

THE BELLRINGER

AMHERST PTA NEWSLETTER
SERVING CLARK, WILKINS AND AMS
WWW.AMHERST.PTA.ORG
PTABOARD@AMHERSTPTAORG

SEPTEMBER 2008

Dates to Remember

Wednesday, September 3rd-Friday, September 5th- AMS Parent Coffees Grades 5-8
Monday, September 8th- AMS Picture Day
Tuesday, September 9th- AMS/Clark/Wilkins 2 Hour Late Start
Tuesday, September 9th- PTA Meeting 7:30 Wilkins Library
Monday, September 15th- PTA Family Information Night, 6:30-8:00pm
Wilkins Gym
Thursday, September 18th- Wilkins PTA Magazine Drive Post Card Collection Day
Friday, September 19th- Wilkins PTA Magazine Drive First Collection Day
Friday, September 19th- AMS Dance, Grades 6-8, 7-9:30pm
Monday, September 22nd- Wilkins PTA Magazine Drive First Prize Store Day
Tuesday, September 23rd- Wilkins PTA Magazine Drive Final Collection Day
Tuesday, September 23rd- Clark Open House
AM Kindergarten- 5:30-6:15pm, PM Kindergarten 6:30-7:15pm
Wilkins Open House- Grades 1 and 2, 6:45-7:45pm
Wednesday, September 24th- Clark Open House, Grade 1- 5:15-6:15pm
Wilkins Open House, Grades 3 and 4- 6:30-7:30pm
Thursday, September 25th- Wilkins PTA Magazine Drive- Final Prize Store Day
Monday, September 29th- AMS PTA Magazine Drive Kick-Off
Monday, September 29th- Clark/Wilkins School Pictures
Tuesday, September 30th- AMS PTA Magazine Drive Post Card Collection Day



Co-Presidents' Letter

Welcome to the 2008/2009 School Year!

"Welcome Back" is a phrase that you often hear throughout September. It is a time of fresh starts and endless possibilities. This is an exciting time of year for our community! The PTA is excited to welcome you back, and we are gearing up for another successful year.

We welcome you to join us at our first general PTA meeting on September 9th. Representatives from each committee will be presenting

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information about their programs, and this a wonderful time to learn about the various programs the PTA runs throughout the year. It is also a great time to get involved. Whether you have five minutes or five hours of your time to donate, we welcome your energy, enthusiasm and commitment to the PTA.

September is also membership month where we welcome returning as well as new members to our PTA. It is not too late to join! Included in this edition of the Bellringer is information on how to become part of the PTA community. Also remember that by joining the Amherst PTA, you will also become a member of the National PTA. Throughout the year we will be highlighting the many benefits that the National PTA offers to our members.

As you read through this edition of the Bellringer, you will see some of the other things going on over the next several weeks. The Family Information Fair on Monday, September 15th is a great way for families (especially those new to the community) to see some of the terrific activities our community has to offer. Our first and one of our largest fundraiser of the year, the Magazine Drive, kicks off later this month at Wilkins and AMS.

We look forward to a working with you as we begin an exciting year!

Christine Poisson, Krista Hanks

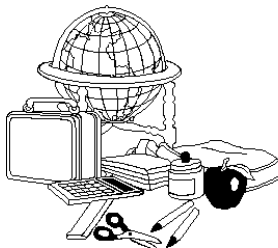
Co-Presidents

Amherst PTA

Attic Resources

Attic Resources is an opportunity for teachers to ask for and receive donated items that they need for their classrooms.

Check out Attic Resources every month to see if you can help out!



Missed us at Registration Day? It's not too late to join the PTA!

It's never too late to join the Amherst PTA for the 2008-2009 year! However, if you would like to be listed in the annual directory, you **MUST** send in your form with payment - through your child's teacher - by Friday, September 12.

Membership/Directory forms were placed in all registration packets, but you can also visit the PTA website: www.AmherstPTA.org to download a form in pdf format. Please fill out only one form per family. Questions or comments? You can contact Cheryl Forster (424-6512, cheryl.forster82@comcast.net) or Karen Oates (424-0286, karen_oates@comcast.net).

General Meeting

Tuesday, September 9th
Wilkins School Library
7:30pm

Please join in at our first Amherst PTA general meeting of the 2008/2009 school year. Come hear about the many programs our PTA offers to the students in our school district.

Hope to see you there!

Thank you PTA

I am writing to thank all of you so much for your generosity! The new risers for Wilkins School are going to be an incredible improvement over what we are currently using. They will be much safer, sturdier, and more aesthetically pleasing for the students and the audience. I am very excited about using them in all of our shows. I cannot tell you all how much I appreciate your support of the music program at Wilkins.

Thank you again for everything you do to make teaching in Amherst such a rewarding experience!

Sincerely,
Rob Allwarden

Join the Amherst PTA for our Annual Family Information Night

Monday, September 15th, 2008
6:30 – 8:00 pm

Wilkins Elementary School, Boston Post Road, Amherst

Whether you are new to the area, new to the Amherst school district or just looking to learn more about our community, the Amherst PTA Family Information Night is for you! Mark Monday, September 15th, 2008 on your calendars and join us for a fun and informative evening.

Representatives from the Amherst PTA, local service organizations and businesses will be available to provide information and answer your questions. You may be able to sign up for everything in one night!

We'll be raffling off two backpacks filled with school supplies and a \$20.00 gift certificate to Toadstool Bookstore! Be sure to fill out entry forms at the door!

Don't miss out on this evening of information! We hope to see you all on Monday, September 15th, 2008! For More Information Contact Christine Redd at 603-305-7746

*PTA Reflections 2008/09
Program Changes this year!
Volunteers needed!*

This year's theme for the National PTA Arts Program Reflections is "Wow!" Join committee chairs Shelly Kayser and Wendy Conway prior to the October 14, 2008 PTA meeting for information regarding rules of the program. We will also be available to answer any questions you may have regarding the program, entry process, etc. Please note that the deadline for all submissions has changed this year to December 3rd, 2008!

If you are interested in volunteering for the Reflections committee, please contact Shelly at 673-6457/SKayser@hughes.net or Wendy at 672-5679/Mconway0427@comcast.net

Thank you Amherst PTA

Thank you for your continued support of the Clark/Wilkins Writing Festival. Our visit from Ted Schew, the Poetry Guy, was enjoyed by all. Amherst students are very fortunate to have the opportunity to meet a number of authors and illustrators in their elementary years. Funding by the Amherst PTA for these very special programs is greatly appreciated by students and staff.

Thank you,
Kathleen McIntyre
Clark/Wilkins Library/Media Specialist



Family Science Day
Saturday, November 8th, 2008

Jane Sodders
Chairperson-Family Science Day

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!

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!

We are hoping that 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

An adult must accompany each student. You can come to either the morning or afternoon session. 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 22rd . 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!!

PTA Committee Chairs Needed for the 2008-2009 School Year

The PTA currently has two committee chair position open. Please consider lending your time and talent as an Amherst PTA Committee Chair. Don't miss this 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 one of these committees, please contact the PTA Secretary, Jil Romano at jilmarc@comcast.net for a complete job description.

CHILI COOK-OFF

The Chili Cook-Off is typically held in mid-February on a Sunday evening at AMS. It is a family fun night!

Some Chili Cook-Off responsibilities include:

- Contact cooks and area restaurants to come and display their chili and support the event.

- Look for potential entertainment.

- Find potential judges. (Past judges have included area politicians, school board members, teachers, etc.)

- Design take-home informational sheets for parents and students to include a clip-off registration form with prices, the number attending, etc.

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:

- Working with the committee to develop themes or ideas for each event.

- Setting the schedule of dates and events.

- Coordinate volunteers for baking and supplies.

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)

Open PTA Board Position Vice President

The Amherst PTA is looking for a dynamic individual to fill the role of Vice President. Although previous Vice Presidents have moved on to become President, it is not a requirement. We also welcome Co-VPs if you are interested in sharing the role.

In addition to serving as back up to the President's role, the VP coordinates the Public Relations activities. These responsibilities include:

- Web site overview – Periodically review web site content and forward changes or additions to the Web Master.
- Bulletin boards – Maintain bulletin board at Clark (and other schools as appropriate) displaying current and upcoming events, meetings and news.
- E-Mail announcements – As needed, prepare email announcements for distribution through the schools.
- Bellringer – Review Bellringer before distribution for content and corrections. Prepare articles as necessary to insure all meetings, events, etc, are announced.
- Local newspapers – Prepare and distribute press releases (and photographs when available) to local newspapers. The primary news outlet is the Amherst Citizen. Information with broader interest can also be sent to the Milford Cabinet and the Nashua Telegraph. Invite the Amherst Citizen to send a reporter/photographer to cover events, as appropriate.
- Maintain periodic contact with Committee Chairs to determine PR needs.
- Pick up the PTA mail at Clark, Wilkins and AMS on a regular basis, or designate a person to do so. Distribute mail as appropriate.

If you are interested in this position, please contact the PTA Secretary, Jil Romano at jilmarc@comcast.net for a complete job description.

PTA Volunteers Help Wanted!!

Please consider lending your time and talent as an Amherst PTA committee volunteer. Don't miss this 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 the educational experience for your child while providing a connection between the schools and the community.

There are sure to be many opportunities that could meet your schedule, ability, and interest. It is volunteers that enable the PTA to provide quality programs and support to our schools.

Any questions about volunteering for the Amherst PTA, please contact the PTA Secretary, Jil Romano at 673-7980 or via Email at ptaboard@amherstpta.org.

Join the Girl Scouts!

All girls ages 5-18 are encouraged to join Girl Scouts and experience the fun and excitement, new friends and unique opportunities. Interested? Please email your name, address, phone number and your daughter's name and grade to Karen Werner at kswerner@earthlink.net.

Please also note if you would be interested in helping to lead a Troop.

Friends of the Amherst Town Library's Annual Book Sale

September 13, 2008 – 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Come to the Amherst Congregational Church on Saturday, September 13, 2008 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. to stock up on great books, CDs and videos at unbeatable prices. Hardbacks and trade paperbacks are only \$1.00. Mass paperbacks and children's hardback books are only 50 cents. Children's paperbacks are 25 cents and board books are only a dime! The "bag of books" sale starts at 1:00 p.m. when you may fill a brown grocery bag (provided) and pay only \$5.00. All proceeds from this sale benefit the Amherst Town Library. There is an early bird admittance, which begins at 8:00 a.m. for members of the Friends of the Library. You may join or renew at the door. Hope to see you on the 13th!