



General Meeting Minutes for the 2009 – 2010 Academic School Year

November 10, 2009 @ 7:00 p.m.

AMS Library

PTA Members in attendance: 16

Co-Presidents: Gillian Smith
Jennifer Boucher
Vice President: Denise Alderson
Secretary: Sharon Campbell
Treasurer: Michele Donoghue
Board Member at Large: Gretchen Pyles

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

President's Report

- ❖ Pledge of Allegiance

Secretary's Report

The minutes from the October 2009 meeting were reviewed at the meeting. Ellen Roos-Unger requested a motion to accept the minutes. Cheryl Forster moved to accept the minutes. Gillian Smith seconded the motion. The October 2009 minutes were accepted.

Treasurer's Report

Copies of the Treasurer's report for October 2009 financials were reviewed at the meeting and copies were available to all that were present. Porter Dodge requested a motion to accept the financials for October and a second motion was made by Ellen Roos-Unger to accept.

Principal's Report

Gerry St. Amand ~ Clark-Wilkins School

- Report cards go home with all students in grades one through four on Friday, November 20, 2009
- Kindergarten teachers will be conducting parent-teacher conferences, but will not issue report cards until second quarter
- Parent-teacher conferences will be ongoing through the month of November
- Evening conferences are scheduled for Thursday, November 19, 2009 from 5 to 8 P.M.

- Friday, November 20, 2009 will be an Early Release Day to allow teachers to conference in the afternoon
- Draft One of the Fiscal Year 2011 Budget has been presented to the Amherst School Board and will continue through the revision process until January 2010
- The six Clark-Wilkins Differentiated Instruction—“DI”—trainers used the November Late Start to lead groups in extremely productive activities that focused on instructional models to support student learning across all levels
- The SAU#39 Professional Development Committee met in early November to map out plans for the February 2010 In-service Day
- The Clark-Wilkins “Wellness Practices” are formally in place at this time
- Each birthday student will receive a fruit “Popsicle” during lunch or snack to help celebrate the special day
- Summer birthdays will be recognized in June

Porter Dodge ~ Amherst Middle School

- Environmental School: 6th Grade experienced infestation of “bedbugs” in three female cabins. Symptoms were not seen until AMS returned. A meeting for parents is scheduled for Monday, November 16 at 6:30pm at AMS to air concerns and answer questions
- Report cards go home Dec 10
- Student Council is running a Holiday Canned Food Drive
- Parent Conferences: Nov 19 5-8pm, Nov 20 after 11 am dismissal
- AMS Book Fair is done and was well-received
- PTA Magazine Drive Limo Lunch is Nov 19
- Magazine Drive Administrator Dress-Up Day Nov 24. Winners decide what Ms. Martel and Mr. Dodge wear!
- Veteran’s Day will be honored on Thursday Nov 12.
- AMS Theater Club is underway. Michelle Emmond, 6th grade teacher, is director.
- Concerts upcoming: Gr 6 Band, Dec 6; Gr 7/8 Band, Dec 9; Gr 7/8 Chorus, Dec 16

School Board Report

- ❖ ***No School Board Representative or Report – Rob Graybill sent following report read in his absence:***

The following is a brief synopsis of ASB and SAU 39 topics discussed since the last PTA meeting:

- At the last SAU Board meeting, the Board received an update from Dr. Jennings regarding an organization that assists communities in dealing with tragedies, such as the horrible events that occurred in Mont Vernon. The organization, ORI, is based in Concord and has experience in dealing with events such as 9/11 and the Amish school shootings. The basic premise of their work over the coming year is that communities have a choice to engage in a healing process and to articulate a future vision for the community, including the SAU school system. Dr. Jennings is working with members of the Amherst Selectmen to develop a community team to help in this endeavor. I will share more details when they become available.
- The ASB recently voted down the proposed change in the school start time for Souhegan, resulting in the current schedule staying in place. The ASB thanked the Alternative Start Time Committee for their diligent work in the matter, but in the end the changes proposed would have a detrimental impact on the elementary schools to achieve the desired goal for Souhegan.

This vote was based on feedback received by the Board from the Amherst community and although we are in agreement that a later start time is a good idea, the logistics and cost of busing and the negative impact to the schools outweighed the small gains for Souhegan.

- The ASB is currently entering budget season and the Administration presented a budget for the coming school year which is both fiscally prudent and responsible given the current economic climate. The Administration has had to deal with slightly lower enrollments and escalating costs, specifically a 22.5% proposed increase in health insurance, that puts pressure on the budget and is difficult given the upcoming negotiations with the teachers union. The ASB will work with the Administration and the Ways and Means Committee to refine the budget as we approach the end of the year.
- I will provide more details on the matters listed above at upcoming PTA meetings. As always, we appreciate the support the PTA provides to the students of Amherst and SAU 39.

Committee Chair Reports

Bellringer ~ There is no January Bellringer so keep in mind the deadlines for material that needs to go in before or after, next deadline is January 15th for February Bellringer.

Curriculum Enrichment ~ **AMS** – Ruth Infanti met with all grades regarding the program **Wilkins** – Jill Romano shared information about the Birds of Prey program for 2nd Grade and Wingmaster, in line with the 2nd grade science curriculum; techsploration science is an ongoing program with electricity, a hands on for 3rd grade science unit. Trying to get Kevin Skarupa from WMUR Weather. **Clark** – Gretchen Pyles is working with Beaver Brook for a National American presentation.

Family Math Night ~ Monday night Feb 1 will be K – 2nd, and Tues night Feb 2 will be 3rd and 4th grade.

Family Science Day ~ Sent from Jane Soddors: Family Science Day was held on Saturday, November 7th at Wilkins. Turnout was a little lower than usual. I would estimate about 60-80 kids attended. I think that all attendees had fun (and so did the committee)! I'd like to thank the committee (Kim Ayers, Karen Oates, Christine Row, Jane Senk, and Laura Taylor) and our outside volunteers (Dr. Young for X-rays, Dovetail Dental, and Bob Hough with the Wright Flyer simulator). We also had donations from the following: Longhorn's, Wal-Mart, Texas Roadhouse, Hungry Herbs, Panera, Lowe's, Stop and Shop, Target, Hannaford, Shaw's, Brookdale Farms, and Stonyfield Yogurt. I plan to write an article for the next Bellringer and the Amherst Citizen thanking these organizations for their support. All these donations reduced the amount we spent out of our budget (I think we spent less than half). We realized on Saturday that we really should have some signs to put outside the school and perhaps in a few places in town to help advertise the event. We are considering having several of the political-type signs made that you can stick in the grass. These are relatively inexpensive (less than \$10 each) and would use up a little more of the budget. I would welcome any input on this.

Holiday Story Time ~ Event Date Fri Dec 4th 6:30-7:30 Clark Multipurpose Room. There will be a raffle for the books that are read that evening.

Membership ~ Membership is up to 512 – still encouraging new members to join

Original Art ~ no new updates

PTA Play – this year's play is Children of Eden, auditions will start in January so keep your eye on the Bellringer! See attached update page

Staff Appreciation ~ no updates

Reflections ~ This year's theme is "Beauty Is..." ; Entries are due at your school office by January 4, 2010. All entry forms and rules are now on the Amherst PTA website. This year we will be having an Art Show/Open House instead of a ceremony. This will be on Saturday, January 16, 2010 from 1-4 pm at the Clark school multi-purpose room. Snow date will be the following Saturday. If anyone knows anyone in the fields of film, dance, music, photography, literature or visual arts who might be interested in judging, please contact: Shelly Kayser (skayser@hughes.net) 673-6457 or Wendy Conway(mconway0427@comcast.net) 672-5679.

New Business

- Upcoming Book Fair, Ellen Roos Unger talked about wish lists for teachers as you go through the fair.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Michele Donoghue to adjourn the meeting at 8:30pm, and the motion was seconded by Cheryl Forster.

Submitted by:

Sharon Campbell

Secretary

Next Meeting: January 12, 2010 @ 7 p.m. AMS Cafeteria

Contact Information

PTA Board ~ ptaboard@amherstpta.org

Bellringer Newsletter ~ ellenbr68@alumni.umass.edu

Committee: 2010 PTA Play, *Children of Eden*

Committee Chair: Chris Janson chris.janson@comcast.net

Report for November, 2009

Plans for the 2010 play, *Children of Eden* (the PTA's 57th show!) are well under way. The following report gives an overview and status.

Production Staff

We are just about staffed up. Producers are Rita Piotrowski (rapiiotrowski@hotmail.com) and Jackie O'Dowd (jgo100@aol.com). Both are from Amherst. Director is Alan Kaplan (kap2005@aol.com) from Manchester. Choreography, music, orchestra, sound, lighting, sets, and tickets are staffed. We are still in need of a publicity person but have decided to wait until the show is cast and try to get the parent of cast member to volunteer. This is a job best held by someone who has to be at rehearsals.

Auditions

Auditions will be held Tuesday, January 12 and Thursday January 14 at 6 PM at Clark School. Note that these dates have changed. I notified Leigh Ann Evans to make the changes to the calendar. We are welcoming children from fourth grade and up to audition. We expect a large cast and are hoping to cast many children and parents! This show, based on stories from the Old Testament, centers around families. We hope to cast actual families when possible.

Publicity for the auditions will be accomplished using the Bellringer, local papers (Cabinet, Citizen, Telegraph, and Union Leader), parent emails, community theater websites and listservs, and our past cast lists.

As always, we will cast Amherst and Mont Vernon citizens first when all talents are equal. We have terrific talent here in our own towns and expect the vast majority of the cast to be local.

Tickets

Last year's producer, Jenn Whitney, has volunteered to take on the job of ticket chair. We are looking at using an online service to sell. Brown Paper Tickets (www.brownpapertickets.com) will allow us a mix of online sales with some paper tickets we can sell to cast and in local stores. This will be a nice mix for us. The buyer will incur a small cost to purchase online. It will cost us nothing. Ticket prices will remain the same, \$10/ticket.

Website

As in the past, Leigh Ann Evans will be designing and updating our website. She has done this job for many years and we are deeply indebted to her. The website has become the lifeblood for cast and audience alike.

Budget

We expect this show to come in within our \$7200 budget.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Janson

November 8, 2009