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Winter Concerts at Myers

By Rob Pribeck, Myers News Rep

Aside from working hard on their other academic lessons, over 180 Myers students in grades 4-6 have been practicing their musical skills for two recently held winter concerts.

Sixth graders showcased their efforts at W.J.H.S. on December 12th in front of an appreciate crowd of staff, family and friends. Music teachers DeDra Wolfe (chorus), Nicole Messner (band), and Jovialis Gricius (orchestra) directed a musically varied concert with a winter based theme. Not only was it a fun night for all, but, it also is an educational learning experience for the students. DeDra explains the evening as "not just memorizing songs, but learning specific musical skills based on District Curriculum which follows the N.Y. State standards for music instruction."

On December 19th, the 4th and 5th grade winter concert was held at the same junior high auditorium. Nicole and Jovialis supervised the 5th grade band and orchestra, and Melissa Lancia directed the 4th and 5th grade chorus.

Both concerts have become much appreciated highlights of the Myers School year.



Web Site Tip: To see a Fine and Performing Arts Department calendar of events, go to <http://teacherweb.com/ny/hollowbrook/jutton/ap2.stm>.

Vassar Road Students Sing Around the World

By Brenda Maiolo, Vassar Road News Rep

Mrs. Karen MacLeod, music teacher at Vassar Road, taught her students holiday songs from around the world. On December 21, 2007, before the winter break, the students participated in an annual sing-along. The kids loved getting together to sing the songs that they had learned.



News From the WCT Welfare Trust Fund

A financial consultant from Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. will be in the WCT office on the following dates: **Wednesdays, February 20th, March 26th, April 23rd, May 21st and June 18th 2008.**

Appointments are one (1) hour in length from 2 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on a first come first served basis. When you call the office to schedule an appointment, a questionnaire will be sent to you. Please complete it and bring it with you to the meeting.

Since these slots will fill up very quickly, **call as soon as possible**. The WCT office number is 227-5065.

If the above dates are not convenient for you, call Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. 1-888-949-1925 directly and other arrangements may be possible.

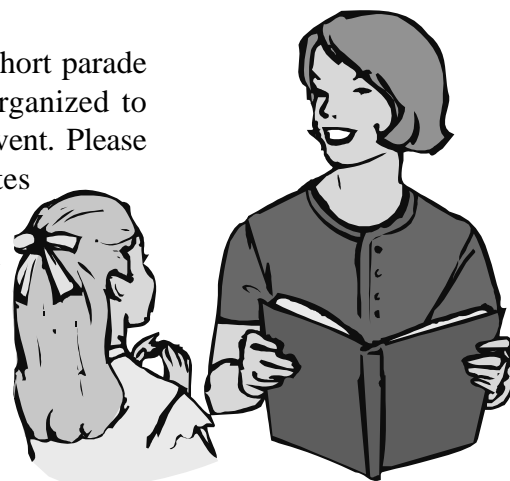
PR Committee News

By Emily Guthoff & Ellen Korz

Let's start the New Year off right. The Public Relations Committee has some great ideas for this year. We need you! Please contact Emily Guthoff or Ellen Korz at Van Wyck Junior High School if you can help us to reach out to the community.

Kids Expo is taking place on April 5th and 6th. The format this year will be fun and interactive for all who love to read to children. We'll need at least eight dynamic readers and books they want to share with kids at

the event. A short parade will also be organized to jumpstart the event. Please hold these dates open. More information will follow.



New Requirements for Mandated Reporters:

Now you must make the call when child abuse is suspected

NYSUT Leader - December 6, 2007

Mandated reporters of child abuse must now directly report their suspicions to the Statewide Central Register for Child Abuse and Maltreatment, rather than rely on the school principal or supervisor.

This change in Social Services state law, which went into effect in October, clarifies murky requirements that had been subject to varying interpretations.

The new law also clarifies that “school officials” who are mandated reporters include teachers, guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers, school nurses, administrators and other school personnel required to hold a teaching or administrative license or certificate. Previously, “school officials” were defined as mandated reporters, but the law did not specify what employees that included.

The mandatory reporting also applies to a wide range of staff in residential and non-residential programs for children, private schools and others.

The new law makes it clear that school districts and other educational or health care employers cannot take retaliatory action against an employee who makes a child abuse report in good faith. A principal or supervisor cannot demand that prior approval is necessary before a report of suspected child abuse or maltreatment is filed.

Different reporting requirements apply to suspected child abuse in an educational setting. Anyone who is mandated to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment — and fails to do so — could be charged with a class A misdemeanor and sued in civil court for monetary damages, “so it’s essential

for everyone who cares for children to be aware of the law,” said Steve Allinger, NYSUT’s legislative director. Mandated reporters who make a report in good faith continue to be protected from any criminal or civil liability.

Mandated reporters must report reasonable suspicions of child abuse or neglect occurring outside the educational setting by personally calling the Statewide Central Register at (800) 635-1522. The mandated reporter should then immediately notify the person in charge of the school or facility. Telephone reports must be followed by a faxed written report on the official form within 48 hours. The supervisor is responsible for all subsequent processing.

Further information is posted at <http://www.nysut.org/>. An information bulletin on the

topic is being updated by NYSUT Research and Educational Services.

A general guide for mandated reporters, including warning signs to look for, is available at www.ocfs.state.ny.us/.

Child Abuse Prevention

<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/prevention/>

**Get information on:
Healthy Family Home
Visiting Care**

**Concerned Citizens
Guide**

**FAQs on Recognizing
and Reporting Child
Abuse and Neglect**

**Shaken Baby Syndrome
Information**

Welfare Trust Fund Benefit Updates

Prescription Drug Co-Payment:

- √ The annual family maximum has been increased from \$150 to \$200.
- √ The \$10.00 maximum reimbursement per prescription has been eliminated.

Vision Coverage:

- √ Effective 2/1/08 there will be an allowance of \$90 for non plan frames.
- √ Effective 2/1/08 there will be an allowance of \$150.00 for non plan contact lenses (an increase of \$50.00)

Dental:

- √ Effective 1/1/08 the fee schedule for enrolled dependents (spouse and/or children) will be increased to the same level as the member's fee schedule.
- √ Effective 1/1/08 the annual maximum for each member will be increased to \$2,000 (an increase of \$300.00)

ORTHODONTICS:

- \$500.00 for the initial appliance – (an increase of \$250.00);
- \$50.00 per month for the active treatments (an increase of \$20.00)

Hearing Aid Benefit:

- √ Effective 1/1/08 the reimbursement amount will be increased to \$750.00 (an increase of \$250.00)

Legal Services:

We are pleased to announce that effective immediately a new benefit entitled “designation of person in parental relation” has been added to our comprehensive legal services benefit program.

This benefit provides the covered member with the opportunity to have a designation of person in parental relation (“designation”) prepared and executed under the supervision of an attorney from the panel law firm.

(Retirees must be enrolled in the Enhanced Plus Plan for this benefit.)

A designation designates another person (the “designee”) as a person in parental relation to a minor or incapacitated person to act on his/her/their behalf in matters relating to education and health care. The designation is a very useful document for parents who must leave their child with a caregiver for a limited period of time.

To obtain the Designation of Person in Parental Relation Benefit, contact the Fund to request an appointment.

Financial Counseling Program:

A Financial Counseling Program for all active and retired members is designed to provide a personal review of your finances and to help answer your financial questions.

You will have access to qualified professionals, Certified Financial Planners and Registered Investment Advisors who are available to work with you to provide **objective and unbiased** advice regarding: debt management, 403b allocations and decisions, retirement planning, insurance, investing, college planning, budgeting, 403b rollovers, and much more. A representative from Stacey Braun Associates will be in the WCT office to meet with members OR you can call them directly at 1 888-949-1925.

Health Care Advocate Program

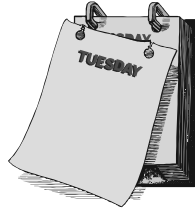
Effective 1/1/08, Health Care Advocate is a new service to assist you in navigating through the healthcare system.

Health Advocate is an independent company that is made up of professional individuals such as nurses, doctors, claims specialist, social workers, etc. This service is designed to help handle healthcare and insurance related issues by cutting through the red tape and barriers that so often create frustration and problems.

Health Advocate does not deliver medical care nor do they tell the members what to do. Instead they help you make more informed decisions about your healthcare.

Call Health Advocate 1 866-695-8622 for information.

Dates to Know



Members' Classified Ads

JANUARY:

- no school - January 21, 2008
- BOE meeting - January 28, 2008 (GY & BR)

FEBRUARY:

- pay day - Feb. 1, 2008
- Superintendent's Conference Day - February 6, 2008
- BOE meeting - February 11, 2008 (VW & SR)
- pay day - Feb. 15, 2008
- no school - February 15, 2008
- no school - February 18, 2008
- BOE meeting - February 25, 2008 (MC & OG)
- pay day - Feb. 29, 2008

MARCH:

- BOE meeting - March 3, 2008 (JJ)
- pay day - March 14, 2008
- BOE meeting - March 17, 2008 (EV, VR, & KR)
- no school - March 21, 2008
- no school - March 24, 2008
- Superintendent's Conference Day - March 25, 2008
- pay day - Mar. 28, 2008

APRIL:

- *General Membership Meeting - April 7, 2008*
- BOE meeting - April 7, 2008 (WJH & FP)
- pay day - Apr. 11, 2008
- Spring Recess - April 14 - 18, 2008
- BOE meeting - April 22, 2008 (GY, BR, & VR)
- pay day - Apr. 25, 2008

MAY:

- BOE meeting - May 5, 2008 (RCK, FS, & SR)
- pay day - May 9, 2008
- *WCT Recognition Dinner - May 16, 2008*
- BOE meeting - May 19, 2008 (VW, JJ, & OG)
- pay day - May 23, 2008
- no school - May 23, 2008
- no school - May 26, 2008

JUNE:

- pay day - June 6, 2008
- BOE meeting - June 9, 2008 (MC, EV, KR, & OG)
- pay day - June 20, 2008
- pay day - June 26, 2008

HOUSE FOR RENT (Martha's Vineyard): Several weeks are available for the summer season. The cost is \$875 per week. You would need to purchase boat tickets which go on sale soon if you should decide to go. If you would like more information please call Lorraine Blaszak at 221-3357.

FOR RENT: Village/Fishkill - large 1bedroom/1bath condo, first floor/patio. Conveniently located near Rt 9 & I-84. Washer and dryer in unit. Clubhouse and indoor swimming pool. Two months security & rent, no smoking/pets, references and credit check required. For more information contact 297-2853.

FOR SALE: One Mount Saint Mary College voucher, valid for 2 years. Good towards a 3 credit graduate or undergraduate course. Available for \$1100. Please call 845 632-1807.

HOUSE FOR SALE: 1800+ sq. ft. townhouse located near Sylvan Lake. Three bedroom, 2½ bath with new kitchen and finished basement. Rights to lake, tennis courts, and basketball court. Located minutes from Taconic and I-84. Call Jason at 845-223-9872.

FOR SALE: 2 Kawai pianos, low priced for quick sale. 1) Ebony Satin Grand, 6'8" - magnificent sound, excellent action and mechanical condition, \$6500. 2) Glossy Black Studio Upright, excellent action and mechanical condition, great sound for an upright, \$1400. Call Rita @ (845) 462-5051.

ROOM FOR RENT: in new condominium. Retired WCS D teacher looking for professional person. Bedroom plus loft/den. Private full bathroom. Heat, wifi, cable included. Use of community workout room, pool. No air conditioning and must be conservative on heat. Very close to JJ. \$600 per month. Call Dave @ 845-926-7954.

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