

## Middlebrook PTA Meeting

November 15, 2012

### MINUTES

- I. Call to Order - Media Center, Middlebrook School @ 9am: Beth Johnson.
- II. Approval of October 18, 2012 Minutes - Aileen Senneff: Sharon Kress moved, Victoria Madden seconded. Minutes approved.
- III. Principal's Report - Julia Harris: The Veterans Day Program included a variety of tributes for veterans, both past and present, including patriotic songs, student poetry, musical performances, and team assemblies for the veterans. A new addition to the program this year is the Veterans Day Drive for the Nick Madaras House for homeless veterans in Bridgeport. Donations requested include; brownie mix, rice, salad dressing, taco shells, gloves, scarves, socks, shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrushes. Six grade students will send letters to the veterans to accompany the donations. Once again, the Veterans Day events were both poignant and memorable. The annual Halloween Candy Drive for the Department of Children and Families is in progress. Donations may be dropped off in Mrs. Leonard's room 133A. These donations will be used to help DCF prepare for holiday gifts and parties. The Middlebrook Hive for the WEF Spelling Bee will include Janet Nobles, Lori Ellis, and Darren Gunn. Dean Jory Higgins will be one of the announcers. Props and costumes will be provided by Sue LaBarbera, our resident beekeeper.
- IV. Teacher Representative - Tara Peterson: **On Six Green**, RWW students are presenting their Mystery Bookmark projects to classes. Students created over-sized bookmarks and displayed important parts of their mystery novel that they read. Spanish students worked on group presentations talking about their interests in Spanish, and English students are working in pairs on a short story project. **On 6 Yellow**, students are reading North to Freedom, their first novel in English class. In Science, they are hard at work on their Cell Project, creating 3-D models of the parts and functions of a cell. For Veteran's Day, students welcomed James Darash, a former marine, as a guest speaker, and they created cards in RWW for Veterans staying at the Nick Madaras House. **6 Red** is kicking off "READO" in RWW class. READO is an independent reading program designed to foster a love of

reading by exposing students to various genres of literature and allowing them to choose from differentiated tasks (such as creating book-trailers, songs, and performances) to display their knowledge of the books they read. **7 Green** was honored to host two Veterans as guest speakers this past Monday. Students gained valuable insights from the stories shared by these extraordinary men and wrote "thank you" letters of appreciation in RWW class. Additionally, as a kick-off to their Chinese Cultural Centers interdisciplinary unit, students participated in workshops held by experts in various fields of Chinese customs. This "Expert Day" was made possible through the generous donation of the PTA, so our students and teachers thank you for that! **On 7 Red**, World Geography students are engrossed in African studies, while in Science, ecology work continues with a focus on brine shrimp, and RWW students are preparing to read Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." **7 Yellow**: The hurricane may have canceled the Ellis Island field trip but they will go there virtually to help launch the upcoming interdisciplinary Heritage Project. Due to the hurricane, the **8 Green team** has postponed their field trip to Philadelphia for Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. They had a most fascinating and educational Veteran's Day team assembly with three guest speakers who were Veterans from different branches in the service and also served in different battles. They each shared their experiences in the Armed Forces and answered questions generated from the students. It was such an interesting way to honor Veterans today and all they have done for our country. Even though their service locations and times were different, their take-away messages and memories of what was important were quite similar. **8 Red also** welcomed three veterans (including their own Mr. McCuskey!) to speak to the team on Monday, 11/12. Additionally, they are continuing their work on turning all the material they gathered on their Philadelphia trip into a site ready for posting on the internet! **And finally 8 Yellow** likewise participated in honoring our country's Veterans in meaningful ways and (again due to the hurricane) has rescheduled their Philadelphia trip for November 29<sup>th</sup>.

- V. President's Report - Beth Johnson: Thanks to fundraising committee-Jen Davatzes, Beverly Hermann, and Dottie Jankowski-they did an amazing job, it has been our best year in a long time! Thanks to Robin Paradis who did a great job with last minutes emails and getting the Messenger out. It is a big improvement now that the PTA is using Edline. Regarding the topic of evening meetings, work on the survey has been delayed due to the storm, but an Edline survey will go out. As always, we will endeavor to meet everyone's needs in the best way possible. There was no PTA Presidents and Superintendent meeting or Council meeting.

## VI. Officer Reports:

- a. Vice President - Stacy Crameri: 4 new parent members, bringing membership to 589.
- b. Treasurer - Maria Wilcox: Net balance right now is \$47,000, but that doesn't reflect all costs. The final number will be between \$29,000-30,000. 7<sup>th</sup> grade activity night made a little money. Due to the loss of PTA council funding, Maria moved to increase the science fair budget from \$1500 to \$2000, Victoria Madden seconded. The motion was approved. The taxes have been sent. We are possibly expecting an additional \$10,000 coming in from the Turnover Shop and photo day. In January, we will have a clearer idea of the funds we will have available for donating to the school.
- c. Parent-At-Large - Savet Constantine: No report. BOE meeting Tuesday November 20.

## II. Committee Reports:

- a. Wilton Youth Council - Nancy Gany: please note that the Oct. event featuring Barbara Greenberg on "Connecting with Your Kids: Learning the Language of Teens Part II" was postponed due to scheduling conflicts and has been rescheduled for Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>.
- b. Spiritwear - Patti Sylvia: Sales have slowed down and dates have been extended. We will need to find someone soon to begin the transition of the position for next year.
- c. Hospitality - Kim Troy: There is no hospitality portion of Veterans Day this year; our next event will be winter solstice. January will be bus driver hospitality.
- d. Fundraising - Maria Wilcox: All good news; wrapping paper sales pickups are beginning.
- e. Reflections - Patti Sylvia: The theme is "The Magic of the Moment". All forms are on the school website, entries are due by 12/14/12, and will be judged by 12/19/12. There are gift cards for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> places.
- f. Activity Nights - Tracy Scarfi: 7<sup>th</sup> grade activity night was very successful. We used a new and cheaper DJ and the kids really enjoyed it. We are considering incorporating a canned goods donation into future activity nights.
- g. Special Education - Patti Sylvia: Working on Disability Awareness Month in April. We are working on having a child, teen, and adult with disabilities perform and speak.

- h. Book Fair - Book Fair will be held December 3-10 during the concert and art nights: December 5 for 6<sup>th</sup> grade, December 10 for 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and December 19 for 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- i. Science Fair - Victoria Madden: The science fair kickoff is rescheduled to November 27. Details are being worked out. Extra help sessions are scheduled for November 29<sup>th</sup> and December 6. Entry forms are due on December 14. All forms and information are available on all science teacher websites.

III. New Business:

- a. Stacy Crameri gave personal thanks to the PTA for the e-reader donation. Her daughter was able to utilize one after a concussion.
- b. Kim Troy wanted to bring attention to Joshua Bennett, a poet/rapper from Younkers and UPenn. He has 3 disabled siblings with schizophrenia, autism and deafness, and he performs his poems about them on YouTube. Please visit and check out his work.

IV. Adjournment