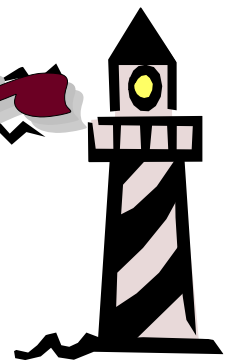




The Beacon



The Newsletter of Mahoney Middle School

Home of the Raiders

April 16, 2009

Volume 18, Number 6

Volunteer Opportunities

PITCH IN FOR EARTH DAY CLEANUP APRIL 18

The South Portland Land Trust is organizing a citywide Earth Day cleanup on Saturday, April 18 from 8:30 a.m.-12 noon. Over 20 groups and organizations will take part and more than 200 volunteers are expected. Although the cleanup is taking place during spring vacation, children and parents are invited to participate. You can either register at Mill Creek Park (across from Hannaford's) in the morning and be assigned to an area nearby, or you can contact the SPLT if you have a preferred location. For more information, visit the SPLT website at www.splandtrust.com or email, splandtrust@me.com.

LEGO PROJECT FOR HABITAT FOR HUMANITIES - PLEASE DONATE UNUSED LEGOS.

Habitat for Humanity of Greater



Portland would like to invite you to join us at the **2009 YOUth Can Build Awareness Project** (a.k.a the LEGO® project) on **Saturday and Sunday, April 25th and 26th in Center Court at the Maine Mall in South Portland.**

Saturday, May 25, noon- 4:00 pm: Local Youth can sign up to participate in a LEGO house building competition. Teams of 1, 2 or 3 will have 2 hours to complete a house with 500 LEGO® blocks. Houses will be judged by a group of judges and prizes will be awarded. Participants are asked to sign up in advance. \$10 participation fee; \$25 for teams of 3.

Sunday, May 26, noon- 4:00 pm: Youth are invited to work together to construct a giant house out of DUPLO® blocks!

We are hoping to make this year's event bigger and better. If you have any new ideas, any LEGO® blocks, any enthusiasm for this project, or any children who would be interested in participating, please contact: **Jennifer Ricci at youth@habitatme.org or by phone at 207-772-2151.**

Mrs. Kathy Germani
Principal

Mrs. Carrie Stilphen
Assistant Principal

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For Your Information



Check This Out!!
3rd Annual

KIDS' YARD SALE

Saturday, June 6th
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
South Portland Community Center

Come and sell your gently used toys, books, CD's, DVD's and more. Learn the pros and cons of running a business and make some money too!

Table rental: \$10.00 Sign up at the South Portland Community Center.

Children in grades 5 and under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

For more information or to rent a table, contact the Community Center at 767-7650.



TABLE SPACE STILL AVAILABLE FOR KID'S YARD SALE

The South Portland Parks and Recreation Department is having its 2nd annual Kid's Yard Sale on Saturday, June 6th from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. at the South Portland Community Center, located next to the High School on Nelson Rd.. Set up begins at 8 :00 a.m. Children can rent a table and learn the pros and cons of entrepreneurship by selling their gently used items such as toys, clothes, CD's and DVD's.. The Recreation Department will provide all promotions for this event!

Table rentals are \$10.00 each. There is a \$5.00 additional fee for non-residents. Pre-registration is required for this event. Space is limited! Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult. Children/ families are responsible for pricing all their items, as well as having money to start sales.

For more information, please contact Lisa Bingham at 767-7650.

Email: lbingham@southportland.org

MAHONEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

240 Ocean Street
South Portland, Maine 04106

Telephone: 799-7386

Fax: 767-7731

TDD: 799-1876

Office Hours: 7:30 A.M. – 3:30 P.M.

Administrative Office

Kathy Germani, Principal (x 505)
Carrie Stilphen, Assistant Principal (x 506)
Karen Brown, Office Manager (x 500)
Judy Arnold, Office Secretary (x 501)

Special Services

Eileen Spencer, School Nurse (x508)
Jay McCreight, Social Worker (x 541)
Fran LeBlanc, Social Worker (x 540)
Sharon Bouchard, Psychologist (x 542)

Guidance

Pat Peluso, Counselor (x 513)
Lisa Tellefsen, Counselor (x 512)
Cheryl Corbin, Secretary (x 511)



Library News

CHECK OUT THIS WEBSITE!

Adult fiction author James Patterson, concerned that his own son and other kids were not reading, began writing very popular books for children. He has now launched a wonderful website: <http://www.readkiddoread.com/home> This site is for parents, teachers, librarians, and kids. On the site, Patterson has gathered together what he calls the “crème de la crème” of great, cool books. Check this site out with your student and help her pick an engaging book. Or why not read the same book as he does, and discuss it? And don't forget: books make great presents. This site will lead you to some terrific titles. Check them out at the Mahoney Library.

Mrs. Burns, Teacher Librarian

AUTHOR VISITS 6TH GRADE MAINELY GIRLS GROUP

Sarah Thomson, author of *Dragon's Egg*, one of the Maine Student Book Award books for 2008-2009, visited with the 6th graders who participate in the Mainely Girls Book Group. Each girl read the book. Everyone had lots of questions for the author about her characters, her writing process, and what books she enjoyed when she was in middle school. Girls included: Samantha Munson, Lillian LaRochelle, Lucy Weaver, Emma Muse, Pratt Olson, Aimee LaPlante, Christina Eckholm, Maddie Martin, Anna Foster, Maura Gavin, Holly Black, and Gabby Ferrell.



REVIEWERS ROUNDTABLE

Vicky Smith, parent of a 6th grader, is working with students who like to read non-fiction. Vicky, a former Young Adult Librarian, is the Children's Book Review Editor for Kirkus Reviews. She receives lots and lots of review copies of children's books. She currently is also the chairperson of the Seibert Committee, charged with choosing the best non-fiction book for children published in 2009. Wanting student input into the non-fiction books that might be considered for this prestigious award, Vicky has brought boxes of non-fiction books to the library. Students who would like to volunteer to review a book are encouraged to come to the library and choose one of the many available. Vicky will meet with groups of reviewers periodically. Students can join anytime and are welcome to read one book or as many as they like. Head up to the library, choose a book, and help pick an award!



From the Classroom

BAND NOTES

Before our final series of performances, a big thanks goes out to all students and parents who made our **Fifth** ever "Jazzapalooza" on April 7th such a huge success! Our afternoon and evening was full of learning and great music. Check out the Music Boosters website for pictures and sound clips of this event.

If you haven't heard, appearing at Jazzapalooza was the one and only Mahoney Performance Jazz Band, who recently placed 3rd in the state of Maine at the State Middle School Jazz Festival on March 28th – way to go!

Performance and Training Jazz Band are officially finished for the school year, but now is the time for Spring Jazz! Any current 6th, 7th or 8th grade band member is welcome to attend our rehearsals on Tuesday and Thursday mornings beginning at 7:15 a.m. Last year 43 hard-working and early-rising musicians had a great time on some fun music. This group will perform at the final concert and at 5th grade step-up day. The only requirement is some experience on an instrument and consistent, focused attendance at our rehearsals.

It's that time of year again, to hit the field and bother our neighbors as we prepare for the Memorial Day Parade! Full 6/7/8 rehearsals haven't been finalized yet, but stay tuned for a detailed letter coming home outlining practices and how parents can assist us on this wonderful community event.

Remember to check out all the wonderful summer music camp offerings, and take advantage of the scholarship program the South Portland Music Boosters offer! Mrs. Barry has details in her room. The deadline for scholarship applications is May 1st! The final Music Booster meeting of the year is Tuesday, May 12th at SPHS. All 6th, 7th and 8th grade honors band and chorus members will be honored at this meeting. Invitations will be given to students after vacation. We hope to see you there!

Our final series of performances is upon us, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the students and parents of our music program for the effort and support that has been exhibited this year. Our success is due to every individual's hard work.

PERFORMANCE DATES:

Sunday, May 24th: 8th Grade Band and invited 7th graders travel to Peak's Island to perform in their Memorial Day observances. Parent help

needed. A pink notice went home with 8th graders on Friday April 10th. Please reply as soon as possible!

Monday May 25th: 6th, 7th and 8th grade Bands march in the city Memorial Day Parade. Meet at SMCC parking lot by 9:30 a.m. Step-off at 10:30 a.m. Parent help needed. A notice will go home after vacation.

Wednesday May 27th: 6th grade band will perform a combined concert with Memorial and the All-City 5th grade at **SPHS**. Students need to arrive by 6:00 p.m. for a quick combined rehearsal. The concert begins at 7:00 p.m. A notice will go home after vacation.

Saturday, May 30th: 8th grade band will participate in the first "Funtown Festival of Bands". We will perform a brief concert at Loranger Middle School (OOB) followed by an educational clinic, then spend the day at Funtown. Parent help and transportation is essential for this trip. A pink notice went home on Friday April 10th. Please reply as soon as possible!

Wednesday June 3rd: 7th and 8th grade bands and Mahoney Chorus will perform the year-end concert at **SPHS**. Students need to arrive by 6:25 p.m. The concert begins at 7:00 p.m.

The Mahoney Gigantic Spring Jazz Band will perform for 5th graders at step-up day. Date and time will be announced.

Mrs. Barry



MAHONEY MIDDLE SCHOOL TAKES ON THE WII CHALLENGE!

(CHANGING THE SCHOOL CULTURE, ONE WII AT A TIME...)

By Jeff Kozaka, Project Reach Specialist



It all started in the Project Reach classroom at the beginning of the school year. Mahoney had been awarded a mini-grant of \$1500.00 from Let's Go to promote their 5-2-1-0 campaign (5 or more servings of fruits & vegetables, 2 hours or less recreational screen time, 1 hour or more of physical activity, and 0 sugary drinks) in the school and the community. While other schools formed committees and

developed curriculum, Project Reach students were given the chance to implement their own unique idea: to challenge and change the culture at Mahoney from food rewards, such as pizza parties and cup cakes, to physical rewards. That's where the Nintendo Wii Fit comes in.

The Project Reach program, which is part of Jobs for Maine's Graduates Program (JMG), is a project-oriented and adventure-based program designed to address the challenges of middle school. The students and the specialist actively plan their community service projects together, giving the students ownership over the projects, rather than just being told what to do. The Project Reach students decided to purchase three Nintendo Wii systems and the Wii Fit balance board and then use a portion of the grant money to purchase healthy food and drinks. Their idea: instead of teachers throwing pizza parties to their classes for a job well done, teachers now contact Project Reach and schedule their own fully catered Wii party for their class!

The first obstacles for the students were the teachers' fear of technology, especially game systems. So, during an after school staff meeting, a select handful of Project Reach students presented the Wii Fit and Wii Sports to the entire Mahoney staff and encouraged them to try them out. Cautiously, one by one, the teachers tried the games and were hooked! Project Reach students explained that they would be doing all the set up, instructing the students on how to play, and buying the food (fresh vegetables and fruits, juices, and bottled water). All the teachers had to do was sign up!

The students' next idea was to hold grade level competitions, with the prizes being a fully catered Wii party. Around Thanksgiving, Project Reach sponsored Stuff-A-Bus, a non-perishable food drive for a local shelter in Portland. Students from every grade were encouraged to bring in canned goods and the homerooms with the most items collected won a Wii party. Next was a round of Wii parties as a reward for all the grades that completed the MEA's, then a school wide cell phone recycling drive by Project Reach. Another student suggested offering the Wii's at the dances as an alternative to dancing. To date, the Project Reach program has hosted 14 Wii parties with an average party consisting of 20 students. In less than a school year, Project Reach students have promoted the 5-2-1-0 movement to over 85 % of the school's population!

Last week, a select few Project Reach students were asked to be presenters to the Let's Go symposium for educators sponsored by Hannaford. Needless to say, the kids were the hit of the day and their workshop was packed for all three sessions. This was the first time students were asked to be presenters at a symposium and they were fantastic!

Now with spring in the air, Project Reach students are moving into the second phase of their plan: to build a vegetable garden to supplement their Wii parties and lower their overall food costs. Melding technology with organic farming? All in a day's work for a Project Reach student!



From the Classroom

Grade 7

MRS. DOUGHTY'S CLASSES

Science

Students just completed detailed disease projects and presented their findings in the form of a Keynote slide show. Each student used his/her laptop to research information on a disease of their choice and compiled this information into some of the most impressive products we have seen. A part of the final product was an oral presentation to a classroom of their peers. This was a positive experience for all students and they received some helpful and affirming feedback from classmates.

We continue to study the human body, currently exploring the respiratory system.

Language Arts

After reading and studying a selection of short stories, as well as reading a collection of memoirs by mystery writer, Joan Lowery Nixon, students are well underway in writing a short story of their own. They gleaned writing tips from this well-known author and are using some of her suggestions to make their stories even better.

Students continue to work with their 3rd grade friends at Brown School. Most recently they worked together on understanding, interpreting and illustrating idioms.

Grade 8

MRS. TUCCI'S SOCIAL STUDIES

Over the past few weeks, our social studies class has been learning about the Great Depression. We have been learning about the different causes of the Great Depression as well as the steps that Franklin D. Roosevelt took to fix the economic crisis. To further understand the New Deal, we split up into groups to make a presentation for the class. Our assignment was to create a television program explaining the banking crisis of the 1920's and 1930's. Lindsay, Antonio, Lyndsay, Sierra and I decided to make a puppet show illustrating both the events leading to the banking crisis and the steps taken by FDR.

Keirstan Field



The Beacon



April 16, 2009 Volume 18 Number 6

Mahoney Middle School
South Portland School Department
240 Ocean Street
South Portland, Maine 04106

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Dates to Remember

April	
17	NO SCHOOL
20-24	SPRING VACATION
May 6	Early Release: Students dismissed at 11:45 a.m.
7	Parent Forum Library 6:30 p.m.
25	No School Memorial Day
27	5 th /6 th All City Bands Concert SPSHS 7:00 p.m.
June 3	Mahoney 7 th /8 th grade concert at SPSHS 7:00 p.m.
12	8 th grade trip to Point Sebago
17	Last day of school (TENTATIVE)

