



MES PTO Newsletter

November 2003



President's Message

Jackie Mulhall

We're moving into the holiday season, which is a busy time for all of us. At this time of year, the PTO usually focuses on a couple of community service projects. This is our opportunity to give back in a couple of different ways. Each year we put together Thanksgiving baskets to give out through the St. Mary's Hospital clinic, which helps families in need. In December, we provide most of the staffing for the children's gift sale, which is held at the Middlebury Library. This helps us do something for all the children in the Middlebury community.

The past month has been another busy one for the PTO. The wrapping paper orders were handed out and poinsettia orders were taken. Thanks to our fundraising chairs, Nina Walsh and Beth Marino, for all of their hard work on these two events. We had our fall book fair which went great. Thanks to Sue Letho for all her work organizing the book fair and also to all the parents who helped staff it. In the cultural arts area, we had an author come and a cultural arts assembly. The children loved both! Thanks to Mary Ann Dzinski, Sue Giangarra and Sloane Reitman for all their efforts to organize both. Also, kudos to Suzanne Kennishea, our volunteer coordinator, for all her work getting people to work at all of our events.

There's also some things going on in our district that I want to share with you. If you have not yet signed up to receive the Superintendent's newsletter electronically, you still can. Just go to the Region 15 website (www.region15.org) and sign up. The district is just beginning the budget process for next year. As with last year, times are tight and there will be some hard decisions to be made about how we spend our money. Once the budget is final, Dr. Sippy, our superintendent, will be coming to one of our PTO meetings to talk about the budget to help us all understand it.

Our next PTO meeting will be Tuesday Nov. 18 at 7:00 pm. For those of you who have not yet made it to a meeting, it's worth coming just for the refreshments, which are always outstanding thanks to the efforts of Nancy Belden and Michelle McCormack. Hope to see you there.

If you are interested in getting updates on PTO activities through EMail, send your EMail address to Jackie.Mulhall@sbcglobal.net

Jack Zmary Wins Award

Before Jack Zmary came to MES to be our principal, his position within the region was as "Region 15 Director of Fine Arts". Due to the great job he did in that position, he was recently the recipient of the "**Distinguished Service to the Profession**" Award from the Connecticut Art Educators Association. Congratulations Jack!



MES PTO Grants 2003-04

Each year, the PTO gives out grants to MES. They fall into two categories – teacher grants, which are for needs within the classrooms, and special grants that are overall needs for the school. This year the PTO budgeted more money than in the past to give out in grants since the budget is so tight. These grants represent a significant portion of our budget and is where much of our fundraising money goes to.

On the fundraising note, I want to thank all of the parents who support our fundraisers. We try to offer a variety of fundraisers to meet different interests. Participation in fundraisers is always optional. If you would prefer to make a donation directly to the PTO instead of doing the fundraisers, that is also an option. You can give a check to our treasurer, Carol Brunnick, made out to MES PTO. As always, it's the parents who make the PTO successful in everything we do.

| Teacher Grants | Item(s) | Amount |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| McMullen | Licenses for "Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing for Kids" or comparable | \$570 |
| Grade 1 | Classroom Centers/Special Seasonal Events | \$300 |
| Grade 4 | Norman Rockwell In-Depth Study across curriculum | \$300 |
| Firimita | Digital Cameras/Photo Printer | \$450 |
| Grade 2 | Guided Reading library | \$550 |
| Kindergarten | Storage Trays | \$350 |
| Grade 3 | Colonial Games | \$400 |
| Grade 3 | Weaving Presentation | total |
| Grade 3 | Framed Art Prints | |
| Grade 5 | Film, processing, photo paper, ink cartridge | \$200 |
| Grade 5 | State Fair project supplies | \$140 |
| Shove | Guided Reading Leveled Books for KDG & Gr 3 | \$877.53 |
| Friebel/OT | Games for Visual/Perceptual Program | \$73.80 |
| Stockno/PE | Climbing Wall | \$3271.00 -\$500 donation |
| Total Teacher Grants | | \$6983 |

| Special Grants | Item(s) | Amount |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------|
| School | Fence and gate for playground area closest to driveway | \$1500 |
| School | Fence enclosure for lid in Kindergarten playground | \$700 |
| School | LCD Projector | \$2600 |
| Total Special Grants | | \$4800 |

Cultural Arts



The past few weeks have been very busy for the Cultural Arts Committee...In late October we hosted author/illustrator Margie Pallatini for the day. She enchanted the children with her sketches, and read some of her stories to them. The fourth and fifth graders got into the spirit of the day by coming to school sporting their worst possible "Bedheads" (the title of one of Ms. Pallatini's books)! A few of her books are still available for purchase in the media center...see Mrs. Sanford if you are interested. On November 7th, the PTO Cultural Arts committee hosted Children's Voices. This duo of gifted performers tours around the country bringing to life poetry and stories written by elementary school children. They visited both MES and LMES, performing works from their repertoire, and added two new pieces from each of the Middlebury schools. It was a special treat to see works by our very own Gabby Paollino and Travis Warner brought to life! Ask your children about the Ridiculous Monkeys poem...you could hear their laughter echoing throughout the building! A BIG THANK YOU to all of you for supporting the many PTO fundraisers...it is your support that enables us to provide these enrichment programs for our children, Sue Giangarra

ROOM-PARENT COORDINATORS

Back in September the Room Parents were chosen for each class. The Room Parent plays an important role in assisting the teacher. The following is a list of the Room Parent's responsibilities:

- Being a liaison between teachers and parents.
- Organizing and coordinating the teacher's requests for events within the classroom.
- Notifying parents with early dismissal or other emergency situations that may arise within the school community. (Please give the Room Parent one number they can call to reach you).
- Taking pictures in the classroom for the school yearbook.
- If desired the Room Parents can organize a class gift(s) for the teacher.

If you have any questions about Room Parents, please call Jackie Desmarais (758-8987), Beth Marino (758-8894), or Denise Petrucci (758-9863).

REGION 15 PTO ADVISORY COUNCIL - DID YOU KNOW?

Increased Informational Contact with Parents & Community

The Board of Education is increasing its number of *School Reporter* newsletters and the administration is contributing a page in *Voices* on those months that you do not receive a Board newsletter. Dr. Frank Sippy is developing a Key Communicator Network of residents and business leaders to whom he can turn to help disseminate information throughout the schools and the communities and dispel rumors.

Revitalized Region 15 District Website

Parents, students, staff, and residents contributed valuable ideas for the revitalized district website which launched in September (www.region15.org). Users can easily access direct links and directions to schools, employment listings, and highlights of student and staff accomplishments. The District strongly encourages feedback to the site and will update the site often to keep the information current and useful.

Innovative Use of Information Technology

Monthly E-mail newsletters will contain up-to-date information about the schools, meeting dates, and reminders about school activities. Parents can give feedback directly back to the administration through this email newsletter. If you have not received a newsletter or wish to sign up, please email the School/Home/Community Liaison at karenmkz@charter.net.