

THE BELLRINGER

AMHERST PTA NEWSLETTER
SERVING CLARK, WILKINS AND AMS

www.amherst.pta.org
ptaboard@amherstpta.org

October 2008

Dates to Remember

Wednesday, October 1st- AMS PTA Magazine Drive First Collection Day
Friday, October 3rd- AMS PTA Magazine Drive First Prize Store Day
Monday, October 6th- AMS PTA Magazine Drive Second Collection Day
Tuesday, October 7th- AMS/Clark/Wilkins Late Start
Wednesday, October 8th- AMS PTA Magazine Drive Final Collection Day
Thursday, October 9th- AMS PTA Magazine Drive Final Prize Store Day
Friday, October 10th- Teacher In-Service- No School
Monday, October 13th- Columbus Day- No School
Tuesday, October 14th- PTA Reflections Information Night 7-7:30pm Wilkins Library
Tuesday, October 14th- PTA General Meeting- Wilkins Library 7:30pm
Friday, October 17th- AMS Dance Grades 6-8, 7-9:30pm
Friday, October 31st- Clark/Wilkins Halloween Parties:
AM Kindergarten parade and parties- 10:45am
PM Kindergarten and Grade 1 parade and parties- 1:30pm
Wilkins parties- 1:30pm

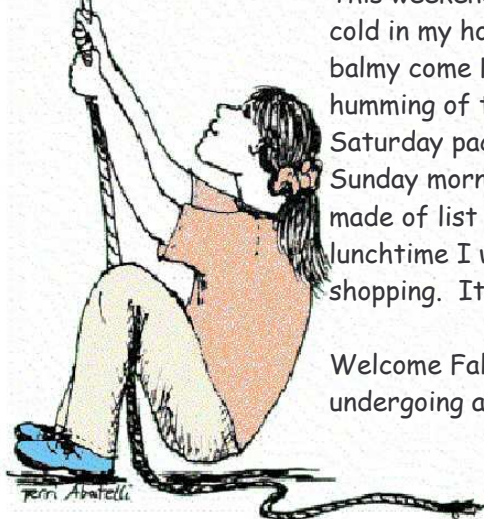


Co - President's Letter

This weekend the heat kicked on for the first time. It wasn't really all that cold in my house; the upstairs was set at 64 - a temperature that will feel balmy come February. But that was cold enough for me. When I woke to the humming of the heaters, I decided that Fall had arrived. I spent all day Saturday packing up short sleeved shirts, shorts and sandals. My kids spent Sunday morning trying on last year's long sleeved pants, coats and boots as I made a list of what we would need for the inevitable cold weather season. By lunchtime I was prepared. We all put on our fleeces and headed out for some shopping. It was 74 degrees outside.

Welcome Fall in Amherst, NH! It's a time for transition. The Amherst PTA is undergoing a transition this Fall as well. Last week, our previous Treasurer,

(Continued on page 2)



Roni Abatelli

(Continued from page 1)

Anna Rego, completed the transition to our elected Treasurer, Michele Donoghue. The Amherst PTA has a very detailed budget that Anna has managed with meticulous attention. We want to thank Anna for volunteering so much of her time to this organization and training Michele so thoroughly that this transition has been seamless. Although she is leaving her role as Treasurer, Anna continues to support the PTA by Co-Chairing the Grants' Committee this year. Thank you Anna!

The Fall is also a time when our committees start gearing up for a year ahead. The Annual Family Information Night on September 15th was a great success. It was invigorating to see the community come together to see what the town has to offer. Many thanks to Christine Redd and the entire committee for such a successful night! As Fall turns colder, look forward to Family Science Day on November 8th. December 3rd is the new deadline for Reflections entries. Photos, artwork, stories or an interpretive dance routine of the wonderful Fall foliage might make a great entry!

Lastly, the Membership Committee has been working hard behind the scenes organizing the membership paperwork and compiling the lists for the PTA Directory. Despite the volume of people at Registration Day and the amount of membership forms they continue to take in, Karen Oates and Cheryl Forster have done a superb job in efficiently organizing the data and preparing the Directory. Currently we have 657 family, faculty, staff and community members!

Enjoy these Fall days!
Christine Poisson & Krista Hanks
Co-Presidents



Thank You

Dear PTA Board and Spring Grant Committee,

On behalf of the second grade team and most importantly our second grade students, I would like to thank you for the new math materials we just received. The Magnetic Fraction Tiles will work perfectly with our new magnetic white boards to help our students build an understanding of fractions in a concrete way. Like the new Fraction Tower Cubes, these materials are colorful, appealing, and easy to use.

We sincerely appreciate your support and generosity.
With gratitude, Janet Scagnelli and the Grade 2 Team

PTA Committee Chair Needed for the 2008 – 2009 School Year

The PTA currently has a committee chair position open for Staff Appreciation at the Amherst Middle School. Please consider lending your time and talent to support the teachers and faculty alike for this committee. This is a wonderful opportunity to become involved in a great organization dedicated to the success of children and the support of our teachers and staff. PTA sponsored activities help to enrich your child's educational experience while providing a connection between the schools and the community.

If you are interested in Chairing this committee, please contact the PTA Secretary, Jil Romano at jil-marc@comcast.net for a complete job description.

STAFF APPRECIATION -- AMS

Staff Appreciation is a program sponsored by the National PTA which plans events for the teachers and staff during the year. In the past there has been a Fall breakfast, a mid-winter lunch, and a Teacher Appreciation Week in May.

Some Staff Appreciation responsibilities include:

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

Back to School event with baked goods and donations of supplies to fill in what the teachers need.

Take goodies to the bus company to give to each bus driver the following day.

NOVEMBER

Provide lunch for the staff on early release conference day.

DECEMBER

Provide baked goods around the holidays.

FEBRUARY

Provide chocolate for Valentine's Day.

MAY

Teacher Appreciation Week: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dessert spread over the week (e.g., Monday/Wednesday/Friday)

Superintendent Dr. Mary Jennings to Speak at Amherst PTA General Meeting

SAU #39 Superintendent, Dr. Mary Jennings has accepted an invitation to speak at the Amherst PTA's October General Meeting. Dr. Jennings will make a brief presentation about the District's priorities for the 2008-2009 school year and will answer questions from parents during a question and answer session. Dr. Jennings' visit is the first in a series of special guests at PTA General Meetings this year. All are welcome to attend this informative session.

The meeting will be held on *Tuesday, October 14 at 7:30 pm* in the Library at Wilkins School. In addition to Dr. Jennings' presentation, PTA meetings also typically include reports from School Principals, the School Board and Chairpeople from various PTA events.

Attic Resources

Middle School

Anne Rocchio-Dodge

- Scrabble game
- LCD Projector
- Computer speakers
- Young adult books

Linda Farrington

- 3 sets of computer speakers
- Tennis Balls

Kelly Kalenik

- Science magazines - Discover and Kids Discover
- Tennis Balls
- Nova or Bill Nye DVD or VHS
- Film canisters - small plastic ones with snaps on top

Lynn Borkowski

- Toys appropriate for 18 month to 3 years (for students pounding pegs, push buttons, etc.)



Wilkins

Betsey Kellndorfer

- Any past issues of National Geographic Kids Magazine, Ranger Rick Magazine or other nature/science kids magazines

Amherst PTA/PTSA Launch Reflections Program: A Cultural Arts Program

Reflections is an arts recognition and achievement program sponsored by the Amherst PTA/PTSA. Each year students, grades K-12, are invited to create works of art depicting a theme that is provided by the National PTA. This year's theme is "Wow!"

If your child paints, draws, writes, plays a musical instrument, takes photographs or likes to cut and paste, then this is the program for him/her. Works may be submitted in any of six areas: literature, musical composition, photography, dance choreography, film production and visual arts (which include art forms such as drawing, painting, printmaking and collage). Each student may submit as many entries as they wish at the local level. Entry forms and specific rules for each category are available on-line at www.AmherstPTA.org/reflections. Forms will **NOT** be in school offices this year as an effort to be more "green". Please read and follow all instructions on the entry form as well as the other forms. Entries that do not adhere to the guidelines will be disqualified.

Entries must be submitted to your school office no later than **Wednesday, December 3, 2008**. All entries will be displayed for public enjoyment on **Thursday, January 8, 2008** at Souhegan High School at 6 p.m. Each student will be recognized during an awards ceremony following the artwork viewing. Prior to the ceremony, a panel of talented local artists will select entries in each of four grade divisions that best portray this year's theme. These works will then be submitted to the State level and, from there, could advance to the National level. Awards of Excellence and Awards of Merit are recognized at the annual PTA Convention and are displayed as part of the program's traveling exhibit. Last year, Amherst's own Eleanor Farris won a National Merit award for her dance choreography piece "Give Joy". She was the only student from New Hampshire to receive this award.

If you would like to learn more about the Reflections program and view some of the works from students all over the country that were displayed at the National level from previous years, you can access the National PTA web site at www.pta.org and visit the Reflections Gallery.

Participating in Reflections is a great way for students to explore and learn about various art forms and to receive positive recognition for their artistic efforts. It does not matter whether an entry for the Reflections Program is created as a classroom assignment or independently at home. Please encourage your child to participate. Creating their own works of art gives children a chance to experiment in the Arts and feel good about what they create. Supporting the Reflections program is one way that parents can support the Arts in our homes, schools and community.

If you are interested in volunteering on the Reflections committee, please contact Shelly at 673-6457 (skayser@hughes.net) or Wendy at 672-5679 (mconway0427@comcast.net).

PTA/PTSA Reflections Information Night

Reflections committee co-chairs Shelly Kayser and Wendy Conway will be answering any questions you might have about the Reflections Arts program, as well as showing some examples of past artwork from 7-7:30 p.m., **PRIOR** to the **October 14, 2008** PTA meeting at the Wilkins library. If you are interested in volunteering on the Reflections committee, please contact Shelly at 673-6457 (skayser@hughes.net) or Wendy at 672-5679 (mconway0427@comcast.net), or see them at the meeting.

Destination Imagination

Does your child like to figure out zany inventions? Is your son or daughter always putting on impromptu plays? Is your kitchen full of "science experiments?" Destination Imagination gives outside-the-box thinkers a chance to channel all that and more! In DI, small teams of similarly-aged kids work together to come up with creative & unusual solutions to complex problems. The team works together for a few months - without adults telling them the answers. The end result is part school play, part science project, and part sporting event - kids put on a creative presentation about their solution at the tournament in March. Together they make all the costumes & props, write the story, and frequently, construct a gadget or machine as part of their solution. Through DI kids learn teamwork and creative problem solving skills. But mostly, they have a lot of fun.

Every year there are new challenges to choose from, with lots of room for all kinds of interests and abilities. This year, teams can choose from: making non-electric machines that work together; a new take on animal communication; videos that put a dance twist on literature; using super sleuth skills to tackle superstitions with improv acting; or building a two-part structure with angled sides that can support weight. Just for creative thinkers in grades K-2, there's even a special challenge with a noncompetitive presentation at the tournament. The other challenges are all open to kids from grades 3-12, with kids formed into teams of about 5-7 kids around the same age.

Registration forms are due by Oct 1st to ensure a place on a team.

If you wish you could have done DI when you were a kid, or if you have time to volunteer with a small group of really fun kids - we need **adult volunteers** to be Team Managers at all levels for the program to be a success. Training & ongoing support is provided.

For more information or registration forms, contact: Craig 673-7299 learn2see@yahoo.com OR Tricia 673-8797 trishjalbert@verizon.net

National Member Benefits Providers

Special discounts & offers for PTA Members
www.pta.org/benefits

Barnesandnoble.com

Barnesandnoble.com has developed a discounted online bookstore for PTA members. Choose from millions of book titles, audio books, CDs, DVDs, and videos. Save 5% on all purchases ordered from this site in addition to any normal site discounts up to 40%. Orders of \$25.00 or more qualify for Fast & Free delivery within 3 business days or less (see site for details).



Kidz-Idz

All students attending PTA-affiliated schools can get a hard plastic School ID Card – for free! Maintain student safety and make a difference identifying missing or injured students.



Liberty Mutual

Special group discount available to PTA members on auto, home, and renters insurance through Group Savings Plus®. Enjoy round-the-clock claims service and a variety of discounts including multi-car, multi-policy, safe-driver, passive restraints anti-theft device discounts.



Discounts and credits available where state laws and regulations allow and may vary by state. Certain discounts apply to specific coverages only. To the extent permitted by law, applicants are individually underwritten; not all applicants may qualify.

MediAlert

PTA members receive a 20% discount for the MediAlert KidSmart® program, providing 24-hour child ID and family notification services. With a phone call, emergency responders can access your child's medical history and records.



Southwest Airlines Vacations

PTA members save 5% on vacation packages to select destinations, in addition to everyday low rates and ongoing specials — choose flights and hotel accommodations, add theme park tickets, tours, rental cars and more — all in one place, for one low price.



Sharp

PTA members receive discounts ranging between 15 – 50% on a wide array of Sharp products, including AQUOS® LCD televisions, calculators, air purifiers, printers, audio systems and more when purchased from a discounted online site for PTA members.



Coming Soon...

PTA member credit card

PTA members nationwide will soon have access to a PTA branded credit card that supports your local, state and national PTA and has many attractive benefits. In addition to generating valuable funds for the PTA, the program includes a special shopping website where members can get great deals and also earn more funds for PTA.



Family Science Day
Saturday, November 8th, 2008
“Energy Matters”

Mark your calendars for a special day of parent-child interaction and learning at Family Science Day. This is the **Eleventh** year that Family Science Day will bring parents and children together in an interactive setting to learn some scientific principles---and of course, to have lots of fun!

This year come to Family Science Day to think and learn about energy - how to harness it, make it, use it and save it! If you have never participated before, or if you are a “repeat customer” please come to see new Science Day displays and experiments never shown before at Family Science Day! Just like in past years, there will be more interactive experiments and displays this year---something for everyone! We set up the experiments and exhibits so that parents and students can have fun learning something new!

The Flight Simulator (based on the Wright Brothers first plane) will be there again, an Amherst PTA Family Science Day tradition and a real crowd pleaser! First time “pilots” and experienced “pilots” alike will have a thrill! Spectators (parents) have a great time too!

Location: Wilkins Gym
Date: Saturday, November 8th
Time: 10am-12 noon or 1pm - 3 pm
Participants: Kindergarten through 4th grade, accompanied by parent

We want to provide everyone with the opportunity to join in this fun. That means that students from both Clark and Wilkins Schools in any grade (K-4th grade) can attend either the 10 am-12 noon session or the 1 pm- 3 pm session. Siblings are also welcome, it is a terrific family event!

Registration forms will be going home with students during the week of October 22nd. Volunteers are still needed to help out with either the planning of the event, set up on the evening of Friday, November 7th or to come help on the day of the event. There is plenty of opportunity to help—and you don't need a PhD in Physics! Come join us in this great community event! Please contact Jane Sodders at 672-7882 for volunteer information or for general information on the event. We hope to see you there!!

Family B-I-N-G-O Night

Family Bingo Night will be held on October 3rd in the Wilkins School gym. Bingo Night is a fun-filled evening where families and friends can get together on a Friday night, enjoy pizza and baked goods, and play bingo for great prizes! Doors will open at 5:30PM, pizza and drinks will be available 5:30-6:15PM and Bingo games will run from 6:15PM until 8:00PM.

Please plan on coming early as seats are limited and might run out. Bingo play is \$6 and includes 8 games. Every winner will get to select a prize from the prize table. During the evening one SPECIAL Bingo game will be called, giving participants a chance to win a "special" prize. Special cards will be available for \$2 each. The Amherst Junior Women's Club is sponsoring the evening and donating all proceeds to

Amherst Recreation Department

Amherst Recreation Department Presents

Bob Bigelow 's "Common Sense Approach to Youth Sports"

This nationally recognized speaker and former professional athlete is coming to Souhegan High School to talk to the residents of Amherst about our youth sports programs. "His goal is to help all coaches and parents involved in organized youth sports to balance their perspective". Please join us Wednesday, October 1st, 7-8:30pm in the auditorium at the Souhegan High School . Complimentary babysitting services will be available in the cafeteria during the talk and this talk is being provided as a service to our community by the Recreation Department. There will also be raffles and door prizes.

Amherst Recreation Department Announces Fall Schedule

The Amherst Recreation Department has published the complete Fall and Early Winter Schedule of programs on it's web site www.amherstrec.org. For a complete listing of programs, dates, times and costs, click on "Program Schedule" in the left hand column.

Highlights include Spanish and Drama Workshops, Horseback Riding, Peabody Mill Environmental Center Programs and of course, Youth Basketball. Other exciting programs for adults and children are listed on the web site.

Registrations for Recreation programs (including P MEC) are accepted:

On-line: www.amherstrec.org by using a credit card.

By mail: Complete your registration form and return it with full payment to Amherst Recreation, P.O. Box 960, Amherst, NH 03031

In person: The office is located at 4 Cross Road , Amherst

By fax: with credit card info to 673-2032

Celebrate Halloween with P MEC and the Amherst Recreation Department



6th Annual Nature Spooktacular

Crawl on in for an afternoon of fun for all ages! Costumes encouraged. Enjoy educational booths, crafts and a concession stand. Visit misunderstood creatures such as spiders, snakes, and bugs. Crawl through our soil tunnel and discover what lives underground. Join us for an exciting afternoon presentation with Wildlife Encounters of NH where you'll meet spectacular wild animal critters such as snakes, skunks, frogs, and wild cats.

Sunday, 10/26 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Souhegan High School

Fee: \$5 Resident, \$6 Nonresident

HeartPounders-Scary Stories for the Strong at Heart

Looking for a bit of spine tingling this Halloween? Join us on Halloween night for an evening of dark and spooky stories with renowned storyteller Odds Bodkins. Odds Bodkin's character-voice and music-filled storytelling style has been mesmerizing listeners, young and old, for twenty-four years. This program is suitable for adults and older children.

Friday, 10/31 at 8:30 p.m.

Souhegan High School

Fee: \$8 Resident, \$10 Nonresident



Parenting Talk at Milford Middle School

Parent-to-Parent and the Milford Police Department present the first of a series of five parent-planned interactive talks for parents of elementary and middle school students on Weds Oct 15. The topic is: My Space, UTube and Internet Safety. Presenter Officer Mark Pepler is currently serving as the juvenile and gang officer and has over 32 years of law enforcement. Officer Pepler has trained with the Hillsborough County- South Task Force on Internet Safety, The NE State Police Information Network on My Space, and the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center on cyber-bullying. The talk will be held at the Milford Middle School from 6:30 to 8:00 PM. There is no fee for the talk. Light refreshments will be provided.

"Games Galore", a recreational program for students aged 3-14 will be held at the same time as the talk. Older students will have open gym time and make a fall craft. . For younger students there will be a seasonal craft, stories and games. A complimentary snack of apples, caramel and whipped cream will be provided. Games Galore is free if a parent attends the talk.

The talks are sponsored by the NH Children's Trust Fund, Community Action for Safe Teens (CAST), MMS Enrichment and The Youth Council, Nashua. For questions contact Libby Anderson at mmsenrich@charter.net or 672-9876.