

# superstar 11

last hard copy edition

october calendar

boo!  
it's coming



- 7 | Morning Roundtable: Annex 8:15am
- 13 | PTA Executive Board Meeting: 7pm
- 15 | Fall Festival (raindate 22nd)
- 18 | PTA Midtown Direct Series 7:30pm
- 21 | Schools Closed: Staff Development
- 26 | Picture Day
- 31 | Halloween!

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**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**



*We are reducing our carbon footprint and going green! The Superstar newsletter will only be offered in a digital version and accessible online at [smsuperstars.com](http://smsuperstars.com)! Contact by email: Priscilla Goldman at [p@4elbows.com](mailto:p@4elbows.com)*

**fall festival**  
oct 15



**morning roundtable w/principal lehn**  
8:15am

annex



**box tops:**

**Please keep bringing in those Box Tops!**

**Yvette Holowczak**

[yholowczak@yahoo.com](mailto:yholowczak@yahoo.com)



## feeling at home...

## presidents message

Amy Forman & Shana Teitelbaum, PTA Co-Presidents

We hope that you and your children are starting to settle into the school year! We especially hope that those of you who are new to South Mountain are beginning to feel at home. Just a reminder to any new families who have not been connected with a SMILE volunteer: Please reach out to Eileen Trinity at [jcet110198@aol.com](mailto:jcet110198@aol.com). Thanks again to Eileen and all of the SMILE volunteers for making South Mountain such a welcoming school community. *And if there is anything we can do to help with the transition, please let us know!*

September was a busy month, and we truly appreciate the efforts of programming VPs Wendy Miller and Nerissa Aschoff, along with the many volunteers who helped welcome families to the new year. We hope everyone enjoyed the First Day Welcome Coffees, Ice Cream Social, and New Parent Reception. Special thanks to our treasurers, Barbara Trumpbour and Paige Graves, for their budget presentation at our first general PTA meeting, and to Principal Lehn for the question-and-answer session.

We would also like to thank Marilyn Wright and Tracy Spangler, VPs of administration, along with Priscilla Goldman, VP of Communications, for all their work on the first day packets. If you haven't yet submitted your information, please do so as soon as possible. Online forms are available at our website, [smsuperstars.com](http://smsuperstars.com). If you do not have access to a computer, please send a note to Marilyn or Tracy through the school office and they will contact you to make other arrangements.

Our fundraising is off to a great start with a successful Book Fair! Special thanks to fundraising VPs Janet Christmann and Jennie Tinkelman, along with their book fair co-chairs Sarah Hayden, Beth McCourt, Vicki Rivkin and Maria Witt, plus a long list of volunteers. We are also grateful to Maria for chairing school supplies this year. And many, many thanks to Lauren Rutkin for the countless hours she has devoted to Reach for the Stars, our annual fundraising campaign, and Lori Dalvi, who is chairing Display My Art, which is new to South Mountain this year.

We are looking forward to many events and programs in October. We hope you will join us celebrate the season at the Fall Festival on Saturday, October 15, behind the Annex (the raindate is October 22). We will also continue to offer roundtable meetings with Principal Lehn this year; the first will be Friday, October 7, at 8:15 am at the Annex. And the Midtown Direct meeting series will begin with a special evening presentation on Tuesday, October 18, at 7:30 pm. Finally, Photo Day will be Wednesday, October 26 (with retakes scheduled for November 30). October also brings the start of our After School Enrichment program. We hope your children will enjoy these special classes, and we cannot thank Randi Mandelbaum enough for coordinating the program this year. It is truly a monumental task, and the school community is most grateful!

And finally, we need to ask for your help in our efforts to go green and save the environment and money. Our goal again this year is to communicate as much as possible through email. We usually send one eblast a week, although there may be more if there is important, time-

(continued on next column)



## back-to-school night

**Math Enrichment Info Meeting**  
**6:30-7pm South Mountain**

**Specials School In Action**  
**7-8pm South Mountain**  
**with Art, Library, Music, PE, Spanish & Enrichment Presentations.**

sensitive information you need to see as quickly as possible. If you have not been receiving these eblasts, please contact Priscilla Goldman at [p@4elbows.com](mailto:p@4elbows.com) so you can be added to the list. **Also please note:** *This will be the last hard-copy edition of the newsletter that you will receive this year. From now on, we will distribute electronic issues via email. If you do not have an email address or access to a computer, please complete the form on page 4 and return it to school through your child's backpack so that we can ensure you receive information through other channels.*

Thank you very much for your cooperation with this initiative as well as your support for PTA programs and events throughout the year. We welcome your feedback, so please don't hesitate to contact us at any time!

*Amy & Shana*



## off to a great start!

## principal's message

Tina Lehn, Principal

Although we started our school year with an earthquake, a hurricane, and several days without internet access, we are off to a great start in the classrooms!

Already we have had several opportunities to get together as a school community. Back to School Night provided the opportunity to hear about the school day and how you can support your children's learning at home; the ice cream social allowed parents and children the chance to meet old friends and greet new ones; and our new parents came to the PTA New Parent evening and asked me to talk about South Mountain, and my hopes and dreams for our school. I am looking forward to continuing this conversation at our Round Table meetings this year.

Many parents wonder (and worry!) about homework. Speaking for a moment as a parent, I know that homework often caused a great deal of stress in our family. At South Mountain, we have had many conversations as a staff about how we can make homework meaningful. I thought I would share some of my thoughts on this with you. Homework should be meaningful and developmentally appropriate. At kindergarten, this means time spent as a family talking about a book you just read together, or taking a walk around the neighborhood to look for signs of fall. At fifth grade, homework reinforces what the children are learning in class and gives them a chance to practice this. It also gives them the opportunity throughout the year to complete projects that are meaningful and engaging. The district has provided guidelines for the amount of time each grade should be spending doing homework. This is available on the district website. If you find that your child is spending significantly more time than what is recommended, or the work is too difficult, please reach out to your child's teacher, or write a note on the top of their homework letting your child's teacher know this.

You have probably heard about the new bullying and harassment laws in our state. Any incidents of bullying must be investigated and reported to the state. We are planning on providing more information on this over the next few weeks. Our goals include helping parents and staff understand what is and what is not bullying, and how to give our children tools to deal with bullying, as well as the challenging business of learning to interact with each other, and how to respond when someone is being unkind or "non-inclusive". I would like to provide a clearer definition of bullying for all of us, and share ways to help our children grow to be kinder and gentler. Our school-wide book this year, *How Full is Your Bucket*, focuses on how each of us can fill each other's "bucket" through thoughtful actions and kindness. Check out our school wide bulletin boards that focus on this so eloquently when you are next in our school.

Tina

## 2011-2012 contact info:

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## Randi Mandelbaum

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hi all!

programming

Wendy Miller & Nerissa Aschoff, Programming VP Co-Chairs

We kicked off the 2011-12 school year with a **Welcome Coffee** and the **Kindergarten Meet and Greet** with positive energy abound, families seemed to settle in nicely. A big thank you to Adrienne Davis for coordinating the Annex coffee, to Starbucks for donating the coffee, and to Tina Lehn and our fellow PTA Executive Board members for welcoming you all. We hope you also enjoyed the **Ice Cream Social** later that week. Serving pizza slices and scooping ice cream were so much more fun in the midst of smiles and happy conversation. It was wonderful to see parents and teachers socializing with both familiar and new faces. Thank you to our eager and diligent volunteers. You were such a pleasure to work with!

Special thanks to Nicole James and Amy Goldberg for co-chairing the Social and for their time and efforts. We continued to welcome our families with the **New Parent Reception** and **General PTA Meeting** on September 13th. Parents got better acquainted over light refreshments, while parent and emcee Michael Minor led the conversation with some ice-breaking questions, light-hearted humor, and a personal story. During the meeting, the treasurers presented the 2011-12 budget, which was approved. Tina Lehn also fielded some questions from parents on topics ranging from technology in the classrooms to integrating new teachers.

As the leaves start to turn vibrant colors, and apples and pumpkins come to mind, we prepare for the school's **Fall Festival** on Saturday, October 15th (raindate: October 22nd). Local vendors will exhibit and sell their wares, and families will have the opportunity to take photos. In celebration of the Fall Harvest, we will be collecting food items for local food pantries. There will be pizza, popcorn, cider, cider donuts, cupcakes, Spiritwear, and pumpkins too! We hope you join us for an afternoon of fun crafts and outdoor activities on the Annex grounds. Please refer to the fliers and e-blasts for details.

Lastly, but certainly not least, we have received so much volunteer interest from our South Mountain families. We are so grateful and look forward to reaching out and working with you all, so we can continue to provide our children with an unforgettable elementary school experience and give ourselves time to get more acquainted with one another and our teachers and staff. Please reach out to us with any feedback, ideas, or to volunteer. Thank you!

Wendy & Nerissa



Morning Roundtable

Friday, October 7th, 8:15am  
Annex

SERIES

round  
table

Please join us at our first Morning Roundtable this year with Tina Lehn. We are happy to continue our series of Morning Roundtable Meetings with Ms. 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT

extra! extra!

Important Reminder

*This will be the last hard copy edition of the newsletter that you will receive this year. Going forward, we will distribute issues through email. If you do not have an email address or access to a computer please complete the form below and return it to the school office through your child's backpack so that we can ensure you receive information through other channels.*

SOUTH MOUNTAIN PTA

If you do not have an email address or access to a computer, please complete the information below and return to school through your child's backpack as soon as possible.

Name:

Child(ren) & Class(es):

Phone number:

Special Message To New Families:

Please contact Eileen Trinity at [jcet110198@aol.com](mailto:jcet110198@aol.com) if you have not yet been contacted by a SMILE veteran parent volunteer.



Thank you Volunteers...

Lori Dalvi, Adrienne Davis, Barbara Ferguson, Amy Goldberg, Katherine Handelman, Sara Hayden, Yvette Holowczak, Stacey Houghtaling, Nicole James, Abby Katoni, Armenia Kraiker, Beth McCourt, Stacey Maebert, Randi Mandelbaum, Terry Martin, Michael Minor, Armenia Monet, Vicki Rivkin, Lauren Rutkin, Eileen Trinity, Elin Weinstock, & Maria Witt!

## fall fundraising event

come to our  
**fall festival**

saturday  
 october 15th

local vendors,  
 fun crafts  
 and  
 activities



## get your forms in!

**administration**

Marilyn Wright & Tracy Spangler,  
 Administration VP Co-Chairs

We hope you and your kids are settled into school and had a wonderful first month! We got great feedback on our electronic first day packets, and we're thrilled that you were so happy with how quick and easy it was to fill out the forms. (We felt the same way!) By the time you read this we hope the school directory will be up and running and accessible online to all PTA members – and you can also print out as many hard copies as you like, of either just your kids' classes or the entire thing.

Class parents are in place and will be in touch with you soon, if they haven't been already. Thanks to everyone who volunteered; we had a huge amount of interest in just about every class, and we're glad that so many of you want to be involved! Even if you're not a class parent, don't hesitate to get in touch with those parents and your children's teachers so you can get into the classroom to help out.

If you have any questions about the school directory or class parents, feel free to contact us!

*Marilyn & Tracy*



INTRODUCING...

## Animal Alphabet - By Fish The Mouse Media

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Tuesday, October 18th

7:30pm

SM

Midtown Direct Series

Evening Meeting

....  
**Judy LoBianco**, Supervisor of Health, Physical Education and Nursing Services, will be presenting information on childhood obesity prevention, links between physical activity and academic achievement and exciting initiatives thanks to the Carol M. White Physical Education for Progress (PEP) grant.

## did you know?

## communications

Priscilla Goldman & Thomas Mixon, Communications VP Co-Chairs

The first month of the new school year is now behind us and what an exciting and exhilarating time! The children are settling into the school routine, parents are only now catching their breath, and a touch of fall is in the air.

Last year we introduced the "Going Green" concept and taking the school paperless. Or at least reserving paper for very important information. Our first task was rebuilding SMSuperstars.com to better present information to the South Mountain community. Next, we introduced the weekly email blasts.

We are always considering ways that we can make life easier for both South Mountain students and parents/guardians. This year, a tremendous step in that direction was the hugely successful implementation of the online FDP (First Day Packet) form. To date we have over 353 online submissions! We could not have achieved this milestone without you!

Given the overwhelming success of the FDP form we also created an online registration form for the After School Enrichment Classes with the ability to make an online payment. We hope you've found that registration process as effortless.

The success of these innovative projects would not have been possible without your cooperation and enthusiastic embracing of the "Go Green" aspect of the online forms. We truly hope that you have found this process more efficient and less time-consuming. We welcome any feedback you may have regarding your experience with the forms. If you haven't already done so, please check out the forms on the South Mountain Superstars website (SMSuperstars.com).

We hope you've been enjoying 2011-2012 South Mountain School Directory 1.0. If your contact information ever changes please let us know so we can update. We will also keep the directory current with new students and students leaving South Mountain.

If you are not receiving e-blasts, please drop us a line, either email or via a note in the Communications folder in the PTA mail basket located in the main office.

Thanks again South Mountain for your continuing support!

*Priscilla & Tom*

picture day  
october 26



October  
26

don't forget  
to smile

say cheese!



## new staff members

**Please help us welcome these new staff members to South Mountain!**

**Suzanne Infante, Kindergarten**

Suzanne Infante is one of our new Kindergarten teachers at the Annex. However, she is not new to the District. Last year, Suzanne was assigned to a Reading Specialist role, K-5. Prior to joining South Orange-Maplewood, Suzanne taught Kindergarten for a number of years and also was a Reading Specialist as well as a high school Art teacher. Suzanne has two Master's degrees, one in Reading Specialization and another in Art from Pratt Institute. She also attended Teachers College Reading and Writing Institutes at Columbia University.

**Diane Lewis Rebimbas, 1st Grade**

"I am thrilled to be joining the South Orange Maplewood School District. I have 13 collective years of teaching over a 20 year span in private and public schools in New York and New Jersey. I am an avid reader and an adventurous cook. I love to swim and cycle, and I have trained for and completed 2 sprint triathalons in the last two years. By far, my greatest joys are my 3 children, 5 year old twins (boy, girl) and an older sister, 9 years."

**Jenn Feinberg, 3rd grade**

"My name is Jenn Feinberg and I am a new third grade teacher in South Mountain. I am thrilled to be a part of South Mountain Elementary School. I received my undergraduate degree from Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA. I received my graduate degree in Elementary Education from Bank Street College in New York City. Before South Mountain I taught second grade in New York City at PS 290 (Manhattan New School).

**Rachel Henderson, 3rd Grade**

"Hello South Mountain Families, My name is Rachel Henderson. I am a graduate of Kean University where I received a degree in Early Childhood Education with a minor in English. My first teaching experience was at a private school where I taught for seven years. Before becoming a part of the teaching staff at South Mountain School, I was a Leave Replacement Teacher at Clinton Elementary where I taught first grade. Prior to being hired as a Third Grade Teacher at South Mountain, I was an Academic Intervention Teacher for first, second, and third grade students. I look forward to having a productive and successful year working with the students, families, colleagues and administrators of South Mountain."

**Rebecca Masters, 3rd Grade**

"I knew I was going to become a teacher from a very young age as I would sit my family down and hold lessons in math and reading. Now, after nine years of teaching, I am still as excited and passionate about it as I was when I was a child. I received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Ithaca College and then went on to obtain a Masters of Arts in Elementary Education from Ottawa University. I am a loving mother of two beautiful girls who teach me every day. I am thrilled to be joining the South Mountain community!"

**Carol Barna-Emposimato, 4th Grade**

"I would like to start off this year by sharing a little bit about myself. I have a Bachelors degree from St. Thomas Aquinas College in both Psychology and Art Therapy. I later went back to obtain a Teacher of Elementary education certification, and taught four years as a General Education teacher in grades 2-4. I left teaching for 6 years to stay at home with my 3 children Nicholas (8), Vincent (6), and John Carlo (4). I returned back to teaching and obtained my Teacher of Students with Disabilities certification and worked for 2 years as a Special Education teacher. Currently I am working on my Masters in Special Education at Kean University. In my free time I enjoy spending time with my husband Adam and our boys. I love to read, knit and ski. I am very happy to have joined the South Orange Maplewood school district, and feel very lucky to be able to love and enjoy the place where I spend most of my time."

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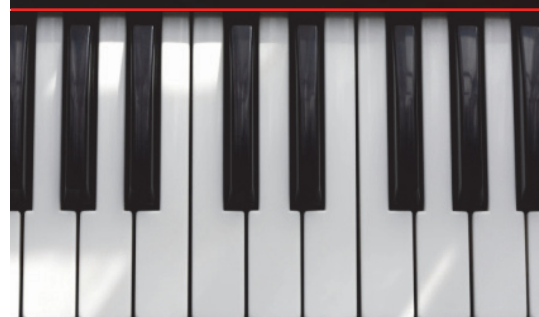


**Call Wendy Goldstein.**

973-762-6601

wendy3637@aol.com

*Manhattan School of Music Alumni*



# Greet Success!

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## a great start!

### fundraising

Janet Christmann & Jennie Tinkelman, Fundraising VP Co-Chairs

Fall is often considered the first sign of the end of the calendar year but when you have children it is also the glorious start of the school year. We are off to a great start and are so grateful to all that have signed on to help with fundraising events this year.

The Book Fair was a great success! Your purchases not only raised money but also helped get teacher book requests into the classrooms. This event would not happen without the hard work and dedication of our Book Fair co-chairs Vicki Rivkin, Maria Witt, Sarah Hayden and Beth McCourt. A big thank you to you and to all of our amazing volunteers. Happy reading!

Fundraising is also about FUNraising and October has some great happenings that will have our children smiling, getting creative and having a good time. First, the **Fall Festival** is on *Saturday October 15* (rain date: October 22). A professional photographer will be there to take casual sibling and family pictures. Watch for more information on this or email Jennie Tinkelman (ennie@tink.com) to schedule a time. And keep those smiles camera ready because school picture day is October 26 (retakes are on November 30).

We're excited to introduce a new fundraiser—**Display My Art**. This program helps build self-esteem and inspires our children's creative abilities by showcasing their artwork as permanent keepsakes. Your child's work can be transferred onto products such as mugs, t-shirts, tile-clocks and much more making treasured gifts that can be worn, shared and put on display. Every child in our school will receive a free magnet displaying his or her drawing. Thank you to Lori Dalvi who is hard at work coordinating with our art teachers to make this program a tremendous success.

Another great way to show your support to your school is to consider a tax-deductible contribution to the **South Mountain Annual Fundraising Campaign**. This no-frills campaign asks for nothing other than your donation. No matter what the size of your donation, every dollar makes a difference and helps bring wonderful programs that enhance our children's learning and lives. We are aiming for 100% participation from our community so consider South Mountain as one of your planned giving organizations. Thank you to Lauren Rutkin for her hard work in organizing this wonderful program.

Lastly, remember fun is part of fundraising so keep shopping and showing off your **Superstar Spirit** in new spirit wear and accessories. We will be selling at the Fall Festival and purchases can also be made online this year (<http://smsuperstars.com/spirit-wear>) and delivered via your child's backpack. Go green with a reusable water bottle and lunch bag or get ready for those long snowy months with a new South Mountain winter hat.

Janet & Jennie



halloween  
oct. 31



## 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 2011/2012 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.

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