



Palmetto Middle School

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www.pms.dadeschools.net

Lisa Noffo, Principal

Melissa Montovino, PTSA President

August 2008 Volume 39 Issue 1

Message from the PMS PTSA President

Hello Parents, Students, Teachers and Community Members!

Welcome to Palmetto Middle School and our first edition of the Lancer Letter, our monthly newsletter to keep you abreast of happenings around the middle school. As many of you all know, this will be my first year as President of your Parent Teacher School Association (PTSA). In addition to this monthly newsletter, we have a weekly e-newsletter, called the PTSA Link. See page 3 for more information on the PTSA Link.

My focus is all about improving COMMUNICATIONS and making it easy for you all to get information when you want it, in a format easily accessible to YOU. With this in mind, I am pleased to introduce our very own website, www.pmsptsa.org that parent and volunteer Sharon DeWitt has designed. Some of it is still work in progress but if you browse the site, you'll see that it is designed to host a great deal of information. Processes that have been manually intensive for parents to operate in the past (Membership, Donations, Volunteer gathering, etc.) can now be processed via an online database linked into the website.

The entire PTSA recognizes that middle school years can be challenging, for both students and parents. We will all be growing together as our children grow into mature young adults. One of the most important things that we can do as parents of middle school students is to be informed. Staying informed about our children's education is on a different level than elementary school as we are no longer invited to be room parents for our child's classroom... It is here that the PTSA steps in. Membership in the PTSA will provide a "pulse" into the school. As a member, your voice joins thousands of other members nationwide and helps to make our local messages heard.

Our first meeting of the school year will be on Thursday, August 21 at 9:15am in the Media Center. This meeting will be repeated at 7:00 pm in the Media Center. We will approve the budget and discuss exciting plans for the school year. In addition, you will meet Mrs. Noffo, the Principal at Palmetto Middle School and learn what she has in store for the upcoming year as well.

For those parents that are willing and able to volunteer through the PTSA, there are many opportunities. Even if you work, there is assistance that can be provided during evenings or "off times." The volunteer check sheet will be sent home the first week of school so be on the lookout for that as well as many other key pieces of information from the PTSA.

A list of the PTSA Board and Committees has been mailed with this newsletter; it contains numbers and dates that may be useful for you. (*You should note that there are still Committee Chair opportunities to lead: Awards, Programs and School Store.*) Feel free to contact me at melissamontovino@yahoo.com with any questions, feedback, or comments. I am both honored and excited to be serving the Palmetto Middle School community and look forward to working with you all in support of our esteemed students!

— Melissa Montovino



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

PMS & PTSA Calendar Aug. '08

- 8-13 6th grade orientation, 11:00 am and 2:00 pm
- 8-14 Teacher welcome back breakfast 9:00 am
- 8-14 Emerald Garden fall clean-up – help welcome
- 8-18 First day of school for students 9:00 am
- 8-21 PTSA meeting 9:15 am and 7:00 pm
- 8-22 Committee chair welcome breakfast 9:30 am
- 9-18 PTSA meeting 9:15 am

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

A Note from Mrs. Noffo

With the approach of the 2008-2009 school year, I would like to welcome all of you to Palmetto Middle School; one of the most outstanding middle schools in Miami-Dade County. It is an honor for me to be the Principal of a school with the tradition and reputation of Palmetto Middle School.

Last year, Palmetto Middle received a grade of "A" for the seventh straight year. Our school's reputation and success rests, in large part, on parental concern and participation. We seek to afford each student an education commensurate with his or her abilities, relevant to the county's needs, and challenging to a degree that will prompt a love of learning.

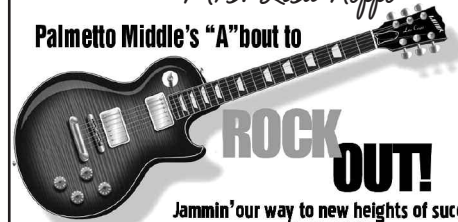
I can assure you that Palmetto Middle School will continue to promote high academic standards and provide a safe learning environment for our children.

I look forward to an exciting year and hope to meet all of you personally. I encourage all parents and students to join the PTSA, which has done so much to contribute to our school.

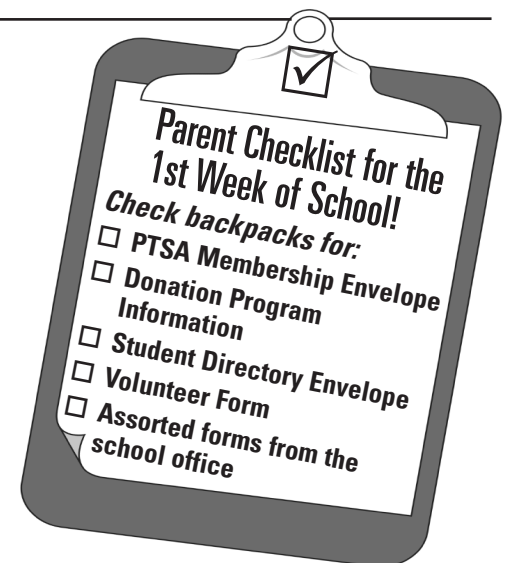
So watch out: "Palmetto Middle's "A"bout to rock out..... Jammin' to new heights of success!"

— Mrs. Lisa Noffo

Palmetto Middle's "A"bout to



Jammin' our way to new heights of success!
2008-2009



Office Depot "Back to School" promotion Help PMS While Buying School Supplies

Office Depot is running a "Back to School" promotion. They will donate 5% of your total purchases back to our school in the form of merchandise credit which can be used for FREE supplies. All you have to do is give our school code at the register when you check out. It's simple and found money for our school.



Palmetto Middle School's code is 70022521. Don't worry if you forget it. Just mention that you want to participate in the Back to School program and they can look it up and give PMS the credit!

WOW! Make a difference by participating in PMS Reflections 2008!

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. In 2007, 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.

The deadline for student submissions to the PMS **REFLECTIONS** program is still to be announced. We anticipate submission date to be late September/early October. **All original student entries must relate to this year's theme: "Wow!"**

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: Mindi Notrika 305-251-7517 or Shifra Lipson 305-378-9504.



Thank you in advance for making a difference in **REFLECTIONS 2008!**

General Mills Box Tops for Education



For the past several years, the PTSA has been raising money for Palmetto Middle School through a fund-raising program called Box Tops for Education.

Please help support our school by clipping the Box Tops for Education logo from hundreds of participating products, such as General Mills cereal boxes, Ziplock containers and bags, Betty Crocker fruit snacks and baking products, Pillsbury refrigerated cookies and dinner rolls and Kleenex tissues. Palmetto Middle School earns 10 cents for each Box Top collected. **With the help of the parents and students, the PTSA and school earned more than \$2,400.00 last year!**

This is a year long program, so please start clipping and saving the Box Top logos now. You can also ask friends, coworkers and family to do the same. (Please clip along the dotted line and be sure the date is present in the bottom right corner).

Participating teachers will collect the logos each quarter.

Thank you for making a difference and helping Palmetto Middle School accomplish its goals.

— Cori Strosnider, Palmetto Middle School PTSA Box Tops Coordinator
coristros@bellsouth.net

In addition to cutting Box Tops and sending them in, here's another way to earn Box Tops.



ROCK YOUR SCHOOL SWEEPSTAKES

To celebrate its partnership with the Box Tops for Education® program, Kimberly-Clark is launching the Rock Your School Sweepstakes to offer parents a chance to win 100,000 Bonus Box Tops, plus an exclusive concert featuring Radio Disney star and Hollywood Records artist Jordan Pruitt for their child's school.

To Enter: Parents and legal guardians of students in grades K through 8 can enter the sweepstakes once daily from June 28 through Sept. 15 via tear pads in participating retail stores or online at www.rockbacktoschool.com. More than 1,000 winners will enjoy prizes that include 1,000 Bonus Box Tops and autographed copies of one of Pruitt's CDs. One grand prize winner will win a Jordan Pruitt concert at his or her child's school and 100,000 Bonus Box Tops. Winners will be selected at random from all eligible entries on or around Sept. 22. For complete sweepstakes details and rules or to enter the Rock Your School Sweepstakes, visit <http://www.rockbacktoschool.com/>.

Friday Pizza Sales

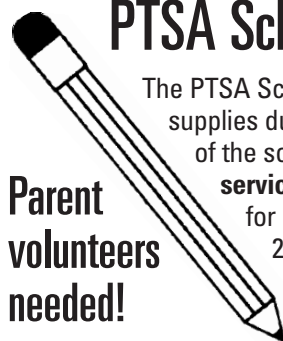
"Hungry anyone? Support our school by buying pizza on Friday afternoons after school. Only \$1.00 a slice or \$12.00 for the whole pie.



PTSA School Store

Parent
volunteers
needed!

The PTSA School Store is ready for business! You can purchase supplies during the Orientation on Aug. 13 and every MONDAY of the school year. **Volunteers are needed to provide this service** of keeping students supplied and making it easier for parents when children need items. All it takes is 20 minutes to run the store from 8:30am until 8:50am. Please contact Maricel Lam if you are interested at 305-613-0843 or whoil@bellsouth.net.



Join the Palmetto Middle School PTSA

We invite you to join the **Palmetto Middle School PTSA**. The PTSA is a Parent, Teacher and Student Association that provides information on important happenings at school, in addition to providing services, equipment, supplies and improvements that benefit all students in the school throughout the year. This is a great way for ALL parents, grandparents, step-parents, extended family members, faculty, staff and students, even those who are not able to devote time to volunteering, to be involved in supporting the PTSA efforts. The cost is only \$10 per parent, \$7 per teacher/staff and \$5 per student. We encourage all those interested in having "a voice" to join. This year, membership invitations will go home during the first week of school. Please look for the GREEN membership envelope and return it with your cash or check as soon as possible. The first homeroom to reach 100% membership will receive a pizza party. We will also have a membership table set up at both orientation sessions on Wednesday, August 13th. Together we can reach our goal of 100% membership. Please show your support for PMS by joining the PTSA.

This year you will be able to sign up online, but will still have to return the green envelope to your child(ren)'s teacher to receive your PTSA Membership card.

Thank you!

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

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

"You Got Mail"

Sign up to receive all PTSA and School Information via Email

Our weekly e-newsletter, **PTSA Link**, provides you with up-to-date information on issues directly impacting our students and school, as well as links to our monthly mailings, *Lancer Letter* and much more. By receiving PTSA Link, you also help us in our efforts to "go green," and reduce the cost and volunteer hours of sending hard copy documents. **To sign up, visit www.pmsptsa.org and click on PTSA Link, or send an e-mail to ptsalink@bellsouth.net with PTSA Link/Opt-out Hardcopy in the subject.**

If you're already receiving PTSA Link and have previously opted out of our monthly mailing, you don't need to sign up again. Remember to make sure our e-mail address is in your Address Book or Safe Sender list. This ensures your e-mail is delivered to your Inbox and not sent to your Bulk or Junk Mail folders.

Teachers – let us help you get your message out, too! If you have an important announcement (sports or club news, yearbook sales, donation requests, study tips/online resources, etc.), send us your copy.

Questions? Contact Martha Limner at ptsalink@bellsouth.net.

Emerald Garden News

Hello and Happy Summer everyone! Hopefully everyone is feeling well rested and is gearing up for another year of work and play at Palmetto Middle. The Beautification Committee is looking for volunteers to come out and help us spruce up our Emerald Garden in time for the start of our new school year. Mark your calendars for Thursday, August 14 at 9:30 a.m. to meet, greet and pull some weeds with your fellow nature lovers. We are also desperately hoping to find a teacher/staff sponsor for an official "Garden Club" for our school. Our school has recently been granted an award from the South Dade Chapter of Garden Club Presidents for its work in revitalizing the Emerald Garden. It has been strongly suggested that our school not only needs, but deserves a Garden Club to serve staff and students who want to get more out of nature and our school's surroundings. RSVP to Christian Armstrong 305-252-7788, Cyndi Eisenberg 305-667-6824 or Lauren Mayer 305-238-7773 if you are able to help out in any way. Cold drinks will be provided!!



Welcome Back Breakfast for Teachers and Staff

The PTSA is hosting a Welcome Back Breakfast for our wonderful teachers and staff.

Starbucks has graciously offered to provide the coffee. Donations of all kinds of food items will be greatly appreciated and enjoyed by all... whether you can cook or not, we could sure use your help!!! Both homemade and store bought items are needed. We also need some volunteer servers the day of the event.

The event will be held on Thursday, Aug. 14 at 8:20am in the Cafeteria. Help us welcome our teachers and staff back to "A" Rockin' new year!!!!

Call or email Laura Schwartz 305-251-6330, Leiasmom23@aol.com or Susan Montesino 305-234-3212, suprmom1017@bellsouth.net.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY: The Children's Trust

The Children's Trust is up for reauthorization on Tuesday, August 26th. The Trust is a dedicated source of funding created by voter referendum in 2002 to improve the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County by making strategic investments in their future, focusing on the areas of health, development and safety, and increasing parental and community responsibility in children. Miami Dade County Council of PTAs/PTSAs is in support of the reauthorization of the Children's Trust and asks you to vote yes. To learn more about The Children's Trust and the many programs and initiatives they undertake on behalf of our community's children, visit www.thechildrenstrust.org.

Mark Your Calendar to Vote on August 26

It is extremely important that you get out and vote on Tuesday, August 26! To register to vote, or if you know of someone who isn't, visit www.miamidade.gov/elections

–Eileen Faradji, Legislative Affairs



Vote

Required Reading Book Sale

All students will receive a Required Reading Book List from their Language Art's teacher during the first weeks of school. Students can purchase all their books plus *WORDLY WISE* during the PTSA's REQUIRED READING BOOK SALE held in the month of September. All books will be priced the same as in the stores. Save time and gas and you won't have to run to the "BORDER"s!



School Board District Budget Update

Miami-Dade County Public Schools moves forward with Budget for 2008-09

Miami-Dade County Public Schools is facing one of the most challenging budgetary cycles in recent history. The District, like many others in Florida, has been hit hard by a reduction in funding and struggling state and national economies, as well as the passage of Florida Amendment One. Future budget cuts to education by the Florida Legislature are a very real possibility, and it is critical that the community stay informed during this time of economic challenge and change.

The District is committed to providing information to the community to present a clear understanding of the process and the progress being made. To view the July 3 Budget Update, please go to http://superintendent.dadeschools.net/default_news.asp?id=61. If you would like to receive Budget Updates directly from MDCPS, please e-mail ptsalink@bellsouth.net and your e-mail address will be provided to the District.

Keep Palmetto Middle School Strong through the Parent Donation Program

With school budgets being slammed, the PTSA is counting on parents to remember the importance of the **Parent Donation Program** here at Palmetto Middle School. This is our only means to raise funds that directly impact PMS students. At PMS we have one primary fundraising program and that is simply the **Parent Donation Program**. Thanks to the past success of this program and the generous support from so many families, we are continuing with this program as our primary means of support for all the programs that the PTSA provides. No donation is too small or too large, and it is fully tax deductible. Most importantly, 100% of your donation goes to supporting academic and enrichment activities unlike wrapping paper sales where only 50% of your checks support the school! A donation letter and envelope will go home the first week of school and is to be returned to your child's home room class. Corporate, small business and grandparent donations are welcome. Donors will be recognized in the monthly Lancer Newsletter.

—Gae Shapiro and Rachele Schneider, Parent Donation Program

Look Cool and Support Your School!



A new, cool PMS School Spirit Shirt will be on sale during orientation – August 13 and at the school store throughout the year. It will be MANDATORY that students wear the PMS School Spirit shirt on field trips. Hurry and buy yours!

PE Uniform Sales

Students enrolled in Physical Education class are required to wear a PE Uniform. Purchase your uniform during orientation on Aug. 13 or directly from your PE coach during class.

Volunteer Sign-Up

At Palmetto Middle school we appreciate and welcome volunteers. Our volunteers make our events successful. We are finalizing details for our PMS volunteers to be able to sign up online for committee & other volunteer opportunities. Please visit our new PMS website www.pmspta.org and click on the volunteer link to fill out an online application and make your volunteer selections.

We can even come up with volunteer opportunities for people who work during the day. Every offer of assistance is appreciated—no time contribution is too small. Parents, grandparents, even aunts and uncles can get involved. The only requirement is each volunteer must have a Miami-Dade County Public School volunteer number, which can be obtained by completing the MDCPS form online. If you have a volunteer number from another school, that number can be used at PMS as well.

If you have any questions, please contact Mary Warrell at 305-256-0505 or email at carmicmom@comcast.net or Sharon DeWitt at dsdewitt@bellsouth.net.

Fit Kids Before & After Program

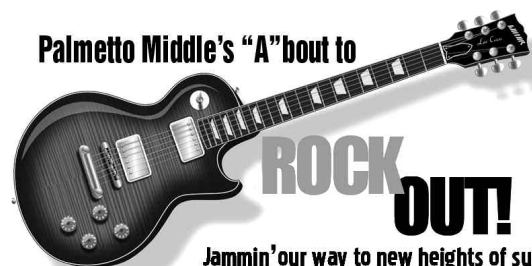
Fit Kids is proud to offer before & after school enrichment program at Palmetto Middle School. They will provide homework assistance, study group activities, sports and snacks. As it is partially funded by The Children's Trust, it is very affordable (\$35 registration fee and \$30 after school care (3:40 - 6:00), \$25 before school care (7:00 - 8:30) or \$50 for both before and after school care). Call Fit Kids at 305.207.0022 to make arrangements. They will have a table to register and answer questions during Orientation.

Lancer Band Booster

Parent volunteers are needed to help in the band room during the first few weeks of school. If you are available to help, please contact Mr. Berrios at rberrios@dadeschools.net.

A general Band Booster meeting will be held the second week of school.

Palmetto Middle's "A"bout to



ROCK
OUT!

Jammin' our way to new heights of success!
2008-2009