

superstar★09

december calendar

winter world festival

is almost here.



- 2 | Picture Retakes
- 5 | Winter World Festival 11-3 (SM)
- 10 | Parenting Center Event 6:30pm (SM)
Children's author Sharon Dennis Wyeth
- 23 | 4-Hour Day
- 24-31 | Winter Break (School Closed)
- JAN 4 | Return to School
- 18 | Martin Luther King Day (Closed)
- 20 | General PTA Meeting 8:30am (SM)
- 28 | Roller Skating Party 5:30-7:30pm

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- Advertising Info

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

SAVE our PLANET



Reduce your carbon footprint and go green! Please sign up for digital version of this Superstar newsletter!
Contact: Kim Miller
by email at:
kdmls@optonline.net

Picture Retakes



Parenting Center
 Children's author
 Sharon Dennis Wyeth
 pg. 8



busy, busy, busy...

presidents column

Sylvia Cutler & Laura Reichgut, PTA Co-Presidents



We can't believe Thanksgiving has past and we hope everyone enjoyed their feast and the long weekend. With leaves still piled along the curbs, we anticipate the long winter season of inclement weather and possible school closings or early dismissals due to bad weather. We will be using the district's Call 'em All phone system to let our parents know when school will be closed or if we have a delayed opening. The district can only call one number and will do so very early in the morning. The PTA will activate the phone chain should the school close early due to weather conditions or any other unexpected emergency, at any time of the day. In the case of early dismissal, we want every child to get home safely. To help ensure this, please make certain that we have your most current home, work and cell phone numbers on file. Should any of these numbers change during the course of the year, please immediately update the PTA and the school of any changes.

It has been quite a busy few months with many events and lots of fundraisers and we appreciate all of your support, especially during these tough economic times. We welcome the entire school community and their guests to join us for our **Winter World Festival** on **Saturday, December 5 from 11am to 3pm**. The day will feature a variety of family fun filled multi-cultural activities, including food, crafts and entertainment from around the world and hosted by our very own South Mountain families. We'll also have a fabulous shopping bazaar featuring boutique vendors pedaling beautiful gift items to give (or keep!) for the holidays. During the afternoon we ask you to please volunteer to take a little time and help sort coats we received from our South Mountain Cares "Message in a Pocket" Coat Drive. We look forward to a great day and in advance thank the many people who made the event happen, from our dedicated VPs of Programming and Fundraising to our awesome co-Chairs Karen Westwood and Shanese Davis. Most importantly, we thank all of the remarkable families who generously offered to share their cultural heritage and traditions with the rest of our South Mountain community.

On **Thursday, December 10 at 6:30pm**, South Mountain will host along with the other elementary school PTAs and the district's **Parenting Center**, an evening with children's author **Sharon Dennis Wyeth**. We encourage you and your children to attend this wonderful opportunity to hear from an accomplished writer at South Mountain, and being hosts we ask you to invite your friends and neighbors from other district schools to join us. Through our Cultural Arts funding the PTA is also pleased to have Sharon spend some additional time with our students when she will visit our school on Tuesday, December 8 and present to our own Superstars. She will focus on generating story ideas, research, revision and the role of the reader. We look forward to her visit and thank Marietta Zacker for organizing and arranging for Sharon to come and share her wisdom and expertise.

(continued on next column)

Please be aware we will not have a January issue, so be sure to check your child's backpack and read your e-mails often so you don't miss any important event information or notices. After the break our monthly General PTA meeting will be another **Midtown Direct Series** on **Wed, January 20 at 8:30am**. Due to space and time constraints, it will be held at the main school in the cafeteria which will allow commuters to get to the train quicker.

The PTA invites you to join us for our annual **Family Roller Skating Night** that will be held on **Thursday, January 28 from 5:30 to 7:30pm**. It's another great opportunity for our Superstars to enjoy some out of school fun and an event you won't want to miss. We'll send out a notice with more details in the upcoming weeks.

We wish all of our South Mountain Superstars and their families a very happy and safe holiday break and hope you enjoy time with family and friends. We look forward to a healthy and wonderful New Year and thank you for your continued support in 2010!

Warmly,

Sylvia and Laura

lost & found coats not claimed will be donated to the coat drive.

last day to claim will be Dec. 6

December

6

i'm lost!



how can i help my child...

principal's message

Tina Lehn, Principal

I know that every family in our school hopes that their children will be happy, will do well in school, and will make good friends. All of us want the best for our children, but sometimes we wonder if there is something else we could be doing for them.

Many parents have asked me, "How can I help my child do better at school?" or, "We have a battle every evening over homework: what can I do?" This month, I want to talk about some of the ways you can help.

According to the National PTA, "*The most accurate predictors of student achievement is school are not family income or social status, but the extent to which the family creates a home environment that encourages learning, communicates high yet reasonable expectations for the child's achievement, and becomes involved in their child's learning*".

There are several ways to do this:

- Limit the amount of time your child watches TV, plays video games & or sits in front of the computer, especially on school nights. You have heard this plea before, but the research is overwhelming: simply put, children who spend less time on these activities do better in school.
- Set aside one evening a week as family night. I know that our lives are busy and it is increasingly difficult to find this time, but creating this family time, and making sure that nothing interferes with it, gives our children a very strong message that family is important. It is a great time to play board games, take a walk or a bike ride, go out for ice cream, do a board puzzle together, share stories from your childhood.
- Take the time to listen to your child's joys and worries. Ask about school. Not, "What did you do today?", but, "What are you writing about in Writing Workshop?", "What are you learning about in science?", "Tell me what your teacher taught you in math today", "What did you do at Morning Meeting today?". In other words, ask specific questions.
- One of our challenges as parents is dealing with the homework issue. Not too many of our children come home and settle down enthusiastically & to complete it painlessly. There are several things we can do to help.
 - a. Give your child some control and choice: Allow him/her to pick the time (right away or after a break) and the place (kitchen table, desk or bedroom). Once they have chosen this it should be a non negotiable, but it will be easier on all if they feel they had some control over this. Incidentally, I don't think there is one right place to do homework: some children need a quiet place and work better with this; others are fine amidst the noise of dinner preparation. Each of my children had very different needs: my son needed a quiet room with no TV or music or noise; background noise didn't bother my daughter at all.
 - b. Provide materials for your child so that he/she doesn't procrastinate looking for a pencil, eraser or compass. Creating a predictable environment with the necessary materials really helps.
 - c. If your child often comes home and isn't sure how to do the homework, or even what it is, ask him/her or the teacher for a homework buddy: Calling a friend can solve it very simply.
 - d. If certain homework takes more than one night, take the time to sit with your child to figure out how it can be broken down into manageable parts. This is an important skill for middle and high school and is best learnt early on. → continued on next column

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Recording Secretary**Renee Leviton**

principal's message (continued)

- e. Check your child's homework, but do not do it! If you see errors, or know that it is not your child's best work, ask him/her to check for errors or tell them that you expect "best work".
- Finally, your children want to please you and read your disappointment, even when you do not say a word. One of the challenges of parenting is setting expectations that are high without being impossible to reach. Affirm their achievements and when they fall short, encourage them not to give up and promise them your support and love.

Tina

many thanks!

fundraising

Shana Teitelbaum & Marilyn Wright, Fundraising VP Co-Chairs

Hello Superstars and Happy Holidays! Thank you to the South Mountain community for making our very first ever Walk-a-Thon a huge success! We could not have done it without you. To all the family and friends who pledged, tallied, cheered and danced during our Walk-a-Thon/Halloween parade we really appreciate your support.

Many, many thanks to our volunteers:

Everyone should have received their invoices by now. We appreciate your prompt pledge submissions.

Mark your calendars **Picture Re-takes** will be held on *December 2*. The time and location will be announced soon.

The **Winter World Festival** will be *Saturday, December 5 from 11am-3pm* at the Main School. Bring the kids and have a day full of family fun with entertainment, food tasting, arts and crafts and shopping. The Fundraising staff has been working hard to provide you with a wide array of vendors for your shopping pleasure. Some of our vendors will be: Tin Tank Clothing; Stuart Hermans – Cash for Gold; Avon; Beastly Beasties T-shirts; Jake's Jems; Zina's Handmade Treasures; Quitage; Truly Yours-Stationary and gifts; EDC Osborne Books; ASG Creations and Creative Memories; Jeanne Sachs-Vintage and Beaded Jewelry Dicycled-Jewelry, handmade cards and gifts for \$5 and under.

Not sure what to do with those 80's gold pieces or that old necklace from an old friend. Bring in your old, unwanted gold jewelry and get CASH!

Juice pouch recycling continues. Keep the pouches and Box Tops coming!

School Apparel Orders forms will be distributed this month. There will be t-shirts, sweatshirts, water bottles and car magnets available for order.

The Fundraising VP's have been asked many times about the money raised from our events and where it goes. Here is a list of past events and the estimated amounts from the fundraising efforts:

Past Fundraising Events

September	Book Fair Profit \$4,200
October	Picture Day Profit \$4,077
	Gift Wrap Profit \$5,000
	Walk-a-Thon Profit \$10,000
November	Bake Sale Profit \$720

The money has not been specifically allocated, although we anticipate spending some of the profits on Principal Lehn's wish list for the children and school, beautification of school grounds, spring assemblies and the broadcast studio. The Fundraising VP's will follow up with more details as decisions become finalized.

Thank you.

Marilyn & Shana

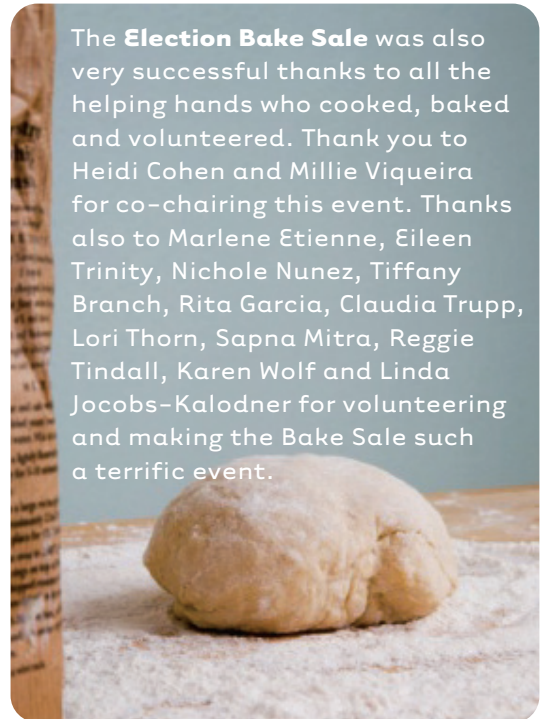


Walk-a-Thon Volunteers

Jane Alexander
Jill Abramson
Fred Basedow
Michelle Billec
Kanani Briggs
Patricia Canning
Janet Christmann
Michael Feinberg
Allison Finnegan
Amy Forman
Janet Gerber
Jenn Glass
Paige Graves
Laura Griffin
Alexandra Guerrieri
Diana Hart
Graham Hill
Jen Kay
Randi Kofsky
Lori Martin
Debbie Oter
Julie Peterson
Leslie Rubenfeld
Jeanne Sachs
Sandy Sandoli
Michelle Schwartzbard
Gretchen Sekel
Jen Stemmermann
Karen Wolf
Marietta Zacker

**many
thx
to
all.**

The **Election Bake Sale** was also very successful thanks to all the helping hands who cooked, baked and volunteered. Thank you to Heidi Cohen and Millie Viqueira for co-chairing this event. Thanks also to Marlene Etienne, Eileen Trinity, Nichole Nunez, Tiffany Branch, Rita Garcia, Claudia Trupp, Lori Thorn, Sapna Mitra, Reggie Tindall, Karen Wolf and Linda Jacobs-Kalodner for volunteering and making the Bake Sale such a terrific event.



South Mountain Elementary School's PTA presents:

Winter World Festival



South Mountain Goes Global

Saturday, December 5

11am – 3pm

South Mountain Elementary School

444 West South Orange Ave, South Orange

International Celebration, Holiday Bazaar, World Music and Fitness, Coat Drive

For more information, email:

Karen Westwood: westwood_karen@hotmail.com

Shanease Davis: shaneaseguion@sbcglobal.net

administration

directories...

Amy Forman & Julie Saydah,
Administration VP Co-Chairs



Well the directories were distributed last month and we apologize that they were a little late coming, but we wanted them to be accurate. Please know it takes many hours to organize and input all the information and we're happy that you can finally put it to good use. Also, please notify us if you placed an order and did not receive a copy of the directory. A limited number of extras are available, the cost is \$8 for the first copy and \$2 for each additional. Please contact us if you are interested in purchasing one or more.

We are starting to organize the parent volunteer program for indoor recess days so we'll be ready for the approaching winter weather. The recess times for each grade are listed below. Please let us know if you are interested in helping. Whether you can spare an hour a week...every other week...once a month...once in awhile... or any time you can commit will make a difference during the cold winter months when our children can't go outside!

Annex: 11:00am-12:00noon

South Mountain:

Kindergarten/1st grade: 10:45-11:45am

2nd/3rd grade: 11:00am-12:00noon

4th/5th grade: 12:25-1:25pm

We especially want to acknowledge and thank our program coordinators Maria Witt (Annex), Randi Mandelbaum & Wendy Miller (2nd & 3rd grades) and Leslie Rubinfeld & Robin Stephan (4th & 5th grades) for all your time and efforts!

Thanks so much and enjoy your holidays!

Amy & Julie

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Season Four



Photo by Richard Termine

THE NUTCRACKER

NEW YORK THEATRE BALLET

WED DEC 2 7PM

THU DEC 3 7PM

Avoid the New York rush and bring your family to this kid-friendly, one hour holiday performance. Watch the magic of the holiday come to vivid life!



Photo by Margo E. Gesser

THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR AND OTHER ERIC CARLE FAVOURITES

THE MERMAID THEATRE OF NOVA SCOTIA

SUN DEC 13 11AM & 2PM

This puppet theater is based on the classic Eric Carle books and brings his colorful characters to a new generation of children.



Photo Courtesy of East Coast Entertainment

HARLEM GOSPEL CHOIR

SAT JAN 23 8PM

One of the country's most respected music ensembles comes to SOPAC for the first time, bringing its soulful message of love and harmony.



Photo by Bill Hayward

BRADY RYMER AND THE LITTLE BAND THAT COULD

SUN JAN 31 11AM & 2PM

The entire family can enjoy Brady Rymer and the Little Band That Could, a 2008 Grammy Nominee whose music will have you singing and dancing along.



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happy holidays

programming

Patricia Canning & Marietta Zacker, Programming VP Co-Chairs

December promises to be such a busy month, but we are thrilled to be concentrating on the most important things during the holiday season — giving and being together, while celebrating what we all bring to the community. We hope much will be gained and given during the following events:

December 5, 11am-3pm at South Mountain. At our **Winter World Festival** we invite families to come and celebrate heritages from around the world with country-specific arts and crafts, samplings of food and entertainment. Each participant will receive a passport to travel the world! We will also come together for the culmination of the **South Mountain Cares Coat Drive** (donations will be sorted during the festival).

Friday, December 18, 6pm at Central Presbyterian Church in Montclair, NJ. At this **Interfaith Hospitality Network Party** we will help families who have been homeless in and around our community get a more solid footing and celebrate the holidays.

In January, please don't miss three important events:

Wednesday, January 20, 8:30am at South Mountain. This is our second meeting in our **Midtown Direct Series**. After the feedback we received from the first meeting at the Annex, we have switched to the big school in order to have a larger space, avoid disrupting instruction and make it easier for those who will be taking the train immediately following the meeting. The meeting will begin promptly at 8:30am and will last exactly one hour. Lynne Toye will lead the discussion on the topic: "How to Build a Good Relationship with your Child's Teacher."

Wednesday, January 28, 5:30-7:30pm at Florham Park Roller Rink. Our annual **Roller Skating Night** is a great evening of South Mountain spirit. We invite you to bring, or rent, your skates or blades and we'll provide the rink and loads of fun with family and school friends. Additional details will follow.

Date and Time in January TBD at Village Apartments in South Orange. **Senior Appreciation Visit** — again, please watch for details.

Happy Holidays and may 2010 be a special and peaceful year for all!

Patricia & Marietta

the parenting center

On **Thursday, December 10 at 6:30pm**, South Mountain will host along with the other elementary school PTAs and the district's **Parenting Center**, an evening with children's author **Sharon Dennis Wyeth**. We encourage you and your children to attend this wonderful opportunity to hear from an accomplished writer at South Mountain, and being hosts we ask you to invite your friends and neighbors from other district schools to join us. Through our Cultural Arts funding the PTA is also pleased to have Sharon spend some additional time with our students when she will visit our school on Tuesday, December 8 and present to our own Superstars. She will focus on generating story ideas, research, revision and the role of the reader. We look forward to her visit and thank Marietta Zacker for organizing and arranging for Sharon to come and share her wisdom and expertise.

the author



advertising notes

NEW!
AND IMPROVED

Advertising Info

We have made changes to the advertising section of the Superstar newsletter. The PTA welcomes your personal or business ADs, which are still subject to South Mountain families only.

The new advertising rate card will be sent upon request. For more information, please contact Wendy Miller by email at: wemiller5@aol.com

We are now offering a 10% discount for AD placement in three or more issues, a 15% discount for placement in six or more and a 20% discount for all issues of the newsletter.

For advertising information please contact:

Wendy Miller

email: wemiller5@aol.com

phone: (973) 761-6780

All checks should be made payable to:

SOUTH MOUNTAIN PTA

and sent to her home address:

Wendy Miller

183 Underhill Road

South Orange, NJ 07079

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For as low as \$2.00 you can place an AD.
(business card, birthday wishes, etc.)

30 words or less.

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

Digital PDF version will be in color.

Printed version will be in color for special issues. Subject to change.

2009/2010 Rate Card is now available.

Email request to: wemiller5@aol.com

classifieds:

Advertising Policy

Deadline: the 18th of the prior month when you wish your AD to appear.

Contact

Wendy Miller at:
(973) 761-6780 or
wemiller5@aol.com

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