

# superstar 10

december calendar

# warm holidays

enjoy it.

- 3 | Coat Drive Ends
- 8 | PTA Executive Board Meeting
- 10 | Cultural Arts Assembly, Drum Café
- 17 | Morning Roundtable, Annex 8:15am
- 23 | No Frills Campaign Ends
- 23 | Half Day School
- 24-31 | Holiday Vacation

**in this issue:**

- 2 **Presidents Column**
- 3 **Principal's Message**
- 3 Contact Info
- 4 **Fundraising**
- 4 Midtown Direct
- 5 **Administration**
- 5 SM Cares
- 5 After School Prgm
- 6 **Communications**
- 6 Fifth Grade News
- 7 **Advertising**
- 7 Cultural Arts Corner
- 8 **Programming**

**School hours:**

**Full Sessions K-5**

**South Mountain:**

First Bell 8:05am  
8:10am-2:40pm

4-hr Sessions  
8:10am-12:10pm

**Annex:**

First Bell 7:55am  
8:00am-2:30pm

4-hr Sessions  
8:00am-12:00noon

coat drive ends  
south mountain  
cares

**SAVE our PLANET**



*Reduce your carbon footprint and go green! Please sign up for digital version of this Superstar newsletter!*

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[smsuperstars.com/newsletter](http://smsuperstars.com/newsletter)

**box tops:**

**Please bring in those Box Tops!**

**Yvette Holowczak**  
[yvettewh@gmail.com](mailto:yvettewh@gmail.com)



happy holidays!

## presidents column

Laura Reichgut & Amy Porman, PTA Co-Presidents

As the weather changes, with the possibility of snow, sleet and hail we need to prepare for school closings. By now you should have received two types of calls – the district Call 'Em All and Class Parent Emergency Phone Chain. If you've received an automated message from Principal Lehn, you are registered with the district Call 'Em All. If you have not received an automated message please contact Andrea Dudley at [adudley@somds.k12.nj.us](mailto:adudley@somds.k12.nj.us) so that central office can update your contact information. The Call 'Em All message will be activated for school closings and delayed openings, as well as other occasional pertinent and time sensitive information from our Principal or Superintendent, so it is very important that you are included.

We have also tested our emergency phone chain through class parents. Our phone chain is crucial in the event of a school emergency that arises during the day. Please make sure you know the class parents in your child's classroom, and that they have your daytime contact information. If you have not received a call from a class parent, or you don't know who your class parents are, please email Marilyn Wright at [mm.wright@mindspring.com](mailto:mm.wright@mindspring.com).

As always, we would like to thank everyone for supporting our fundraising efforts this fall. We had an overwhelming response to our No Frills Campaign, and we are grateful for your participation. We know these are challenging times for many, and every dollar counts. With your help, we can continue to provide enriching cultural arts programs, upgrades in classroom technology and begin to work toward much needed improvements to our auditorium.

South Mountain Cares continues to encourage all of us to reach out to our community and provide support to those in need. Thanks to Kanani Briggs and Lisa Duggan, the Annual Coat Drive was a huge success. Thank you for taking the time to include "A Message in the Pocket" in those donated coats. We welcomed a new addition to the coat drive this year and we know many children will enjoy the gently used Halloween costumes passed on from our South Mountain families.

There are a number of other programs at South Mountain that are only possible with the help of parent volunteers. We want to thank Andrea Bromfeld, Jennifer Lehrman and Nancy Morelli for assisting with the 4th Grade Elementors and special thanks to Anne Quinn for all of her time and efforts organizing the program this year.

We are also grateful to the Broadcast Studio team, Julia Cerny, David Crutcher, Sheryl Eccles, Katherine Foley, Ben Garrison, Paige Graves, Nancy Morelli, Lorry Ripley, Tom Vilardi and Rick Wagner and especially Lisa Vilardi and Elise Joy for coordinating and training everyone!

We hope you were able to join us for our first Midtown Direct Series of this school year. The November PTA meeting featured a discussion on bullying with Karen Weiland of the Parenting Center. Mark your calendars for Wednesday, January 19th and Tuesday, March 15th as we continue the Midtown Direct Series focusing on wellness and nutrition.

(continued on next column)

This year, in addition to the PTA meetings, we are offering a series of Roundtable Discussions with the Principal. This is a perfect opportunity for you to direct questions, concerns, and provide feedback to Ms. Lehn. A summary of topics discussed at the October meeting can be found on the website at <http://smsuperstars.com/staffclassroom-info/parent-editorial/>. **Upcoming Roundtable Dates:** Friday, December 17th @ the Annex 8:15am, and Wednesday, January 12th @ South Mountain 6-7:00pm. We hope to see you there!

We also have a number of activities planned for the new year. We cordially invite you to our **Annual Family Roller Skating Night** on Thursday, January 20th. Don't let winter keep you at home...join your South Mountain friends for an afternoon of fun! Rent or bring your skates, admission is compliments of the PTA! Details for this event will follow shortly.

The annual 3rd-5th grade **Variety Show** will be the evening of Thursday, February 17th, information about "auditions" and rehearsals are in this edition of the newsletter. We are so grateful to Felicia Hill and Jennifer Glass for directing this year.

And keep a look out for information on **Midnight at the Oasis**, Saturday, March 26th. This bi-annual auction is more than just our biggest fundraiser, it is a night full of food, fun, prizes, entertainment and so much more! If you haven't been to an auction night, this is a great way to see what the South Mountain parent community is all about...Bollywood style!

We would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season!

Laura & Amy



## with holidays approaching...

## principal's message

Tina Lehn, Principal

The days may be getting shorter and colder, but in South Mountain classrooms, the quality of teaching and learning that I see is heartwarming. Teachers are committed to meeting the needs of every child, engaging them in rigorous and meaningful learning. As I spend time in classrooms with your children, I am delighted at how engaged they are in important work. They are clearly excited about their learning.

We have been very busy in school over the last month. We had our first morning Round Table. The meeting gave our parent community an opportunity to talk about all sorts of things with me in an informal setting. It gave those who attended the chance to get to know me and my thinking about teaching and learning a little better. I hope to have these meetings on a regular basis and I hope to see many of you there in the coming months. At the next Round Table, I thought you might like to hear about *A Day in the Life of a Principal*. I am sure many of you wonder what a typical day is like!

Our Peer Mediation program is up and running. Our mediators are all trained, and we have had two assemblies for the 2nd through 5th grades, at which they learned how the program works, and what a peer mediation session looks like. My hope is that your children will avail of this opportunity to learn how to listen to each other, and resolve whatever concerns or issues they have with each other. Each peer mediation session will be supervised by a trained adult mediator. Although our kindergarteners will not participate in this, they learned from me about how to keep their invisible bucket full of water through kind words and actions. Ask your kindergartener about this!

By the time you are reading this, our student council is a reality. Fifth graders ran for President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary; third and fourth graders each have a representative on the council. We have two adult advisors. Our hope is that our student council will focus not only on South Mountain, but on the larger community beyond our walls. I was very proud of the letters your children wrote to state their intent to run for office, and the campaign each child ran. It was a wonderful experience for them in our democratic process.

Tina

## contact info:

## South Mountain PTA Executive Board

## Co-Presidents

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**Eileen Trinity** **SMILE Coordinator**

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no.

2

SERIES

round  
table

Morning Roundtable

Friday, December 17th, 8:15am  
Annex

## A Day in the Life of a Principal

Please join us at our first Morning Roundtable with Principal Lehn. This is a great opportunity to have smaller group discussions with the Principal, address questions about your child's school and learn more about what they are doing in the classroom. Light refreshments will be served.

## the holidays are here...

### fundraising

Shana Teitelbaum & Janet Christmann, Fundraising VP Co-Chairs

Light those lights! Clean out your chimney! The holidays are here. We're all looking forward to some cherished family time and a break from school. Hopefully there will be some fun in the snow along with the days off.

Thanks again to our Picture Day co-chairs — Jen Ratner, Kim Miller and Jocelyn Cleary. Along with their supportive group of volunteers, Jen, Kim & Jocelyn got your kids through Picture Retake Day smoothly. Hopefully everyone is happy with their pictures this year.

As you know, our new **No Frills Campaign** is well underway. Instead of asking you to purchase goods or sell products to friends and family, we're looking for financial contributions from the community to fund a host of exciting initiatives to enhance our children's learning. So far we have raised over \$5,000...halfway to our goal of \$10,000! If you've already contributed, thank you. If you have not yet, please remember, every dollar counts and no amount is too small. Also, please note that this campaign ends on December 23rd. You can send a check in via your child's backpack (made out to South Mountain PTA) or go online to pay by credit card — [www.crowdrise.com/smggeneralfund/fundraiser/smsuperstars](http://www.crowdrise.com/smggeneralfund/fundraiser/smsuperstars). Thanks again to Linda Thibodeau and Lauren Rutkin for all their hard work on this campaign!

South Mountain's bi-annual Auction, "**Midnight at the Oasis**", is coming up on March 26th so book those babysitters now! The Auction will be a wonderful night filled with great food, drinks...and dancing!! There will also be raffle prizes galore as well as silent auction items so come test your luck! Thanks to Laura Nixon and Niv Miyasato who are the brains behind our creative theme as well as the heads of the Decorations Committee.

In addition, for this night to be successful... 'We Need Your Stuff'! All donations are welcome — tickets to a show, services of any kind, new, unwrapped merchandise, gift certificates, etc. The solicitation team will be meeting on December 10th after drop off to start strategizing. So if you'd like to join forces with some other South Mountain parents, we would love your help!!! Contact Maria Witt at [mariagwitt@yahoo.com](mailto:mariagwitt@yahoo.com) or Brenda Berger at [brenda@hankypanky.com](mailto:brenda@hankypanky.com) and let them know if you can join the meeting or have something to donate to the auction. Thank all of you, in advance, for your help as well as to Maria and Brenda who have already begun the solicitation process!

And finally, don't forget to save those **Juice Pouch and Box Tops** and send them in. Thank you to Yvette Holowczak and Julia Cerny for their efforts on our school's behalf.

Happy holidays everyone. Enjoy the time off and thanks to everyone who has helped already this year. We are off to a great start and hopefully 2011 will be another great year for everyone at South Mountain.

*Shana & Janet*



picture retake day



12/10



Midtown Direct Series

General PTA meeting  
Midtown Direct Series presents

....  
**Creating a Healthy Eating  
Environment For Your Family**

Nutritionist, MS RD, Susan Schachter, will talk about navigating nutrition labels, enlisting your children as nutrition detectives and creating healthy meals for your family.

January

19



DONATE to  
South Mountain's  
No Frills Campaign:

*100% of funds received go directly  
towards ongoing programs at our school.  
Make a 100% tax deductible donation  
before the campaign ends on 12/23/10!*

DONATE BY CHECK OR ONLINE  
[www.crowdrise.com/smggeneralfund/](http://www.crowdrise.com/smggeneralfund/)

*Reach for the Stars*

## directories are out!

## administration

Marilyn Wright & Julie Saydah, Administration VP Co-Chairs

The PTA directories have been distributed. Thank you for your patience as we made every attempt to ensure the accuracy the information contained inside. We apologize for any errors. Corrections and updates will appear in future issues of the South Mountain Superstar newsletter.

**REMINDER:** *The South Mountain directory is for school related purposes only. The information published is strictly for the staff and students of the school, and is not to be used for business or political purposes under any circumstances.*

If you ordered a directory, but did not receive one, please contact us. If you did not order one previously, but would like to at this time, a limited number of extra copies are available for purchase. The cost is \$10 for the first copy (includes PTA membership dues), \$2 for each additional.

Lastly, we are pleased to announce the winners of the South Mountain PTA T-Shirt Raffle:

- Kindergarten: Lillian Eccles, Team W's Class
- 1st Grade: Andrew Lintern, Mrs. Murray's Class
- 2nd Grade: Jack Witt, Mrs. Paisner's Class
- 3rd Grade: Maddy Miller, Mrs. Visco's Class
- 4th Grade: Ellison Rounsavill, Mr. Jones's Class
- 5th Grade: Chris Nitti, Mrs. Simon's Class



Congratulations to the winners, and thanks to everyone who participated!

Happy Holidays everyone! Wishing you all a joyous and safe holiday season,

*Marilyn & Julie*

## happy holiday season

## south mountain cares

Kanani Briggs, South Mountain Cares Committee Chair

Happy Holiday Season from South Mountain Cares! Enjoy the time off with your families and stay tuned for our upcoming events:

**Senior Appreciation** — Sunday, February 6, 2011, 11-12 noon at Village Apartments. Join us for an hour of fun and games with the senior residents.

Watch for more information on volunteering with your families at a local food pantry and soup kitchen in the new year.

Best to all of you this holiday season,

*Kanani*



## after school superstars

Afterschool Superstars ends December 8th, but don't worry, we'll be back in the spring with more fun and enrichment in the creative and performing arts, and recreation and fitness. Thank you to all the wonderful teachers and volunteers who helped make the afterschool program shine this fall.

The Parenting Center and the Elementary School PTAs invite you to

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An evening with child-rearing expert DR. RON TAFFEL

WEDNESDAY

DECEMBER 8, 7:30PM

TUSCAN SCHOOL AUDITORIUM  
25 HARVARD AVENUE (BETWEEN VALLEY AND PROSPECT)

## did you know?

### communications

Priscilla Goldman & Thomas Mixon, Communications VP Co-Chairs

South Mountain Teachers join the PTA! The inclusion of teachers as members of the PTA provides the final component of the Parent Teacher Association and epitomizes the mission of the PTA — to provide additional support and resources to help enrich the lives of our students throughout the educational experience. This would not be possible without the extraordinary dedication and abilities of our wonderful teachers and administrators, and we thank the entire SM staff for going above and beyond their everyday responsibilities and offering our students as many opportunities to learn and succeed as possible.

We're introducing a new section to the web site, "Parent/Guardian Editorial". This is a column written by South Mountain Elementary parents or guardians about a school or PTA event. The goal is to share a unique perspective about the goings on, topics and atmosphere at a particular event. It is also our hope that the Editorials will spark interest which would result in a higher attendance rate at events.

If you're interested in writing an editorial, please write it! Then email it to Priscilla Goldman, [p@4elbows.com](mailto:p@4elbows.com). Editorials will be posted on the [SMSuperstars.com](http://SMSuperstars.com). Our first contributor is Linda Thibodeau. We can thank Linda Thibodeau for "breaking ground" with this idea.

<http://smsuperstars.com/staffclassroom-info/parent-editorial/>

We would like to expand communication within our SM families, particularly on school-related issues. One of the ways we believe this goal can be achieved is by posting "Ask Your Student" on the [SMSuperstars.com](http://SMSuperstars.com) website whenever a cultural assembly or a grade assembly is scheduled. So, instead of the general question, "How was school today?" you'll be equipped with a specific event to inquire about and provide a prompt for our students to begin discussing their school lives in greater detail.

We've been sending out email blast weekly! Have you been receiving these weekly email blasts? If yes, we hope you're finding them informative. If not, please contact Priscilla Goldman, [p@4elbows.com](mailto:p@4elbows.com) with your email address, which will be added to the newsletter list. We strongly encourage SM families to read these emails as we are phasing out the distribution of flyers. These emails are designed to keep you "in the know" about what's going on at South Mountain. We are coordinating with class parents and teachers to send out grade and class specific emails. We hope these communications assist busy parents and guardians by offering school information in a clear and concise newsletter format.

Our website, [SMSuperstars.com](http://SMSuperstars.com), is updated daily! This is the best way to stay on top of what's going on within the South Mountain School Community. The homepage features a listing of the events occurring each week, along with school news, grade information, each of the Specials curriculum and recent news and press about the school. The web site also features a monthly calendar so you can plan for school holidays, and district news and community links. Please bookmark the site and use it as the best way to stay informed and get involved.

*Reminder, the South Mountain PTA New Years' Resolution is to strive toward a paperless environment!*

*Priscilla & Tom*

Priscilla: [p@4elbows.com](mailto:p@4elbows.com)

Thomas: [Thomas\\_Mixon@nysp.uscourts.gov](mailto:Thomas_Mixon@nysp.uscourts.gov)

save the date

## Midnight at the Oasis



March

26

March 26th, 2011

### Midnight at the Oasis

Book those babysitters now for a fun-filled parents' night out complete with food, libations and prizes galore! Invitations to follow in early 2011.

5  
news  
FIFTH GRADE



### Hey 5th Graders!

Join us for the second 5th Grade Fun Friday Night on December 10th at 6:15. This time, its fun and games so be ready to play. The cost is \$10 per student and includes pizza and water. All proceeds go towards 5th grade events and activities. *Game on!*

be truly amazing...



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## cultural arts corner

### russell kaplan

Christmas, Kwanza, Chanukah. Perhaps more than any other month in the school year, December provides us with the greatest opportunity to celebrate the cultural differences with which many in our community identify. It is against this back drop that we are excited to welcome the artists of Drum Cafe to South Mountain, bringing their modern twist on the ancient communicative visceral language of drumming, to help our children celebrate the creative rhythms inside each and every one of us. Recognized around the world for their approach to community and team building, Drum Cafe's unique ability to bring people of different cultures together is what led them to be chosen as featured artists during the opening ceremonies of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. On December 10, each armed with their own drum, our students will join together to search for, discover and create a living heartbeat for our school that will bond us together and provide us with a wonderful communicative tool that will echo through South Mountain for years to come.

This program, like the wonderful Chariot of the Sun assembly presented for our upper grade students in October and our January science and music program targeted at our younger grades, is only possible because of the generosity of the parents of South Mountain. At this time of year, as we give thanks for all of life's blessings, on behalf of my 3 children and most likely all of yours, I want to say thank you for your belief in the value of arts in education and for your ongoing support of the PTA's efforts to bring inspiring artistic programs to our school.

Ca

## warm thanks

## programming

Patricia Canning & Wendy Miller, Programming VP Co-Chairs

As we approach winter, we are still basking in the warmth drawn from this year's Fall Festival. Many families from our South Mountain community, including teachers and their families, came out to enjoy the beautiful day. Children enjoyed decorating pumpkins and cupcakes painting leaves and playing fun games with Mr. Kaesshaefer and Mr. Tait. The smell of popcorn and the taste of apple cider and apple cider donuts added comfort to the coziness of the Annex. We are thankful to the many volunteers who created such an inviting day for our South Mountain community. We would especially like to thank Lorry Ripley, Rachel Sullivan, Jackie Newman, Lori Martin, Rebecca Rounsaville and Adrienne Davis, who led many of the efforts that created this wonderful day.

**Midtown Direct Series PTA Meetings**

Our school's seriousness about anti-bullying was punctuated by Karen Weiland's presentation on "Playground Politics and Talking to Your Child about Friends, Frenemies and Bullies". All who attended, agreed that Ms. Weiland, who is from our district's Parenting Center, offered practical and helpful tips for coaching children through potential bullying incidences.

**Upcoming Midtown Direct Series PTA Meetings**

Please mark your calendars:

**Creating a Healthy Eating Environment For Your Family**

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Nutritionist, MS RD, Susan Schachter, will talk about navigating nutrition labels, enlisting your children as nutrition detectives and creating healthy meals for your family.

**Promoting Healthy Bodies**

Tuesday, March 15, 2011

Exercise physiology expert, David Scott, will give a presentation on promoting healthy bodies – assuring confidence in our children's body types, and focusing on healthy eating and exercise.

**Save the date – Roller Skating Night!**

Thursday, January 20, 2011

Dust off your roller skates and dance off the winter blues at our annual South Mountain Superstars roller skating party for families. Please join us at Florham Park Roller Rink on Thursday, January 20, 2011 from 5:30 to 7:30pm. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

As always, we welcome your feedback about any of the PTA sponsored events. Please contact us at: patmatcan@yahoo.com or Wemiller5@aol.com. Also, please let us know if you would like to volunteer to help with any of the upcoming events.

Patricia & Wendy

**Save these dates:**

**January 12th** – Evening Roundtable w/ Principal Lehn (6-7 pm)

**January 12th** – PTA Executive Board Meeting

**January 19th** – General PTA Meeting – Midtown Direct Series Presents:  
"Creating a Healthy Eating Environment For Your Family"

**January 20th** – Annual Roller Skating Night

**March 26th** – South Mountain Auction – "Midnight at the Oasis"



## variety show

Calling all parents interested in assisting the production of the **South Mountain Variety Show, Thursday Feb 17th!**

The variety show is open to all 3rd thru 5th grade students due the high volume of participating students. We need a few parents to lend a hand in wrangling talent, props, lighting and music during rehearsals and the day of show. Auditions are January 10th and 12th from 2:30-4pm in the Auditorium. Rehearsals are Jan 24th, 26th, 31st and February 7th and 14th from 2:30 to 4pm in the Auditorium. If you are interested, please contact Felicia Hill, felicia.hill@gmail.com or Jennifer Glass, jglass@eventage.net for more info.



## ADVERTISE!

We have made changes to the advertising section of the Superstar newsletter. *The PTA welcomes personal or business ADs from South Mountain families and South Mountain Alumni only.* Space is limited, so AD submission is on a first come basis. AD deadline is the 15th of the month for placement in the next month's issue (this will give us enough time to track down payments).

**For larger display ADs, please inquire. Submissions by email only.**

Printed and digital PDF versions will be in color. Subject to change.

**For advertising information, including any requests for the 2010/2011 Rate Card, please contact by email:**

**Thomas Mixon**

thomas\_mixon@nysp.uscourts.gov

All checks should be made payable to:

**SOUTH MOUNTAIN PTA**

Drop payment off in the PTA mailbox, communications folder, located in the school office at South Mountain.

**classifieds:**

**Deadline:** the 15th of the prior month when you wish your AD to appear. Subject to availability.

*South Mountain Families ONLY!*

**credits:**

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