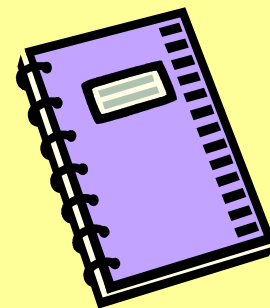


Nut Swamp Notebook



Principal's Message (January 2010)

Thomas Olausen

Spirit Committee Introduction

January may seem bleak and cold, but we are shaking off the winter doldrums at Nut Swamp and looking for ways to enhance school spirit. To that end I am happy to announce that we will be instituting a new program run by a **"Spirit Committee."** Here's the best part -- the committee will be comprised solely of 5th grade students, who will be responsible for generating ideas that provide a fun school atmosphere not only for students in all grades, but for staff as well.

Initially, the committee will be working on ideas for "Spirit Fridays," which will occur once a month. The first will occur February 5th, just before the Super Bowl. On that day, we are asking that students and staff wear a football jersey of their favorite team, or dress in a color of one of the teams in the Super Bowl. As we begin a process to form the committee, this will be the one and only "Spirit Friday" idea that will not come from the committee. Once up and running, the committee will also look for other ways to enhance school spirit beyond "Spirit Fridays."

Although we are still in the planning stages and working out the logistics, the committee will be filled using a democratic process. There will be two representatives from each 5th grade class, elected by the entire grade. As a result, we are also hoping to provide an excellent learning experience, creating an opportunity for our 5th grade students to not only take independent initiative, but to feel a sense of ownership for their experiences in their final few months at Nut Swamp. Stay tuned for more details.

State Policy on Nutrition Revisited

In the September Newsletter, I outlined the "State Policy on Nutrition." It has become necessary to reiterate which foods will be acceptable at Nut Swamp, based on state policy and in consideration for children who have allergies. In the September Newsletter, the following foods were listed as acceptable for birthday parties, classroom holiday parties, and school events:

- * Ice cream
- * Munchkins
- * Ice pops
- * Plain cupcakes

To expand on that list to offer more of a variety, here are a few more suggestions:

- * Pretzels
- * Fruit
- * Animal crackers
- * Cheese crackers
- * Vegetables
- * Yogurt with no nuts on top

I am asking for your cooperation in adhering to this policy. It is my experience that children are simply happy to have a party and are appreciative of whatever extra snack they get. The list above offers enough of a variety that will make the event special for children. Please also note that ingredients for homemade items must be provided. Finally, parties don't always need to be centered on food as children also appreciate non-food surprises.

Nut Swamp
Elementary School

January 2010
Volume 4

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PTA President's Message

Judy Benedict



Happy New Year to all of you! It's hard to believe that it's 2010 and already a third of the way through our school year. I'd like to thank **Michele Walla** for coordinating our school spirit wear orders in time for the holidays. I look forward to seeing everyone wearing their school clothing with pride! I would also like to mention the incredible generosity of our Nut Swamp families, which never ceases to amaze me. Our collection of used coats and holiday gifts for families in need in our community was overwhelming. Thanks to **Nichole Ruggeri, Sue Bonardi and Mrs. Dupree** for their efforts coordinating these drives, to **the Peacemakers** and **second graders** for assisting in collection and to **all of you**, who generously donated.

Our second grade Understanding Disabilities program has been updated with some exciting new additions thanks to co-chairs **Vera Piasecki** and **Jennifer Entwistle**. They are kicking off with a visual impairment program that has representatives from the Association of Blind Athletes coming to speak. It

should be very interesting and informative. Make sure to ask your second graders about it.

We have several other exciting things planned for January. Our children, as well as Theater Week co-chairs **Karen Koedding, Margaret Colvin** and **Patrice Nybro**, have been hard at work putting together our school production of Willie Wonka. With less than 2 weeks of rehearsals, our fifth graders will be presenting a public performance on Friday, January 15 at 7:30 p.m. at Thompson Middle school. We welcome you to join us for a fun night when all their hard work comes to fruition.

We also have planned a family movie night Friday, January 29. We will be showing "Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs" in our APR. It is free but due to room capacity limitations, tickets must be ordered in advance and presented at the door. Please get ticket form off web and join us for a great night.

The Read to Succeed program is underway again. Please encourage your chil-

dren to read for 6 hours to receive a **free** ticket to Great Adventure. Info is on the web and forms are due back Feb 5.

Thanks to **Carol Peragino** for coordinating this program which rewards our children for reading!!

I'd also like to thank **Lana Clark and her team of helpers** for the incredible holiday bulletin boards. The creativity and beauty was commented on by everyone who saw them. We all look forward to see what they'll do for the next season or holiday! Many thanks also to **Jeanette Falotico** and **Frances Dunn** for coordinating our library volunteers and keeping our library running smoothly again this year.

Lastly, a quick reminder that our Spring Fundraiser will be held on April 9, 2010. Our co-chairs have been planning a spectacular "Night at the Races". It will be a great community event involving horse racing and exciting raffles with plenty of food and drink and tons of fun. Please mark you calendars and plan to attend!

Want to see changes made in the district elementary facilities?

Then this is an opportunity for you to make a difference!

An important **community ad hoc committee is being formed** to analyze our district's facilities and make recommendations regarding the best possible use of our resources. Committee is open to all township residents. It is critical that the Nut Swamp community be adequately represented.

The 1st meeting is being held Jan 28 at HSN Library at 6:30. Please check the web for more details or contact **Judy Benedict** at 732-275-6564 or njbenedicts@comcast.net for more information.



Your PTA Funds At Work



- ◆ Bob Conrad Holiday Enrichment Program
- ◆ Willie Wonka Jr Theater Week Production
- ◆ PTA Family Movie Night
- ◆ Understanding Disabilities

Project Pride

Multicultural Luncheon



All 3rd grade students and their families are cordially invited to enjoy the Project Pride Multicultural Luncheon in the All Purpose Room on **Friday, February 5th from 11:30am - 1:30pm**. The Project Pride program is aimed toward celebrating and learning from the diversity of others, developing concepts of tolerance, concern, and mutual respect for one another.

During the luncheon, students will take part in the following:

- ◆ **Listen to brief presentations from families** (any family members including grandparents etc. are welcome) who would like to share a story or tradition from their culture.
- ◆ **Visit various countries** (display tables) representing the cultural backgrounds of our 3rd grade students. Children will receive passports and obtain stamps from the countries they visit.
- ◆ **Sample foods** from the different cultures.

Parents or other family members are encouraged to participate by:

- ◆ **Making a presentation** – sharing a story or demonstrating aspects of their cultural heritage (dance/song), explaining holiday traditions, the meaning of family names, values of their culture regarding raising children, work, music and education, etc.
- ◆ **Bringing in items for country display tables** – family photos/photo boards, blankets, tablecloths, flags, ethnic attire, games, and cultural holiday decorations, etc.
- ◆ **Preparing a cultural food dish.** Dishes can be sent in with your child or served by parent or family member who will attend the event.

Please send in a recent wallet size photo of your 3rd grade child for their passport by **Monday, January 11th**. On the back of the photo, please write your child's name and teacher and place in an envelope labeled "Project Pride".

For more information please contact:

*Kris Alexander (732) 957-8774
myworms@verizon.net*

*Michele Gilbert (732) 706-1382
thegilberthouse1@aol.com*

*Michelle Reda (732) 212-8160
mjreda@comcast.net*

Please Help... My Final Plea

FUN DAY



When you say **Fun Day**, all the kids smile! Planning needs to start soon to ensure that we are able to provide the kids with their favorite activity of the year BUT we **still need 1 or 2 additional co-chairs**.

We have a wonderful, large school community, yet less than 20% of the parents actually run programs. **I know there are tons of parents out there with creative minds, great organizational skills and plenty of good ideas, so PLEASE consider volunteering so we can deliver the Fun Day your kids look forward to each year.**

If you have never given your time, this is a great time to grab a friend and get involved. Please don't think "somebody will step up", we need **you** too!

Please contact *Judy Benedict at 732-275-6564 or njbenedicts@comcast.net* if you think you can help.

Next PTA meeting date is...



**January 20, 2010
at 9:30 am.**

We mistakenly listed a different date on the web. Please mark your calendars accordingly and hope to see you there.

Nurse's Corner: January 2010

Lucille Orchanian RN



My heart warmest thanks to the Nut Swamp community; your generosity during this holiday season was overwhelming. Once again you reached out to families in need. Your contributions to Middletown Helps Its Own were greatly appreciated. The snowman in the front hall was filled with donations of gloves, hats and mittens.

I want to take this opportunity to thank every student, parent, and staff member for thinking for me, your kindness and thoughtfulness has always brighten my holidays.

The spirit of giving and sharing is truly alive at Nut Swamp, thank you for the many years of support and caring. Many thanks for all the delicious goodies and gifts, may the New Year bring health, love and joy to all.

Health Office Reminders

- ◆ January 14 & 22, 2010- Scoliosis screening for children 10 and older. If you do not want your child screened please return the form by January 8, 2010.
- ◆ The classrooms are in need of wipes (non Clorox) for cleaning the desk before the children eat lunch. Please help us during the cold/flu season.
- ◆ Alcohol- based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers are strongly advised to prevent the spread of germs.
- ◆ Children are not allowed to keep cough drops in school. If you would like to keep cough drops for your child, a parent note and the cough drops are kept in the health office.

- ◆ Acceptable foods for class parties & school events are, ice cream munchkins, ice pops, plain cupcakes without icing, fruits, & vegetables.
- ◆ Always remember to check with your child's teacher before sending in any treats for food allergies.
- ◆ All foods must have ingredients clearly marked, safe then sorry is the rule!

Prevention is the Key to Wellness

Lucille Orchanian RN
School Nurse
732-672-5795 x7103
www.orchanianl@middletownk12.org

Nut Swamp is helping the Ronald McDonald Foundation



The Nut Swamp peace makers are helping the Ronald McDonald Foundation by **collecting Pop Tabs**.

Each pound of Pop Tabs are worth money. The money goes to the foundation and helps pay for the houses. The houses are used for the patient's family who live about two hours away from the hospital. The families only pay 10 dollars a week, but the houses cost around sixty dollars a week. Their children are in the hospital and they don't have the money to pay for a house next to the hospital. If they bought a house they still will have to pay for the hospital bill (which is a lot of money!).

Even though it's just a Pop Tab **you can help by putting Pop Tabs in the water jug in the main hallway**. The families in the Ronald McDonald Foundation really appreciate your help, if you don't the bill might go up! **Please help Peace Makers get to their goal of filling the jug up this year.**

The Ronald McDonald Foundation thanks **YOU** for helping them pay for the homes!

By: Madison Hoskins (5th grade student at Nut Swamp)

CORRECTION...

The word "patient" next to Madison Hoskins' name has been removed.
The original placement of the word was the editor's error.

Health Focus

Lucille Orchanian RN



This month's health focus is on **Cold and Flu Season & the "Winter Woolies" or "winter dryness"**.

Winter Woolies/Winter Dryness

Children need skin moisturizing lotion and lip protection during the cold dry weather. **Eucerin, Aquaphor, Curel or Aveeno** are good moisturizers to use. Remember the skin is the largest organ in the body we must protect it from cold weather.

Cold and Flu Season

- ◆ Keep your child home if they have any of the following:
Rash or other skin eruptions, sore throat, a bad cough, discharge from nose that is greenish, eyes that have discharge or crusted,

earache, headache, toothache, fever, diarrhea, vomiting or a temperature over 100 degree.

- ◆ Children should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- ◆ All communicable diseases such as Strep Throat, Conjunctivitis, Chicken Pox, or Impetigo require a doctor's note to return to school. This could be faxed, # 732-671-3529.
- ◆ Dress for the weather, gloves, hats, boots as needed.
- ◆ Cover you sneeze/cough.
- ◆ And please stay home when you are sick.

Hand washing is still the best prevention against colds/flu.

Cold and Flu Season



Is it a cold or the Flu???
This may be a useful guide.

Symptom	Cold	Flu
Fever	rare	characteristic high 102-104 sudden onset; lasts 3-4 days
Headache	rare	prominent
General aches & pains	slight	usual: often quite severe
Fatigue & weakness	quite mild	extreme; can last 2-3 week
Runny, stuffy nose	common	sometimes
Sneezing, stuffy nose	usual	sometimes
Sore throat	common	sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	mild to moderate	common; can become severe

Understanding Disabilities Program Kicks Off

The Understanding Disabilities program for the 2nd graders kicks off this month with a session on visual impairments.

On **January 12th**, the **Association of Blind Athletes of New Jersey** (ABANJ) will speak to all of second grades and demonstrate their abilities in the All Purpose Room. The ABANJ (NJblindsports.com) is a nonprofit organization that promotes sports and physical activities for blind and visually impaired people.

Parents make sure you ask your kids about the program on the 12th – it should be fun as well as informative!

The program will continue on **January 26th and 27th with a session on hearing impairments** in the individual 2nd grade classrooms. A district sign language teacher will facilitate the session including, teaching the children how to sign a short song. Physical and learning disabilities, as well as autism, will be covered over the next few months.

For more information contact **Vera Piasecki** at veramaddi@aol.com or **Jennifer Entwistle** at jcentwistle@yahoo.com

Come see the Nut Swamp's school play...

Willy Wonka

January 15th at 7:30pm
Thompson Middle School

Tickets at the door.
Adults \$10.00
Children \$3.00.

Yearbook/Memory Keepers



The Memory Keepers Committee has begun to put together the 2009-2010 Yearbook.

Our **first deadline** to the printer is in a few weeks.

The pages due include the following:

- ◆ 4th grade classes and collages
- ◆ 5th grade classes, collages and special pages
- ◆ First Day of School
- ◆ Great Race
- ◆ 4th and 5th Grade Science Fair
- ◆ Theater Week

If you have pictures for the pages above or for the remainder of the yearbook please forward them to your room parent or a Memory Keepers committee member.

The FINAL deadline for the remainder of the yearbook is mid March.

Yearbook Order Forms

Yearbook Order Forms will be sent home with every student the week of January 18th and will be due back by the end of February.

We do not order extra copies, so please place your order on time.

Lifetouch has in the past sent us a few extra copies, but that is not always the case.

For more information please contact *Christine Klimek at 732-747-1919, cbk825@verizon.net.*

Grocery Gift Card & Holiday Gift Card Program



Happy New Year and Best wishes for 2010!

We would like to **thank you** all again for participating in the Holiday Gift Card and Grocery Gift Card Programs in December! **We raised almost \$1500 for our school just doing our Holiday shopping.**

We have our first lucky \$10 Panera Gift Card winner, congratulations Ellen Minze and thank you for outstanding level of participation!

Please continue to purchase your Grocery Gift cards. Remember, we are raffling off a \$10 Panera Gift Card each month to one of our lucky families.

With a minimum purchase of just \$50 in Grocery Gift Cards you could do your shopping and win a free lunch! February Orders are due by Friday, January 29th.

Please see our web site for further details and order forms.

Thank you and keep those orders coming!

For more information please contact:

Marisa Torre mtorrel@comcast.net, Carol Loh kloh@comcast.net, or Christine Fink christinefink@verizon.net

Read to succeed Six Hour Reading Club



This popular program for kids grade K through 6 is back.

Read for six hours and earn a free ticket to Great Adventure!

Just print out the form on the web, track your child's recreational reading time, and submit back to school. It's that simple. Encourage your child to read and don't miss an opportunity to get a free ticket for this summer. **Forms due February 5, 2010.**

For more information please contact

Nominating Committee Members Needed



Each year at this time, our nominating Committee is formed and assigned the important task of suggesting and recruiting volunteers for next year's executive board and committee chair positions. This committee is vital to continuing our strong and successful PTA.

Please consider serving.

For more information, please contact: *Judy Benedict at 732-275-6564 or njbenedicts@comcast.net.*

A Night at the Races

2009 Spring Fundraiser



Friday, April, 9 2010

Robert Meyner Reception Center

PNC Bank Arts Center

7:00pm-11:30pm

You are invited to a "Night at the Races" on Friday, April 9, 7:00 – 11:30 p.m. , for Nut Swamp's annual spring fundraiser.

Parents and faculty will pick their favorite horses to win and cheer them on with excitement as the horses race against one another. There will be 6 races, a "winners" circle, and a winners prize raffle. The evening will also include a cocktail reception, beer, wine, DJ, 50/50

Raffle, Chinese Auction, and much more. Look for your invitation in the upcoming month. Tickets are \$75 per person or \$150 per couple.

Now is your opportunity to become a horse owner and have the pride of ownership as your horse races at the event! Only 60 horses are available and can be purchased for \$25 each. You do not need to attend the event to be a horse owner. Once you purchase a horse, you take it home to decorate and name it (each horse will come with ownership papers and details.) You can purchase the horse individually or get your friends and neighbors to buy one together -- imagine

the fun as Brash Farms BlackJack races against Oak Hill Stallion. All horse owners who have a winning horse will also be eligible for prizes.

Please contact *Jamie Ferlanti* at (732) 533-5407; jamieferlanti@comcast.net or *Lori Agro*, (732) 671-6430, loriagro@yahoo.com to purchase your horse today.

Sponsorship and advertising opportunities are also available, starting at \$25. This can include personal/family messages and business/service related promotions. *Please contact Jamie Ferlanti, Tracey Keogh or Karin Green for additional sponsorship information.*

Nut Swamp's Annual Coat and Toy Collection

Was a Success!!

We collected over **200 gently used coats and 425 toys for children** and families throughout Monmouth County!

Thank You!!



Middletown Ambassador Program



Congratulations to Valerie T. who received a Middletown Ambassador Award for her contribution to the Monmouth County SPCA.

Nomination forms can be found in the VP folder in the main office or downloaded online.

Nut Swamp PTA's Movie Night!

Now showing...

Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs, rated PG

Friday, January 29th at 7pm

Bring your blankets, we will provide popcorn & drinks.

Tickets required. Don't be left out, request your tickets now as space is limited. Ticket requests must be received **by January 22nd**. **Ticket request forms are found on the web site.**



Nut Swamp PTA Meeting

General Meeting Minutes 11/18/09



PTA Officers Present

Presidents: Judy Benedict, Vice President: Nicole Ruggeri, Treasurer: Michelle Walla, Corresponding Secretary: Karin Green, Recording Secretary: Tracey Keogh. The meeting was called to order at: 9:32 p.m. Motion was made by Patty Nybro to waive the reading of the minutes and Kathy Froelich seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

President's Report

Judy welcomed everyone and first thanked the Golf Outing Committee chairs, Tricia Decker, Karen Itulrralde, and Ellen Minze. After having to be postponed due to weather, it was a great day for all who attended. Receipts are still coming in but it appears that we made about \$9000. Thank you also to Tracey Keogh and Karen Koedding for running the Health Fair. The kids had a great day.

We are still in need for additional chairs for Fun Day. Without additional volunteers we will not be able to have Fun Day.

We have received an Eagle Scout request for help from Brian Pinamonti, who is trying to build items for Poricy Park. If anyone is interested in offering donations please see Judy.

Principal's Report

Thank you to the Golf Outing Committee members. It was a great day and a huge success. The money raised at these events really goes along way. For instance, the SmartBoards are being used by the teachers that have been trained. The teachers are excited about using them and the teachers that don't have them definitely want them. The work of the PTA really has a direct impact on the kids. There will be additional training on the SmartBoards at the next in service in February.

Thank you also to the Health Fair Committee, it was a great educational day for our kids. I'm going to keep this brief to introduce Doreen Been who is our reading specialist. She came over from River Plaza and she is a DRA expert - and she will help you understand how DRA works and answer any questions.

The second and fifth grade classes were visited by a representative from NASA. Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Vannucci attended a conference over the summer and were able to have someone come visit. He taught them about the sun, ultra-violet rays, and made bracelets to use in the sun.

The Asbury Park Press and NJ Natural Gas sponsored post cards that they were sending to troops around the world. We made over 550 postcards thanking the troops along with pictures that the kids drew.

Report Cards will be distributed tomorrow. Please keep in mind we are utilizing a new system called Power School so there could be a few glitches. These will be rectified by next quarter.

Vice President's Report

The coat drive was a success with over 200 coats collected and sent to family services in Long Branch.

Also, the annual gift drive will be taking place this week. Students will choose a dove with a suggested gift. Presents will be collected from December 7-11 from 8:45-9:00.

Corresponding Secretary

A thank you card was sent by Mr. Butka for the sympathy basket sent.

Board of Education

Nothing to report, next meeting November 18, 2009.

COMMITTEES

Fifth Grade Event

Thank you to all who donated to the clothing drive and to those volunteer who helped to collect the clothes. Reminder to fifth grade parents that the fifth grade questionnaire and picture request need to be completed and returned by December 11.

Grocery Cards/Holiday Cards

Raised another \$800 last month with only 25% of families participating. We collect money every month. For the next couple of months a Panera gift card will be given to a winner picked from the names of those participating. Also we are offering one time only holiday gift cards. Orders are due by December 3, 2009.

School Spirit

Orders will still be accepted this week.

Spring Fundraiser

Scheduled for April 9, 2010. We had a kick-off meeting with all of the committee volunteers. Details to follow.

Theater Week

All forms are due by December 1 for the play Willy Wonka. Auditions will be held on December 11 and the play will be on Friday, January 15, 2010.

No new business and no December meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:52.

**Nut Swamp
Elementary School**

925 Nut Swamp Road
Middletown, NJ 07748
Phone: 732-671-5795
Fax: 732-671-3529

**www.middletownk12.org/
nutswamp**

Principal:

Thomas Olausen

Newsletter Editor:

AnnMarie Rung
a.rung@att.net



The article
deadline for
the February
newsletter is
**Friday
February 5.**

Quote Corner...

*“In the **new year**, may your right hand always be stretched out in friendship, but never in want.”*

~Irish Toast

*“One **resolution** I have made, and try always to keep, is this: To rise above the little things.”*

~John Burroughs, 1837-1921

American Naturalist and Essayist

*“Cheers to a **new year** and another chance for us to get it right.*

~Oprah Wnfrey, 1954

American Television Host,
Producer and Philanthropist

We've gone Green!

Our Web Address:

<http://www.middletownk12.org/nutswamp>