sit on the EESAC committee for a 2 year term, there are several positions that are available and will be voted on at the 5/14 PTSA meeting. At the EESAC meetings (which are typically held at 8:00 am right before our PTSA meetings), we meet with teachers, students and other concerned parents to discuss the educational well being of our students.



## Box Tops for Education

I would like to thank all of the students, teachers and parents who have participated in the Box Tops for Education program. With your help we have collected approximately \$3,062.00 worth of Box Tops this year. The top 3 teachers for the first 9 weeks were Ms. Figureiras, Dr. Cruz, and Mr. Kaplan. The second 9 weeks were Dr. Cruz, Ms. Smith-Ramsey, and Ms. C. Martin. The third 9 weeks were, Ms. Naranjo, Ms. O'Hara, and Dr. Cruz. Students, please help your favorite teacher make the top 3 for the final 9 weeks by bringing in all of the Box Tops you can find in your pantry by May 22, 2009. And don't forget to collect Box Tops all summer for your teachers in the Fall.



— Cori Strosnider, Box Tops Coordinator

## "We Love Our Volunteers" Appreciation Breakfast May 14

All volunteers are invited to attend the Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast and Installation of PTSA Officers on **Thursday, May 14 at 9:00 AM** in the Media Center. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend!



## Thanks from Darla March, PMS PTSA 2nd Vice President:

**SAFE SITTER COURSE:** Hope Phillips, Chair. XX kids were trained to great reviews! Thanks to all the volunteers and the support of Baptist Health for making this possible.  
**CAREER DAY:** Natalie Lemos, Chair. More than 70 presenters were available throughout the day! A special "Thank You" to Mrs. Anderson for all her hard work!

**RED RIBBON WEEK:** The ad hoc committee of Diana Husson, Cristina Bissi and Carmen Lucas decorated the school in red ribbons, banners, etc. Kids, teachers and staff wore red, mismatched attire and took a pledge to be drug and alcohol free with the theme of "Ask ME, See ME, Be ME – I am drug free." Thanks to the Palmetto High School Lacrosse Team for helping us "Team Against Drugs" and judging our teams' bulletin boards. Congrats to Dr. Cruz' team for their first place award. Ms. Parrot's media team produced informative public service spots for our morning announcements. Throughout the week, announcements via the closed circuit television system informed students about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Informative flyers, pamphlets and posters were available in the attendance office. The Red Ribbon Pep Rally featured Student Government leadership, DYFIT Club leaders, dancers, cheerleaders and our guest speaker, Mr. Ritchie Lucas from THINK FACTORY! Thank you again to Mrs. Anderson for putting the pep rally together.

**REFLECTIONS:** Mindy Notrika, Chair. The PMS Reflections program was held in September. This year, PMS PTSA set a new record with over 200 entries in 5 categories! The talented work of our students featuring the theme "WOW!" A big "congratulations" to each of our participants and our finalists. We are proud of all participants and greatly appreciate the teacher, student, faculty and volunteer participation. Specifically, we appreciate the Palmetto Orchestra's Chamber Group catering and entertaining the gallery night visitors. Next year's national theme for Reflections is "Beauty is..." Further information will be announced in the Fall or you can visit the national PTA at <http://www.PTA.org>.

**SPIRIT WEEK:** Dawn Ratiner, Chair. The school was decorated and the students celebrated their spirit throughout the week, culminating in a ORANGE vs WHITE football tournament. Students, faculty, staff and parents were filled with LANCER PRIDE!

**BEAUTIFICATION:** Christian Armstrong, Cyndi Eisenberg and Lauren Mayer, Co-Chairs. Last year, the Emerald Garden Dedication was on November 29, 2008. This committee did an outstanding job of maintaining the area flawlessly and spreading the beauty throughout the campus. Several work days were devoted to mulching, planting and weeding the front and breezeways of PMS!



**LISTENERS:** Linda Diamond, Chair. Had a tremendously successful year with listeners and students. The listeners have all reported great and challenging experiences with their students. These volunteers' special service is a safety net for their students and our community!

Thanks for their reliability and consistent service to our wonderful students.

**MEDIA CENTER:** Due to the success of our many parent donations, the media received over \$3000 in new books! Thanks to all the community support to build our library collection!

**PROGRAMS:** The PTSA hosted 7 informational programs at both morning and evening meetings. They included: Communicating with your Teenager, Election 2008, Legislative Update, Making your Voices Heard / Advocating for Children, the RALLY to TALLY, Update from School Board Member Dr. Feldman, and MDCPS Student Services. In addition, Randi Trazenfeld, Maricel Lamb, and Melissa Montovino provided TEAM BUILDING for the November Professional Development session for our faculty!

## Legislative Notes:

Many thanks to everyone who helped organize and/or attended any of the legislative events this year. Our PTA/PTSA and community are extraordinary in their support of education. Please keep it up! There is more to do, but I would like to take this time to recognize each and every action that you have taken in support of education funding this year.

In the next two weeks, please contribute to the e-blast campaign for education funding, in the amount of about ten minutes. If everyone does, it will be the best investment we could ever make. Keep on the lookout for opportunities to take action, as we will do our best to provide them. Have a wonderful summer!

– Eileen Faradji, PMS PTSA Legislative Chair

## Thanks from Maricel Lam, PMS PTSA 3rd Vice President:

**A Big Thanks to all the Chairpersons, Volunteers, and Donors who SHOWED US THE MONEY!**

**Gae Shapiro** and **Rachelle Schneider** did a fabulous job co-chairing the **Parent Donation Program** – our main fundraiser. This year 194 PMS families donated \$22,563.35 to help PTSA continue providing materials and support to all PMS students, teachers, and staff. I would like to thank every person who donated to this program.

Co-Chairs **Colleen Beauregard** and **Lisa Whalen** took over the **Required Reading Book Sale** from **Janet Bass** who did a great job starting the event. Because of their efforts and that of the incredible team of volunteers, they helped raise \$11,478.74 and gave over \$719 worth of books provided to students, \$1750 worth of books donated directly to classrooms, and \$150 worth of requested books to the Media Center to be used by all students. In addition, after the temporary closure of Get Smart, Colleen managed to stock up the school store with blank books so all Language Arts students could have them for their projects.

**Carolyn Seckinger** and **Kelly Forman** once again chaired the **Scholastic Book Fair**. Their enthusiasm, patience and unrelenting will to get *Twilight* merchandise to our students during the book fair made the event a huge success. Their efforts helped raise over \$800 worth of books donated to the Media Center and over \$1000 to PTSA.

Hard working **Cori Strosnider** cut, counted, and mailed off over 30,000 **General Mills Box Tops for Education** to earn our school approximately \$3,062.00. Parents and students – please keep collecting them all year long! GM donates 10 cents for every Box Top. Teachers collect them and at the end of each 9 week period the top 3 collecting teachers receive a gift as a thank you for their efforts.

With over 4860 slices sold! our Friday, **Pizza Sales** ladies **Diana King**, **Lourdes Martin** and **Cindy Lukesboom** did “Molto Buono” and Pizza Hut on US1 and Kendall Drive delivered the “delicioso” pizza. “Graci” to you all.

**School Store** Chair **Cindy Luksomboon** with the help of Wendy Wilson greeted our shoppers with a smile. Our school store located in the cafeteria provides supplies, blank books, spirit T-shirts and hoodies to students every Friday morning.

The wonder team of **Dina Lara** and **Jana d’Adeskey** made this year’s Rocking **Student Directory** fantastic. This year’s winning artwork graced the directory’s covers and insides. Thanks to Ms. Charles for judging the artwork and Ms. Schaefer for guiding the student’s artwork submissions. The UPS STORE on Bird Road and 67 Avenue did an awesome job laying out and printing the directories. A huge thanks to all the sponsors who helped underwrite this project.

**Taste of Pinecrest** brings in funds to all the schools within the Village of Pinecrest. Chair **Dawn Ratiner** did an amazing job coordinating our Jazz Band and Chorus to perform as well as gathering volunteers to sell tickets and help out at the event. **A LANCER THANK YOU** goes to **Mayor Lerner** and the **Commissioners** for their continued support of education in our community. A BIG Thank you to the **Pinecrest Business Association** for sponsoring the Taste of Pinecrest.

And finally a big thanks to all the moms who folded, sold and counted School Spirit T-shirts and hoodies especially **Susan Montesino** and **Susan Davis**. **LANCERS LEAD OTHERS FOLLOW!**

## VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH



### Martha Limner

Martha Limner is recognized for:  
**Creating and writing weekly PTSA Link since 2006.**

This technology has changed and improved communication for the entire PMS community.

Martha and husband, Nick, have been together for 26 years and have two sons – Nick (14), who’ll start at the new Green School in the fall, and Jordan (12) in 6th grade at PMS. Martha’s professional focus is tourism as a marketing/writer; full-time mom and tired chauffer.

Some things we didn’t know about: “I bury secret messages in PTSA Link to see if anyone’s reading.”

Martha’s “motto” is,  
*Be kinder than necessary.  
Everyone is fighting some kind of battle.*

We Love Our Volunteers

### Carmen Lucas

Carmen Lucas is recognized for:  
**Helping out wherever help is needed.**

Carmen and husband, Ritchie have two children – Max, 11 at Palmetto Middle and Simon, 9 who attends Pinecrest Elementary. .

Carmen’s professional focus is marketing and public relations consulting.

Some things we didn’t know about: “I create and write advertising, marketing and public relations campaigns. I’m also helping Mayor Lerner’s Education Committee as Chair of the Arts and Enrichment Program at the Pinecrest Community Center.” Carmen’s “motto” is,  
*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*