



Wonderful163!

News and Information from the PTA of **The Alfred E. Smith School**

SEPTEMBER 2009

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Thursday, 9/17, 6–8:30pm

First PTA General Meeting, *all are welcome!*

Sunday, 9/20, starting at 10am

Back-to-School Picnics
in Happy Warrior Playground

Monday, 9/28

Yom Kippur, *No School*

Tuesday, 9/29, 8:02–8:40am

Extended day begins for selected students

Tuesday, 10/7, 6:30pm

PTA Executive Board Meeting

Monday, 10/12

Columbus Day Observed, *No School*

Saturday, 10/17

New York Cares Day, *Help Spruce Up PS163!*

Tuesday & Wednesday, 10/20 & 21,

School Photos, *tentative date*

Friday, 10/24, 8:45am

PTA General Meeting, *all are welcome!*

Friday, 10/30, 6:30–9pm

Día de los Muertos Halloween Party

Tuesday, 11/3

Election Day, *No School*

Election Day Bake Sale at PS163

Thursday, 11/5, 6:30pm

PTA Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, 11/10

Parent-Teacher Meetings, *Noon Dismissal*
Scholastic Bookfair

Wednesday, 11/11

Veterans Day, *No School*

Friday, 11/13, 6:30–8:30pm

Chess Night

Monday & Tuesday, 11/16 & 17

NYS Social Studies Test, *5th grade*

Thursday, 11/19, 6:30pm

PTA General Meeting, *all are welcome!*

Thursday & Friday, 11/26 & 27

Thanksgiving Break, *No School*

Saturday, 12/5

PS163 Evening Auction

Friday, 12/18

PTA General Meeting, *all are welcome!*

Welcome back,

Wonderful 163 Community!

We hope you all had a relaxing and fun summer. We would like to extend a special welcome to all our new students and parents!

We have an exciting school year coming up, with lots of things to look forward to. The PTA of PS163 (of which YOU are a member!) will be planning lots of fun events: several Chess Nights, a Halloween party, a Holiday/Winter sing-along, a Noche de Amor/Valentine's Day celebration in February, and, of course, the annual Spring Fair in May. Plan on attending these schoolwide events with your family, and help to organize them if you can.

We would also love to hear from you at the newsletter! Please send your ideas, suggestions or columns to: PS163newsletter@yahoo.com. You can also leave them in the newsletter mailbox located in the main office.

Have a great year!

— *Julia Heath-Gil*

Editor, *Wonderful 163!*

Back-to-School Helpful Tips

Do you remember your first days at school? They were filled with anxious and exciting moments. You wondered if you would make friends, like your teachers, fit in. Your children are now embarking on their own school adventure and they might need a bit of guidance. Here are some helpful tips to ease the transition from summer fun to the structure of a classroom:

- Make sure your child gets to bed early, no later than 8:00pm. Young children need eleven hours of sleep.
- Come to school on time. Please bring your child to the Yard or to their kindergarten classroom between 8:35 and 8:40am. If you arrive late with your child you must go to the main office to receive a late pass. The number of arrivals

and absences are noted on report cards.

- Attendance is key. Absences from school create gaps in your child's learning.
- Each child should have a backpack big enough to carry lunch, folders and books to and from school.
- Dress your child appropriately. All children are expected to sit on the floor in the meeting area and play during recess either in the yard or in the gymnasium. Please make sure your child wears the proper clothing for these activities. Also, dress your child in sneakers on the day he or she has gym.
- Make sure your child eats a healthy and substantial breakfast.
- Kindergarten parents, be sure to ask your teacher about afternoon snacks. Many teachers prefer that parents sign up for one or two snack days out of each school month. The snack sign-up sheet will be posted in the classroom. A typical snack consists of juice boxes and enough pretzels, goldfish, animal crackers, etc. for the entire class. Juice boxes are easily distributed, clean, and much appreciated. Please note that snack cannot contain any peanut or milk contents.
- Read the notes that come home from the teacher and the school.
- Remember the value of positive reinforcement. Encourage your child with positive comments about reading, writing, drawing, and math done at home. Also, try to acknowledge any academic growth and positive changes in classroom behavior that teachers communicate to you.
 - Ask your child who he or she has played with, what books they have read, and what activities they took part in.
 - Read a book with your child or, if they are reading on their own, have your child read to you every night. Ask your child to retell the story. You might start by asking who is in the story and where it takes place. Let your child tell you about three events that occurred in the story, then ask what happened at the end.

BACK TO SCHOOL PICNICS

Sunday, September 20
Happy Warrior Playground
Starting at 10am

VERY USEFUL NUMBERS

Main School Number
212-678-2854

Nurse
212-865-6859

Guidance Counselor
212-678-2789

PTA Co-Presidents
Julia Heath
212-666-4563
jheath@medialink.com
Carrie Reynolds
212-222-8008
carriechase@earthlink.net



Thanks to our new neighbor
for their generous food contributions!



TRICK OR TREAT!
Friday, Oct. 30, 6:30-9pm
GHOSTS & GOBLINS & GROWNUPS!
Save the date for
THE ANNUAL
PS163 Halloween Party
DÍA de los MUERTOS!!!

Things you can say to start a good book talk are: "I noticed...", "Why do you think...", "I know...", "I have a question about...", "This reminds me of the time...", "This book makes me feel...", "I wonder...", "I loved the part...", "Maybe...", "Show me where..."

Your interest in your child's school experience sends an important message:

SCHOOL IS IMPORTANT!

Become a Class Parent!

Being a class parent is one of the most important things you can do for the school and your child's class. The main responsibility of a class parent is to disseminate information to all of the parents. This involves creating a phone tree or an e-mail list to keep all parents up-to-date on classroom events, the need for classroom supplies, and important information from the PTA and the principal's office. This does not have to be a time-consuming job, and multiple class parents are encouraged. If you're planning on being a class parent this year, please send your name, e-mail address, teacher's name and classroom number to Cynthia Carris Alonso, carris27@aol.com

What is One Cause?

Money for PS163 at no cost or hassle! Register with www.onecause.com (it's easy and fast and you can shop with all your favorite merchants) and a percentage of all your Internet purchases will go to PS163. Some merchants donate up to 15% of the amount you purchase to the school! Merchants include: Barnes & Noble, L.L. Bean, Land's End, Gap, eBay, and many, many more. All of your friends, family and co-workers can sign up as well. Our school is listed with them as: *PS163 Alfred E. Smith School*.

It's a great way to raise money for PS163 (paid quarterly) without a lot of work.
Happy shopping!

Attend the First PTA Meeting, Thursday, September 17, 6:00pm

If you are a parent or guardian of a child at PS163, YOU are a member of the PTA! The PTA does whatever it can to help the teachers and administration at PS163. And for the PTA to succeed—for your child's school to be the best

it can be—we need your help! Make sure to attend the first general PTA meeting on Sept. 17. Childcare will be provided, as will light refreshments and entertainment. You'll get a chance to hear from our principal, Dr. Pepe, and to learn how the PTA will spend the money it raises this year. Want to get involved? You'll have the opportunity to meet with organizers and sign up for a wide range of activities.

Remember, your child's school needs you!

Just a few of the things we need help with:

Lunch and Recess, Annual Appeal fundraising, Newsletter, Auction, Book Sales, Garden, Technology, Library, Grants, Community-Building Events, Chess Nights, Magazine Drive, Enrichment Arts, Spring Fair, anything else you'd like to see!

If you only have a few hours a month to donate, we can set you up with a group that needs just a little help. If you have lots of time to help, we can find a big need area for you to work on. Most importantly, we welcome your initiative to start any projects that appeal to you.

Please come to the PTA meeting. If you can't make it, get in touch with one of the PTA presidents — Julia Heath (jheath@medialink.com) or Carrie Reynolds (carriechase@earthlink.net).

We look forward to a year of raising lots of money, helping our kids, and having a blast while we do it!

How to Join

The PS163 Yahoo Group Listserv

Stay connected with other PS163 parents! Join the PS163 internet community on Yahoo Groups, where you'll be able to receive email announcements and send messages to other parents at school.

To sign up:

1. Go to www.groups.yahoo.com/groups/PS163PTA
2. Click on 'Sign Up'
3. Create Yahoo ID if necessary
4. YOU HAVE JOINED!

Any problems, contact the PTA Co-Presidents!