

PTA NEWS

Dear Parents,

I hope this Newsletter finds you all happy and healthy.

Hopefully, you all had a great Thanksgiving. It is hard to believe that it is December already.

PRESIDENTS' REPORT



Whenever I think of December, I think of Holiday Happiness, which was a huge success this year! As I walked through the halls and classrooms, the kids were having fun with sand art, face painting and the game room to name a few. They were also buying lots of presents for their family in the gift room. The vendors offered great gifts for the holiday season too. Although the final tallies have not been completed, it appears that the day was a financial success for the PTA as well.

Holiday Happiness is the largest fundraiser for the Primrose PTA and it supports many of the programs that we fund each year. Thanks so much to Maria Marschke and Jen Maestri and all of the other Holiday Happiness volunteers who worked so hard to make this day such a success. Maria and Jen have chaired this event for the past three years but their children will be moving on to SIS next year. So, we are seeking volunteers to chair this next year. Without this event and the funds it generates, multiple programs will have to be reduced or eliminated next year. So, if you have any interest in chairing Holiday Happiness 2009, please contact us as soon as possible!!!

In October, we held the book fair in the library for the second year. We should all be very grateful that our children find so much joy in purchasing books to read. The Donuts for Dads event was very successful – it generated thousands of dollars in less than an hour. Thanks so much to all of the Dads who brought their children that morning!!! Thanks also to our Book Fair chairs, Virginia Maloney, Maureen Searles and Debra Walker. Nicole Brownstein has been kind enough to take on this task next year!!!

The fall season has been full of PTA sponsored events like Picture Day, Red Ribbon Week and visits from Author's like Helen Lester. Thank you to all of the volunteers who have worked to make these events happen successfully.

Since we will not be publishing Pipeline this year, the Executive Board voted in November to do a Primrose Yearbook this year. Susan McCormack and Kristen Iorizzo will chair the committee doing the yearbook. We will send out more information as it becomes available.

We also voted in November to reallocate funds in the current budget to fund a Literacy Garden at Primrose. We are hoping to have the Gazebo, which will act as an outdoor classroom off the Library, constructed by June. This will commemorate Primrose's 50th Anniversary. If you would like to make a contribution that will be applied to the Literacy Garden, please send it to Becky Williams c/o Jack Williams – Mrs. Johnston's class. Contributions are tax-deductible and a receipt will be furnished upon request.

On a much sadder note, the Somers Community recently lost a dear friend, Lynn Adams. As we enter the holiday season of giving, I can't help but think about how much Lynn gave to our community. She was involved in so many facets of our children's lives from the PTAs and Girl Scouts to coaching. There is hardly a child in our community whose life Lynn has not enriched in some way and we will miss her dearly. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her husband Jonathan and children, Zach, Sarah and Josh.

In closing, let's remember the people that are near and dear to us and not forget to tell them that they are so special in our lives. My Co-President, Susan Taylor, and I wish you a very healthy and happy holiday season – *Becky Williams*



PRINCIPALS REPORT

Dear Parents,

This is certainly a momentous time in our country's history. We are facing unprecedented economic turmoil. We seem to have finally come to a national consensus that global warming and our energy and environmental crisis cannot be ignored. We have just experienced the election of our first African-American president, and have had women as candidates for the highest offices. When we state that the world is changing, this is not idle chatter; our responsibility is to prepare our children for this change, and to make sure that we are doing everything we can to help them succeed in this changing world. Learning to live and work together is more vital than ever.

Given our continuing work on diversity, I wanted to share with you some strategies that you may find useful as you respond to issues of diversity in your own life and community. Do you ever wonder what to say, or do, when you hear an ethnic joke, receive an offensive email, confront prejudice or disrespect in the workforce or on the playground? Try these, as our teachers and I have found these suggestions both simple and powerful. They are from <http://www.ouch-video.com/> and I recommend that you go online and check it out; the video at this site is powerful and the following language comes directly from this source.

6 Techniques For Speaking Up Without Guilt Or Blame:

1. **Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact** Say: "I know you mean well, but that hurts."
2. **Ask a Question** Say: "What do you mean?" "I'm sorry, what was that?"
3. **Interrupt and Redirect** Say: "Wow, let's not go down that path."
4. **Broaden to Universal Human Behavior** Say: "I don't think it's a _____ thing. I think it applies to everyone."
5. **Make it Individual** Say: "You mean all _____ or are you speaking about someone in particular?"
6. **Say "Ouch!"** Simply saying "Ouch!" can let someone know that you find a statement or act hurtful or inappropriate, without the need for more explanation.

It takes just one voice to speak up.

Sincerely,

Richard M. Fisher

A MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Our children are coming each day wrapped in scarves and bundled in their heavy coats and boots. We had a peak of fall and now we are in full fledged "winter" mode a month early. The school year is flying by and our children are growing by leaps and bounds socially, emotionally and academically.

As the holiday season quickly approaches, it is that time of year to think about our school and local community and what we are thankful for. We are teaching our children to be thankful for the little things in life. We have family, a roof over our heads and food to eat. We have all of the basic necessities of life. What more could we ask for??? At this time of year we are also thinking about others that may not have what we have. As we think about ways to support others as a community, we are supporting our children in becoming caring, thoughtful citizens who think of others and ways they can help.

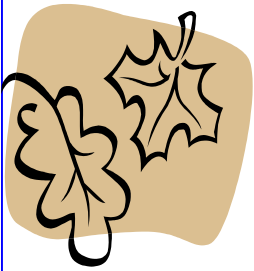
Here at Primrose, there are multiple drives occurring including collecting toys for children that are less fortunate, food drives, collecting towels, blankets and pillows for our furry friends, as well as class projects that revolve around helping others. We are conducting read alouds and engaging our children in conversations that foster a way of being that includes thinking about others in our community and how our actions can have a positive impact on them. Having empathy and thinking about others is a life skill and we are all supporting our children as they develop these skills.



There are many books out there that show characters giving to others and/or helping out the community they are a part of. Some of these titles include, *Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney, *Chicken Sunday* by Patricia Polacco, and *The Gardener* by Sarah Stewart. *Miss Rumphius* is about a woman who is told by her Grandfather that she must do something to make the world a more beautiful place. She decides to plant lupines everywhere she goes and this adds beauty in unexpected places. In *Chicken Sunday*, a group of children come together to purchase a hat for a very special lady in their life who always shows them love. And finally, *The Gardener* is about a little girl that plants a secret garden for her Uncle because she wants him to be happy.

I am so proud to be a member of the Primrose family. Our children, teachers, and families are extremely generous and always go above and beyond to help out those that are less fortunate. Thank you for being the community that you are. I wish each and every one of you a wonderful holiday and a happy new year!

Haidee Anaya
Assistant Principal



Kindergarten was so excited to see the changes in the fall weather. We used this as a springboard to many activities including nature senses walks, learning about the life cycle of trees and a discussion about chlorophyll, the chemical that makes leaves change colors. As fall progressed the kindergarteners learned about the life cycle of the apple and many comparisons between apples and pumpkins. Many classes made applesauce and other apple products. A yummy time was had by all!

A tradition among the kindergarten classes is to have Math Masquerade around Halloween time. The classes created math centers using Halloween and pumpkins as the overarching theme as they learned how to weigh mini pumpkins, play number bingo, learn about symmetry, among other exciting activities. It was so exciting hearing about the students' costumes and how much fun they had trick or treating with their friends and family.

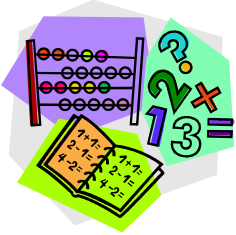
Kindergarten thanks the PTA for once again bringing Lou Del Bianco back to Primrose for Red Ribbon Week. After the assembly many of the students were singing some of the words to Lou's song including, "make a choice, make a good choice!" This sparked many conversations about treating others with kindness and respect and thinking before one acts or reacts.

Weather permitting; kindergarten will go outside for recess.

Please remember to have your child dress appropriately this includes a hat, gloves or mittens and a warm winter coat!

Looking forward, kindergarten will read many different versions of the *Gingerbread Man*. We will compare and contrast the different stories, predict the endings and use our math skills to create a class graph.

The kindergarten classes will usher in the various holidays by creating gingerbread houses.



FIRST GRADE NEWS

It is hard to believe that we are already finished with the month of November. In first grade we have been very busy. We made good choices during Red Ribbon Week. Thank you to the PTA for the many activities that you planned for the children. First Graders especially enjoyed the very engaging assembly with Lou DelBianco.

In Reading Workshop we are continuing to develop good strategies as readers. We also are currently working on a unit of study on Re-telling stories. After listening to your child read it would be a great idea for you to ask them to re-tell the book to you. A good re-tell includes the title, author, main characters, setting, problem, and solution or beginning, middle, and end.

In Writing Workshop we are working on writing personal narratives or "ME" stories as we like to call them in first grade. Simply put, these are stories that really happened to us, that are special, and memorable. We read lots of literature to the children to get them immersed in this genre. In this unit of study the children will learn that stories should include a beginning, middle, and end. We will also encourage lots of details as they write their piece!

In Math the children are working with partners on new math games such as Penny Nickel Exchange and High Roller. These games help to reinforce money concepts and adding concepts. Please encourage your child to play math games at home. We are also teaching the children about various number patterns using Frames and Arrows.

In Social Studies we are reading lots of different books about all kinds of families. You will hear the children coming home talking about different family traditions as well.

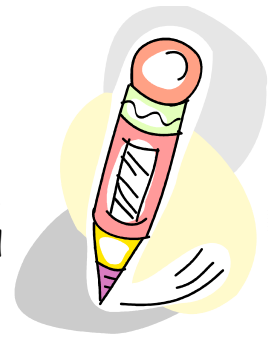
The weather can change throughout the day. Please remember to dress your child appropriately. Layers tend to work best as the temperatures in rooms can vary! Please also label all clothing that comes to school. It makes it so much easier to find the owner of a lost item at the end of the day when a name is on it.

At this time we would like to extend warm holiday wishes to all of you! Spend good times with family and friends! Relax and enjoy some quiet moments together as well.

We would also like to say Happy New Year 2009!

The Second Grade Teachers would like to thank the PTA for providing the students with some wonderful Fall assemblies and programs during the months of October and November. Thank you for all the work you put into the wonderful Book Fair with a great selection of books for the children and staff. We really appreciated the great system of using the pink tote-bags for "wish lists". Thanks for the activities during Red Ribbon Week and the assembly with Lou Del Bianco on healthy choices. Also, thank you for inviting Helen Lester to come and speak with the children about her books and her craft. She is always a crowd-pleaser and our students really get excited about reading her books!

In Reading Workshop, we are working on the comprehension strategies of retelling and making connections to books. In the area of Writing, we are working on writing letters, stories and poems based on theme related topics. Our Second Graders couldn't wait to get the Wee Deliver Post-Office up-and-running! They were so excited to write and send their letters, as well as starting their official duties working in the post-office! Mr. Mahoney, Mrs. Weiner and Ms. Molloy did an amazing job with the opening ceremony in November.



In the area of Spelling, we have been studying short and long-vowel sounds along with different spelling patterns, homophones, and sight-words.

This year we are pleased to use our new computer lab in addition to our own classroom resources to teach our students about using technology. Recently, we have been focusing on the skills of logging on, using equipment, navigating around the menu to find programs, logging off, and playing different math and reading skills games.

In the area of Science, the Second Graders are learning about Rocks and Soil. They are also learning about worms and building worm homes. In the area of Social Studies, they are learning about Communities including rural, urban, and suburban. Additionally, we continue to study holidays and raise global awareness through the use of Scholastic News Magazine, the Great Body Shop Magazine and National Geographic Magazine.

In the area of Math, the students are working on building speed and accuracy for addition and subtraction facts, in addition to creating and extending number patterns accurately. They are also working on counting mixed coins. Also, Ms. Bernstein joined the second grade teachers in co-teaching a unit in Problem Solving called "Draw a Picture or Diagram". This strategy is used to help the students solve multi-step word problems. We thank you for your continued support and practice of these skills at home!

Box Tops for Education is a year round fundraiser.



Our school receives \$.10 for every box top sent in.
If every student participates, that's \$\$\$ for our school.
Grandparents can clip too!

[Clip from these products!](#)

Our October winners are:

Kindergarten: Carlee J., Bridget Y., Anthony F.
1st grade: Jack H., Caitlyn V., Matthew A.
2nd Grade: Brooke P., Patrick B., Liam H.

Our November winners are:

Kindergarten: Robert G., Ben G., Ryan M.
1st grade: Sydney K., Alex C., Nicholas P.
2nd grade: Joanna R., Sarah D., Christina L.

Another way to support our school is to sign up at www.boxtops4education.com.

There are great money saving coupons and recipe ideas. Also, you can enter Primrose in the many contests and giveaways.

Note: It is very important that you cut out the box tops on the line first and *then* write your child's name, teacher and grade on the back of each box top.

(Please do not send in Campbell's labels for Education or Betty Crocker points.)

Thank You!

Jenn Azimi - azimi@optonline.net



PRIMROSE PIA Holiday Happiness

Saturday, December 6, 2008

We hope you were able to attend Holiday Happiness and enjoy the day with your family and friends. There was so much action going on. Along with the many vendors selling their goods, our Holiday Happiness Committee was very busy too! There were many details that needed to take place prior to the event. In the late summer, Penny Fonde sent out letters and registration forms to potential Holiday Happiness vendors and continued constant dialogue with them until the conclusion of the event. Robin Kushner contacted local publications to make sure that everyone knew about Holiday Happiness and Christine Katsch, Lauren Kittredge, Lillian Rossetti and Josie Stoner put up posters throughout the towns. Tammy Repp designed our Holiday Happiness program and Christine Justo made sure that we were able to get volunteers to help on Friday night and Saturday. At Holiday Happiness Laureen Smith-Arena and Amie Fay were selling delicious homemade baked goods at the bake sale, while Erica Gentile and Antoinette Gionta were busy serving food and drinks to the crowds in the kitchen!! Down in the gym Anastasia Erenberg was keeping the kids occupied with the games and handing out prizes in the game room while next door Hope Mazzola and Corinne Procopis were extremely busy negotiating prices at the tag sale. In the front of the school Sue McCormack was selling Somers merchandise as Robin Bambach helped our younger shoppers pick out the perfect present in the Kids' Gift Room. Additionally, just a few doors away were Debbie Ashley with sand art, and Danielle Recine applying tattoos, nail art and face painting. Across the hall from there was Virginia Maloney helping kids make one of a kind paintings. Our wonderful raffle committee this year, Sally Krauss, Amy Lerner and Cathy Vinci, were in the main office all day announcing winners. By the end of the day they raffled off over 100 incredible baskets. In another room Tina Savino along with Kristen Iorizzo, Susan Taylor and Becky Williams kept track of all our profits. We kept the Primrose custodians busy too! They were with us every step of the way helping us out throughout the event and then had the fun job of cleaning up when it was all over (sorry about that!). Thank you also to Mr. Fisher, Ms. Anaya and the entire Primrose Administration and Staff for welcoming this holiday event into the school and for all your support and guidance along the way. This Primrose tradition could not have been what it was without you. It was truly great!

We would like to thank the following that so generously gave to Holiday Happiness.

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| A&P, Mahopac | Imperial Wok, Somers | Somers Discount Wine & Spirits, Somers |
| Amy's Nails, Bedford Hills | Jesse's Deli, Lincolndale | Somers Hot Bagels, Baldwin Place |
| Annie's Nail, Somers | Just A Buck, Baldwin Place | Somers Mobil, Somers |
| Art in Us, Dobbs Ferry | Learning Express, Baldwin Place | Somers Tavern, Somers |
| Bellizzi, Mt. Kisco | Lia Sophia, Kathie Mollaghan - Somers | Sound Ideas, Steve Edelman - Armonk |
| Brewster Ice Arena, Brewster | Lyndy Jewelers Ltd., Baldwin Place | Stop & Shop, Baldwin Place |
| Bria Carting, Somers | Mancini Realty, Somers | Strathmore Bagels, Somers |
| Carminart, Angeline Family | Momo Nails & Spa, Baldwin Place | Stuarts Farm & Nursery, Granite Springs |
| Chilis, Baldwin Place | Mount Kisco Chevrolet Cadillac, Mt. Kisco | Sweet Delites Pastry Shop, Somers |
| Cocomo Tanning Salon, Baldwin Place | New Bon Buffet, Baldwin Place | Tastefully Simple, Michelle Burns - Purdys |
| Cold Stone Creamery, Baldwin Place | Opportunity Buying, Bronx- Gottesman Family | The Gentile Family, Somers |
| Custom Painted Miniature House Portrait, | Panera Bread, Yorktown Heights | The Gionta Family, Somers |
| Penny Fonde - Somers | Patsy's Bella Luna, Lincolndale | The Maestri Family, Somers |
| CVS, Somers | Peppino's Pizza, Baldwin Place | The Marschke Family, Somers |
| Dante's Family Restaurant & Pizza, | Pepsi Bottling Group, Somers | The Mexican Shack, Somers |
| Mahopac | Portofino's Pizza & Pasta, Golden's Bridge | The Pinnacle, Somers |
| Domino's Pizza, Mt. Kisco | Route 6 Wine & Liquor, Baldwin Place | The Walsh Family, Somers |
| Dr. Ash Khorram, Yorktown Heights | Sgaglios, Katonah | Val Ben's Heritage Market, Somers |
| Fratelli's Pizza & Pasta, Somers | Sleepys, Baldwin Place | Westchester Adventure Boot Camp, Somers |
| Grand Central Market, Baldwin Place | Somerfields, Somers | Westchester Marriott, Tarrytown |
| Il Forno, Somers | Somers B&B Café, Somers | Yogis Paw, Mt. Kisco |
| Images and Impressions, Somers | Somers Chamber of Commerce, Somers | |

And all the Primrose Families and Holiday Happiness vendors that gave so generously.

We would also like to thank the many parents and Leo Club participants who came out to volunteer for the day – a few hours of your time were greatly appreciated and much needed. Many thanks once again to everyone involved. We would like to wish you and your family a happy and healthy holiday season!

Jennifer Maestri and Maria Marschke - 2008 Holiday Happiness Co-Chairs

Somers Board of Education convened again on October 21, 2008 for a brief, second public meeting of the 2008-2009 academic year. Dr. Joanne Marien, Superintendent, called the meeting to order and thanked the PTA for spearheading Red Ribbon Week earlier in the month.

On the policy side, the Board accepted a number of policies for a first reading and review, including policies on student auto use, student organizations, a revised Internal audit function policy and a policy outlining the use of the district's sole special purpose credit card. The Board is trying to front end load the review of all policies in an effort to close out the review process by year-end. The Board also accepted a donation from Club Fit in Jefferson Valley of 11 fitness machines to the school district's fitness center.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Dr. Marien reiterated that the upcoming budget cycle will be a challenging one. There is a possibility of mid-year school budget cuts, as NY State Legislators may be called back to Albany in December to address a \$2 billion budget gap. The Board will know the status of state aid Somers Central School district will receive by January 2009.

The November 18, 2008 Somers Board of Education meeting began with a brief statement by Lucia Vece in which she thanked all Somers support staff for their hard work as part of Support Staff Recognition Day.

Awards were presented to the four captains of the Somers football team for winning the Section 1 league championship. In addition, a certificate was presented to a Somers High School cross-country runner who participated in the NYS Class A championship.

On the school budget side, state aid cuts are anticipated although district-wide reductions in expenditures were already planned and have been implemented as part of this year's budget. There have not yet been any program cuts although there will likely be no staff additions as part of the upcoming budget. There will be a general discussion at the next school board meeting as to how to approach the upcoming budget process.

The next public School Board meeting will be on Tuesday, December 21 at 7 PM at Primrose Elementary School.

Leah Bramson

Somers Education Foundation is in its 15th year, having awarded more than 225 grants and scholarships totaling \$400,000 to the school district. Grants awarded recently have funded technology equipment, classroom materials, environmental studies and educational events. We thank the Somers community for its continuous support! Thanks to all who supported our annual Spaghetti Dinner on November 14 and our Wine Tasting on December 3!

Please mark your calendar for the following events we will be hold during the remainder of the year. We raise most of our grant making funding through these events.

More details on these and the full SEF organization can be found at www.sefny.org.

- Student Variety Show, 7:00pm Feb. 6, Somers High School, featuring students from Primrose & SIS!
- Gala Dinner & Auction, 7:00pm April 18, Pinnacle Restaurant, highlighted by induction of honorees into SEF Hall of Fame
- Harlem Wizards basketball, 7:30pm May 15, Somers High School. See the zany antics of the Wizards as they take on a spirited Somers team of teachers and administrators.

SOMERS MERCHANDISE SALE!

We have limited quantities!

Call early for best selection!

They make great holiday gifts for everyone on your list!



Gildan Full Zippered Hooded Sweatshirts – Pink and Red Available – assorted sizes for both youth and adult - \$26.00 each

Black Quilted Sholder Tote – \$25.00 each

Red Beach Towel – 30" x 60" - \$20.00 each

Golf Folding Umbrella – 58" arc - \$20.00 each

Folding Umbrella – 48" arc - \$15.00 each

Gildan long Sleeve T-Shirt – Red and Black Available – assorted sizes for both youth and adult - \$15.00 each

Please email Maria Marschke at LMSEMARSCHKE@optonline.net with your requests – please include item, size, quantity and color. Thank you!