

PTA NEWS - FEBRUARY 2008

Hi Everyone,

December and January were very quiet months for the PTA but it looks like February is going to change all that! We had a great meeting this month and I'm very happy to report the following activities. Please remember to come to our meetings. I appreciate so much the people who take the time and effort to come and support all that is happening in our local schools' community by giving their input and volunteering their time to help create a strong and productive organization. And now, to our upcoming plans.

Rachel's challenge – **April 3, Portsmouth High School**. (www.rachelschallenge.com) Some of you may have heard about the presentation over at Portsmouth High School last month by the brother of Rachel Scott, the first victim of the Columbine High School massacre. Rachel was an amazing girl who was committed to the idea of a chain reaction of kindness and compassion spread by simple acts. Her legacy is being shared all over the country by her family and other committed individuals who bring the challenge to schools in the form of presentations. George Cushing, SAU50 Superintendent in conjunction with Portsmouth SAU, is bringing the challenge to the Greater Portsmouth area Middle schools. The Rye PTA members agreed to help fund Rachel's challenge to the amount of **\$1,250**. This ties in with the focus on bullying and cyber-bullying, something else our schools are strongly committed to addressing. The PTA is also dedicated to this commitment.

Wheelchair basketball. Piper Cronin asked the PTA to support her request for **\$600** to bring Wheelchair Basketball to RJH. The program comes from Northeast Passage, a non-profit organization from UNH. Their mission is to create an environment where individuals can recreate with the same freedoms as their non-disabled peers. The Instructor from Northeast Passage will come in and talk to the RJH students about disabilities and the importance of these people being tolerated, accepted and included in recreational activities. This two day event will give every child in the RJH the chance to play basketball in a wheelchair and get a feeling of what it is like to be disabled. You can find more information at www.nepassage.org. Thanks to Piper for bringing this request to the PTA.

Michelle Wirth, RJH music teacher requested **\$334.99** for a cordless microphone and batteries and recharger. Michelle is doing a wonderful job bringing drumming and world folk songs to the RJH, but with all that music happening it is difficult for the children to hear her singing! The PTA members are happy to support Michelle in this endeavor.

Other news and important dates.

Wednesday February 20th – Boxtops closing date for this cycle. Please send in any Boxtops coupons you may still have for Lucretia Schafroth to process. We have had very positive feedback about this fundraiser with parents telling us it is helping children with everything from counting to reading dates! Thanks to Lucretia for breathing new life into this and any ideas/suggestions please come forward and email Lucretia at schafbach@aol.com.

Thursday February 14th – RJH Senior Valentine's Day concert. All are welcome to come to the Valentine's Day concert the RJH students are presenting for seniors from Webster's at Rye.

Thursday February 21st – RJH Manguito presentation. Five internationally known Latin American musicians are coming to RJH to take the students on an interactive musical journey of the Caribbean as they play the rhythms of Puerto Rico, Cub and the Dominican Republic. This is one of the presentations brought to Rye by the PTA Enrichment Assemblies committee headed up by Jules Grant.

Thursday May 15th – RJH concert. The PTA would like to find someone who could help Michelle Wirth organize events related to music in RJH. The first event will be the arranging of some flowers and

small celebration of the RJH students participating in the May concert. If you are interested in being a support parent for Michelle, please contact either Michelle or myself at mwirth@sau50.org or harrison.rm@comcast.net.

Saturday May 17th – Run, Paddle, Pedal race. The Run, Paddle, Pedal race is being organized this year by twelve schools in and around the Exeter area. The funds raised by the Rye community will come directly back to RJH and RES. Holly Warden is interested in talking to any parents who would like to be involved in helping out with this fun and worthwhile event. Please contact Holly Warden at hwarden@sau50.org for more details.

Saturday May 17th – Bike Rodeo. The Safe Routes to School committee for Rye is looking to raise interest in this fantastic possibility for our town. They are hoping that eventually we will have sidewalks and bike routes to make Rye a safer town for all. Please keep an eye out for further details regarding this fun event. Any queries/suggestions/offer of help please contact Jeanne Moynahan, the PTA representative on this committee at grammy5899@hotmail.com. Thanks to Jeanne for her commitment and enthusiasm for both this and her role as Membership Volunteer for the PTA.

Talking of Membership – we have a record 198 members! Let’s make it to the 200 mark at least and maybe even 250 by the end of the year. We accept Membership anytime throughout the school year. By supporting the PTA, you are helping us fund many wonderful programs. We also work hard at helping create a sense of community. Our meetings are open to members and non-members and we are always looking for suggestions for new ways to enhance our children’s school experience.

March 13 – April 22 – Carbon Challenge Please join Lucy Nieman and the other folks at the Rye Energy Committee in the quest to have as many of our households in Rye join the worldwide Carbon Challenge. The Carbon Challenge committee will start with a kick-off in school on March 13 and the ending day for this first phase of the Carbon Challenge will be April 22. The challenge will encourage all children to get their parents on board and the PTA wishes to support this by rewarding the winning class in having them choose some new books for the school library (in the same way they chose to name the fish In RES). Any ideas/queries/input will be much appreciated. Please contact either Lucy Nieman at lneiman@strawspointdesign.com

April 17/18/19 – RJH GREASE production. Please don’t forget to put one of these dates in your diary for the long-awaited coming to Rye of the production of Grease! Please contact Jeanne Moynahan at grammy5899@hotmail.com for any more details.

Finally, thanks again to everyone for your support and assistance in making our PTA strong and effective. We are always looking for new ideas and in any way you can help we are most appreciative. Not all PTA ‘jobs’ need to be done in school, so if you know of anyone who can help us with at home assistance please let us know. We look forward to seeing you at the Spaghetti dinner Thursday 21st February. This is the last year for Kathy MacAlpine and Julia Madden as the organizers, so come and help us make it a great send off!

Sincerely,
Rebecca Harrison (harrison.rm@comcast.net)
Rye PTA President

Remember JOIN THE PTA AND HAVE YOUR SAY!