

The Middlebrook Messenger

December 8, 2008
Volume 0809, Issue 2

Principal Patricia Colello



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Upcoming Events

- ◆ SCHOOL STORE 12/12
- ◆ HOLIDAY CONCERT 12/17
- ◆ FATHERS CLUB MEETING 1/8
- ◆ KIDS IN MOTION KICKOFF 1/9
- ◆ SCHOOL STORE 1/9
- ◆ PTA MEETING 1/12, 2:00
- ◆ MOVIE NIGHT 1/16

Principal's News

Dear Middlebrook Families,

It is remarkable to me that we have already completed the first trimester of this school year. The classrooms are full of energy and learning. It was wonderful to see so many of you during the November conferences. A face-to-face meeting between family members and the teachers is a great way to support student learning. I sincerely hope that you found the conferences informative and collaborative. Please note that although November is our formal conference time you may request a conference anytime you feel the need to talk with your child's teacher.

The winter season will soon be on our doorstep. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather- the students go outdoors almost everyday weather permitting. In addition, this is a good time to review your weather emergency plan with your child. As you know, we will follow the plan you have sent to us in the event of an early dismissal.

Many of you have heard your child talk about a "just right" book, but what is a "just right" book? Your child will be reading many books this year. A "just right" book is a book that your child can read independently. Books should not be too difficult or too easy in order for your child

Middlebrook Explorers News

The Fall session of the Middlebrook Explorers has concluded. The students had a chance to view interesting objects in the night sky through the observatory telescope. The 5th graders were also able to photograph the sun and moon through the telescope. There is a great 5th grade picture of the moon posted on the Explorer's bulletin board outside of the

to grow as a reader. The tips below will help you determine if the book your child is reading is "just right" for him or her.

The "five finger rule" is one way for your child to choose a book that is "just right". Once your child has selected a book, ask him to read the first page aloud. As your child reads, s/he should count on one hand any unknown words. If there are more than five unknown words on a full page of text, the book is too difficult. If the child knows all the words, it may be too easy.

When reading a "just right book" Reading should be fluent, not too choppy Your child should be able to tell you about what s/he has read using a sentence Your should be interested in the topic

Children enjoy and benefit from re-reading familiar text, but in order to grow as a reader, your child needs to read books which are "just right". If your child chooses a book that is too difficult this would be a great choice for reading together. Remember, reading aloud to your child is valuable at any grade level!

Finally, the staff and I are very thankful for our families and the support you provide to your child's educational experience.

Sincerely,
Patricia Colello



gym. The 4th graders had a very successful rocket launch on a chilly November afternoon. This provided a great source of entertainment and interest to the TLC kids. It's never too early to start recruiting those younger kids J. The Winter session will start in early January with notices going out before the December holiday vacation.

Kindergarten News



We are expert detectives in Kindergarten! We have been busy searching for signs of fall. We took a fall walk and discovered all the changes trees, plants and animals go through as the seasons change. We have read both factual and silly stories about fall. We have discussed the difference between fiction and non-fiction.

We are busy learning the letters and sounds of the alphabet with the help of Echo the owl! We are also learning how to form the lowercase letters correctly.

We will begin drawing and writing in our journals this month. We have many ideas!

We have become experts at making patterns! We have found the world is full of patterns. In Kindergarten, we practice counting, graphing and comparing numbers, too.

We will be focusing on families and traditions during the month of December.

First Grade News



November was an exciting fun filled month in grade one. We were busy learning about the fall harvest, squirrels, and hibernation. We learned about how various animals prepare for the winter. We also discovered which animals migrate or hibernate. As the month progressed we learned about Native Americans and the Pilgrims. We concentrated on the Wampanoag tribe which was in Plymouth, Massachusetts when the Pilgrims arrived from England. To celebrate the bountiful harvest we had our own classroom feast. Each class made stone soup. The children all brought in vegetables to help make the

soup. We had our feast on Tuesday, November 25th.

During the month of December we will read many books written by Jan Brett. We will learn about who she is and how she writes and illustrates her books. Jan Brett has written many stories about winter. We will travel around the world with her. We will also learn how various countries and cultures celebrate the holidays with light. We will culminate the month with our study and comparison of many Gingerbread Stories. Be on the look out for any runaway "Gingerbread People".

Second Grade News

Second graders have learned so much about the Thanksgiving Day Parade. We integrated reading, social studies, math and writing lessons in our classrooms for this event. Our specialists have also gotten involved. Your children learned about parade history, researching and writing paragraphs

on their floats (which were based on American legends, fairytales, and faraway places) with Mrs. Balzano. We used map skills and math by going over The Macy's Thanksgiving Parade route map, and creating floats in cooperative groups with Mrs. Edward's tremendous effort.



Third Grade News

Third grade has been very busy! In celebration of our countries, we had our International Luncheon in each of the classrooms. Students were able to enjoy various tasty treats from Costa Rica, France, Italy, & Australia. The rooms were decorated fabulously, as well! Thank you again to all of our wonderful parent helpers! In addition, students got to dissect owl pellets last week! Since our Science curriculum includes the study of barn owls, each third grader was lucky enough to dissect his/her own pellet, discover bones

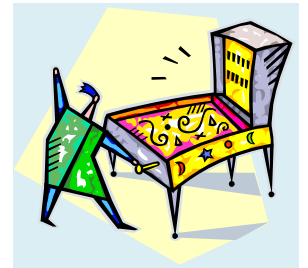
from different creatures, and piece them together. It was a very exciting discovery! Reminders: Next week, on December 8th, we will be going on our fieldtrip to see the “Amber Brown” play. Students need a bagged lunch for that day. Also, mittens and hats are needed for our donation/writing assignment! We appreciate your help in helping others this season. Lastly, the December Math Fact calendars have been sent home. Third grade knows how important it is to practice these often!



Fourth Grade News

We are busy learning about force, motion and simple machines. We will be going on a field trip to Eli Whitney Museum in New Haven to build pinball machines. Our social studies unit on immigration and the Northeast is underway. We are

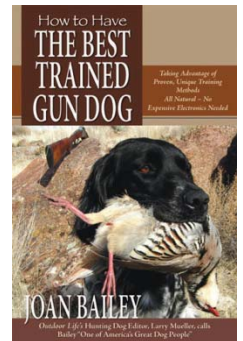
learning about family traditions and the states in the Northeast. Our Thanksgiving lunches were a success. Thank you to all the parents that volunteered and provided us with food for our feasts.



Fifth Grade News

A few weeks ago Mr. Cavagnuolo's class received a visit from Joan Bailey, John Granata's pen pal from Oregon. Mrs. Bailey grew up with John's grandma here in this area before moving away. She has written two books about hunting dogs and she shared some information from both books with the class. Her books are titled The Best Trained Gun Dog and How To Help Gun Dogs Train Themselves.

Both of these books were autographed previously for John, and they spurred much discussion about pets from the children in the class. All mentioned their wonderful experiences with their pets and how much of a gift it was to have pets in their lives. We certainly enjoyed our time with our special guest, Joan Bailey.



Nurse's Corner

Brrrrrr...with the cold weather comes a few reminders:

Hands, ears & faces are vulnerable areas. Keep them covered!

If your child is feeling “Less than Best” remember, “Rest is Best”.

Remind your child to:

Never share cups, food eating utensils & combs

Only eat healthy snacks

Get a good night's sleep

Eat breakfast

Remember to wash your hands often

Minimize stress

Sneeze into your elbows or a tissue

Put the first letters all together and what does it spell?

NO GERMS !!!!!!!!





Music News

All students have been busy learning new songs and dances, playing instruments and acquiring new music theory skills. Our string orchestra and band members, as well as 5th grade choristers, have been especially busy mastering their concert pieces.

We are taking this opportunity to invite all Middlebrook families to join us for our annual Holiday Concert on Wednesday, December 17th at 7:00PM. Young Middlebrook musicians will make your evening fun and enjoyable with their performance of many holiday songs.

Art News

November has been an exciting month for second graders in the art room. With a lot of creativity and team work, students created fabulous floats for their Parade. We used just about every type of art supply and recycled material found in the art room. Thank you to those parents who donated a variety of materials for the floats. Their floats were based on Fairy Tales, Places or Historically famous people, and were paraded around school the day before Thanksgiving. Great Job second graders!

Congratulations also goes out to three second graders: Sofia Pancher,

Nicholas Mego and Emily Caiola, who's artwork I chose to submit to Crayola for it's Annual Children's Art Exhibition. The theme was "Green, Earth's Favorite Color". Students had to bring from home toilet paper and paper towel tubes, and we created low relief sculptures with them. Students enjoyed creating artwork out of something they would have just thrown away!

Don't forget to check out artwork online at my website at teacher web.com!

From your Art teacher, Mrs. Edwards

Want to submit something to the newsletter? Please contact Michele Karpowich at mandjkarpowich@yahoo.com.

Library News

November has been a busy research month in the library. Mrs. Mayglothling's social studies classes began researching the lives and discoveries of their explorers for the explorer trading card project. Fourth grade classes were working on Connecticut projects and discovering interesting facts about our state's famous people, sites, and firsts. In preparation for

their International Food Festival, third grade classes spent time learning about foods native to their classroom's country. Second grade classes researched facts about the topics they had chosen for their Thanksgiving Day Parade floats. Be sure to ask your child to share the interesting facts that they discovered! Mrs. Balzano

HALLOWEEN AT MIDDLEBROOK

Middlebrook
Elementary School

220 Middlebrooks
Avenue
Trumbull, CT 06611

Phone:
(203) 452-4411

Fax:
(203) 452-4426



Photos courtesy of
Mrs. San Pietro

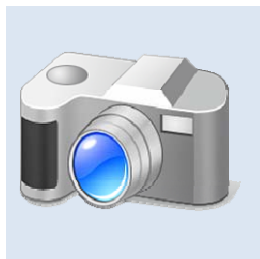
2008-2009 PTA Officers

President – Vinnie Long

1st VP – Robin Bova2nd VP – Sue Wyckoff3rd VP – Pat Colello

Secretary – Sara Matschke

Treasurer – Michele Karpowich

**PTA President's News**

Dear Friends and Families...

"If I could wish a wish for you, it would be for peace and happiness not only now, but for the whole year through!"

[Catherine Pulsifer](#)**Holiday Boutique News**

The Holiday Boutique Committee would like to send out a heartfelt thank you to each and everyone who gave of their time and efforts and showed their support for this festive event. It would not have been a success without of you.

Recipe – from the Wellness Committee**Very Berry Muffins**Courtesy of [365 Foods Kids Love to Eat](#)**Ingredients**

2 cups of flour
 4 teaspoons baking powder
 3/4cup sugar
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 cup fresh or frozen berries (drained) – blueberries or cherries work best
 2 eggs
 ½ melted butter
 1 cup milk
 Cinnamon sugar for topping (1/8 teaspoon cinnamon to ½ cup sugar)

Yearbook News

The Yearbook committee is asking for all your photos. If you have photos we really would like them sent in by the Christmas break. We need all sorts of pictures - most specifically ones for the individual

Book Fair News

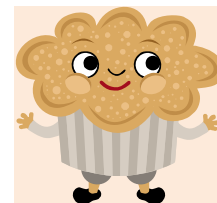
The Fall Book Fair was a success and a lot of fun for all. Geronimo Stilton made a special appearance and the children were thrilled!

On behalf of the PTA, I would like to wish everyone a Happy Holiday and a Happy, Healthy and Safe New Year!

Vinnie Long...PTA President



A special thank you to Annette and Kim, the Hospitality Committee, for the thoughtful and delicious lunch they put together. It was greatly appreciated! Thank you again and Happy Holidays.

**Directions**

Preheat oven to 400°F. Shift flour, baking powder, sugar, and salt together. Add berries and mix until well-coated. In a small bowl, beat eggs well and add melted butter and milk. Quickly stir liquid mixture into dry mix. Stir just until blended. Fill muffin cups ¾ full. Sprinkle a ½ teaspoon of cinnamon sugar on top of each muffin. Bake for 20 minutes or until brown. Yield: 12 – 14 muffins.

class pages. Please send them in to Mary Angelucci, Robin Bova, Lisa Bottino or Dawn Paskevicz. We cannot do this without your help.

Thank you,
 The Yearbook Committee

Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time to work at the fair and we look forward to the next Book Fair in the Spring.

PTA Wellness/Green Committee News

New Student Representative Program Begins

Students now have a new avenue for involvement in the school community: as Wellness Committee Representatives.

These student representatives join the PTA Wellness Committee at monthly meetings to share ideas and to help build plans of action on the topics of Healthy Foods, Healthy Bodies, and a Healthy Environment.

Interested students in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades submitted job applications, garnered teacher recommendations, and were chosen as representatives of their classrooms. So many interested students applied for the positions that most are working in groups and the positions in many classrooms are being rotated throughout the year!

At the first Wellness Committee meeting held on November 24th, 28 student representatives enjoyed a healthy snack, some body-friendly movement, and a lively

demonstration and discussion of the importance of conservation to our environment.

These representatives have an important job to continue, with conservation surveys to complete with their classmates, and, at the next meeting on December 18th, to help draft a plan of action to help reduce paper waste in their classrooms.

There is a live symbol of their current project right outside the school. There are 23 trees along the perimeter of the playground – one for each of the 23 classrooms – with a ribbon tied around it to represent a tree that each classroom will help to conserve this year.

Future student representative meetings will cover other topics in the Wellness Committee's "Healthy Foods, Healthy Bodies, Healthy Environment" focus.

School Enhancement News

Thank you to all the families that helped maintain the school gardens this summer by watering, weeding and re-planting and to those that came out to plant bulbs on Fall Planting Day. We planted 400 tulip and daffodil bulbs around the front circle which will look beautiful this spring. Special thanks to Lisa Hughes, Annette Wolson, Laura Siebold, Kim Rudich, Janet Grillo,

Dawn Paskevica, Heather Howell, Kim Johnson and Kate Prezioso. The gardens look beautiful!!

If anyone is interested in helping with the school gardens, please contact Meg Smith at msmith328@charter.net. This is a really great way to become active at Middlebrook after school hours or on the weekends. Families are welcome!

Middlebrook Father's Club

The Fathers Club is off to a great start! The Halloween Party was attended by over 500 people and was a scary good time. The Haunted Hallway was a ghoulish success! Special thanks to everyone that volunteered their time and energy to this event.

Our first movie night was also a big hit and we will be holding another on January 16th. Look for the flyer after the Winter Vacation.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, January 8th at 7:30 in the Media Center. We will be planning the Beach Party in February.

Can't make the meeting and still want to volunteer? Please contact Oz Yorulmaz at osman.yorulmaz@gmail.com or John Karpowich at mandjkarpowich@yahoo.com.



We're on the Web!
www.middlebrookpta.com

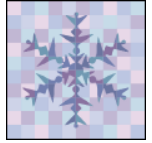
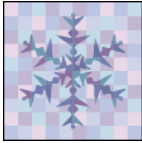
Winter's almost here
 and that can only mean
 one thing...

Kids in Motion!

Our 5th annual challenge
 begins this January.

Details coming soon....





Trumbull Parents of Students with Learning Differences
In coordination with Trumbull Public School Pupil Services Presents

Maverick Minds:
A Cognitive Perspective on Understanding ADD/ADHD Kids

An educational program from a cognitive perspective
to understand children with ADD/ADHD,
executive function and self-regulation.

Wednesday, December 10, 2008
7:00 p.m.
Long Hill Administration Building
6254 Main Street, Trumbull, Connecticut

This educational program will provide information from identification to intervention with evidence-based practices for parents and educators from a strength-based perspective. Come to this **free workshop** to learn:

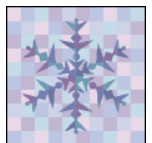
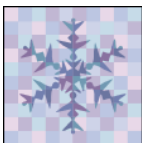
- How to address educational/behavioral management strategies to improve academic/behavioral performance;
- About different treatment interventions from a cognitive-behavioral approach to understand ADD/ADHD, dual diagnosis, executive function and self-regulation processes;
 - How to help your child develop compensatory strategies and adaptive skills to reach their potential and succeed;
 - How to design, implement and monitor the progress of an educational/treatment program.

Your knowledge on ADD/ADHD will increase with evidence-based research practices, interventions, strategies and resources.

Speaker Information:

Ruthann N. Short, MSW, LCSW, of Maverick Minds, LLC. Short's private practice in clinical/educational social work provides academic/behavioral consultation/coaching to parents on attention and learning challenges related to ADD/ADHD. Clinical service provides cognitive-behavioral therapy for children and their families.

Trumbull Parents of Students with Learning Differences (TPSLD) is a town-wide parent support group under Trumbull PTA Council, an affiliate of the National Parent Teacher Association. TPSLD is a support group that offers resources and information specializing in children with or without special needs.





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Donator	2008 Raffle Prize	Winner
Mrs. Piquette's Class	Sports Basket	Anthony DiGirolamo
Middlebrook School	Ice Cream Sundae Party w/ Mrs. Colello	Mari Anjewski
Old Towne Restaurant	Lunch for Two	Gianni Provenzano
Mackenzies	Snowman Webkinz	Sarah Cirillo
Family Prezioso	Puzzles & Lunch Box	Morgan Plitnick
Grill and Bar	\$25 Certificate	Mrs. Troesser
Middlebrook School	Lunch w/ Mrs. Colello	Catherine Odendahl
Family Giacobe	Elizabeth Arden Gift Basket	Monica Reardon
Mrs. Abate's Class	Pocket Book Basket	Jennifer Sloan
Family Pearson	Lord & Taylor Gift Certificate	Mrs. Craw - won by Jett Hughes
Mackenzies	Poodle Webkinz	John Centopani
Gioves	1 large Pizza	Mrs. Castillo
Mrs. Bossio's Class	Dog Basket	Sophia Trotta
Joggen Your Noggin	School Daze Magnetic Maze	Christopher Nemece
Ichiro Restaurant	2 Free Lunches at Ichiro	Blake Lillicraf
Family Prezioso	Toy Horse	Shannon Siebold
Fred Astaire Dance Studio	Gift Certificate	Janet Grillo
Mohawk Mountain	2 Adult Lift Tickets to Mohawk Mountain	Mrs. Redgate
Subway	5 Free 6" Subs	Joanne Gallagher
Mrs. Gorton AM Kindergarten	Chocolate Lovers Basket	Chris Lefriere
Middlebrook School	Lunch and game w/Mrs. Michaels	Kevin Granada
Joggen Your Noggin	Chess/Checkers	Mrs. Moore
Wolfson Family	Candle	Liz Yorulmaz
Marie's Sandwich Shop	Gift Certificate	Isabella Cusano
Family Gregory	1 hour Yoga Lesson/Yoga Book	Nurse Pat - Preschool
Miss Massi's Class	Snowy Day Gift Basket	Manuella Artia
Frances Bakery	\$25 Gift Certificate	Leah Pearson
Porricellis Food Mart of Trumbull	\$25 Gift Certificate	UNKNOWN - only have phone number
Middlebrook School	Lunch w/ Mr. Eliff	Ashleigh Johnson
Stop & Shop	\$25 Gift Certificate/Bags	Monica Reardon
Mr. Cavagnuolo	Movie Night Basket	Erica Vazquez
Mrs. Cerulli's Class	Snack Attack Basket	Morgan Story
Family Giacobe	Elizabeth Arden Make-Up Gift Basket	Leah Pearson
Family Felstein	Pirate Basket	Ethan Ziegler
Mrs. Marini's Class	Game Basket	Rebecca Weiman
Family SanPietro	Stuffed Puma	Alix Hughes
Mrs. McCauslands Class	Handyman Basket	Bob Ezenye
Mrs. Stanton	Game Basket	Tyler Rudick
Luigis Bakery	\$25 Gift Certificate	Mathew Bedoya
Studio	Gift Certificate for Manicure	Alison Karpowich
SOBE	Sport Watch	Ms. Piquette
Mrs. Rydelek	Book Basket	Ben Duda
Family Cousins	Stuffed Snowman	Haley Angehucci
Family Prezioso	Brighton Jewelry	Kayla Plitnick
Ace Hardware	Ace Hardware Gift Basket	Jett Hughes
Gulf Gas Station	\$10 Gas Card	Lindsay Lee
Middlebrook School	Breakfast w/Mrs. Frillici	Meredith Newman
Healing Touch	Customized Organic Facial	Miss Massi
Joggen Your Noggin	Knight Dress up Costume	Payton Lao
Minute Men Cleaners	Gift Certificate	Nurse - Mrs. SanPietro
	Snowman Candy Dish	Nicole Marzulli
Family SanPietro	Beardsley Zoo Basket	Kaityn Ghent
Mackenzies	Snake Webkinz	John Centopani
Middlebrook School	Four Front Row Seats to Winter Concert	Steven Bowman
Healing Touch	1 hour massage	Arianna Rojas
Flourishes Gift Shop	Elf On a Shelf	Tyler Rudick
Mrs. Gorton PM Kindergarten	Mom's Day Basket	Gabriella Provenzano
Marisa's Ristorante	\$20 Gift Certificate	Mrs. Foster
Family Cusano	Frank Pepe Pizzeria Basket	Scott Bova
Joggen Your Noggin	Penguin Game	Madison Taylor
Alette Monjoux	\$55 Gift Certificate	Ms. DelMonte
Miss Iannacone's class	Italian Basket	Joan Hughes
Middlebrook School	Four Front Row Seats to Spring Concert	Maryellen Jones
J Exxon	Free Oil Change	Maryellen Jones
Joggen Your Noggin	Chess/Checkers	Cole Smith
Treeland	Wreath	Annette Lefriere
Family DiLeo	Kate Spade Pocketbook	Mrs. Lilley
Subway	5 Free 6" Subs	Leah Ismail
Mrs. Mercier	Game Night Basket	Sophia Trotta
Mackenzies	4 Webkinz	Dominic Provenzano
Mrs. Craw	Ice Cream Sundae Party Basket	Emily Plumb
SOBE	Cabellas Back Pack and Rack	Jake Bova
Feldstein Family	Music Instruments Basket	Anthony Cimmino
Family Prezioso	Holiday Casserole Dishes	Mrs. Mercier
Wonderland Of Ice	Mini Hockey Game	Scott Bova
Family Pollock	1 Sound Tiger Jersey	Matt Carloto
Senor Panchos	\$25 Gift Certificate	Mrs. Dunn
Webkinz Hound	Family Karpowich	Molly Fabrizio
Ms. Velazquez class	Movie Pack	Mrs. Marini
Webkinz Hound	Family Karpowich	Thomas Melia
Tashua Knolls Golf Course	Golf Foursome	Mitchell French
Stuffed Penguin #1	Yankura Family	Dominic Provenzano
Stuffed Penguin #2	Yankura Family	Maverick Grillo

