

WATCHUNG PTO
Minutes of the Meeting Dated October 11, 2011
Bayberry Library

The meeting was called to order at 9:50 am by Michelle Hwang, President

Michelle asked that the minutes of the September meeting be approved. There were no changes or discussion and the vote was to approve.

Board Reports

President - Michelle Hwang

Michelle reported that Back To School night was a success. She thanked:

- **Kristin Rizzi** and **Greta Santucci** for chairing the **Innisbrook Giftwrap fundraiser**;
- **Wendy Ruta** for chairing **Bayberry Picture Day**;
- **Edie Belcastro** and **Mike Santucci** for chairing the **Ice Cream Social**; **Steve Rizzi** and the **Watchung Little League** for providing the snack shack and other resources for the **Ice Cream Social**; and **Chris Blackador** and the **Watchung Youth Services** for organizing the movie night after the **Ice Cream Social**.
- **Lauren Krouk** and **Teresa Schaefer** for chairing the sale of **Watchung Wear**.

Michelle reported that the PTO held a meeting recap the evening of the September PTO meeting and that a recap of today's meeting would be held at 7pm tonight in Room C101 at Bayberry, before the BOE meeting. She also reported that she and Lucy Hsueh had helped with the Kindergarten, Pre-school and other new student fingerprinting and that it had gone very smoothly.

1st Vice President – Lauren Krouk

Lauren thanked everyone who joined PTO and reminded others to complete their **membership online**. She reported the Valley View teaching staff had 100% membership participation. She is still accepting **PTO Directory Advertisements** and encouraged people to mention this to Watchung business owners so that our membership can support local businesses.

2nd Vice President – Christine Ead

Christine reported that there had been some changes to **Class Parents** and that an email clarifying the duties of class parents had been sent.

Treasurer – Greta Santucci

In Greta's absence, Michelle reported highlights of the financial statements through September 2011, primarily income from Bayberry Food Sales and Watchung Wear.

Recording Secretary – Susan Ober

Sue reported that the **September minutes** were on the website and that, going forward, minutes would be available on the website by the Monday following the meeting.

Corresponding Secretary – Tiffany Brigante

Tiffany asked that people submit eblast requests to her at least one week before an event or deadline.

Immediate Past-President – Edie Belcastro

Edie complimented the work of the board.

Administration Reports

Superintendent – Dr. Malyska

Dr. Malyska said that Valley View has a history of community service including working with seniors, donating to the community food bank, etc. She said many VV graduates say their fondest memories included walkathons, raising funds to build a kindergarten in Indonesia, etc.

She invited people to attend this evenings' BOE meeting, at which the two principals would present standardized testing results. She said Watchung students had scored well on the NJ tests but that the tests were only one indication of a child's success or the school's success. The minutes of the BOE meeting are posted on their website.

VV is doing very well in collecting activity fees; BB had not yet begun collecting. The new floor is completed in the VV APR and included corrective action so the buckling problem would not recur. She asked that as we head into holidays we remind students not to forgo their studies! She congratulated the PTO on the success of the Ice Cream Social and said the WYS was happy to team with PTO for the successful evening.

Valley View Principal – Dr. Resko

After a successful opening of the 2011-12 school year during the month of September, October was filled with many exciting instructional classes and activities for students. Fire, security, and bus evacuation drills were completed during the week of September 26th. School was closed in observance of Rosh Hashanah on September 29th. Intramurals are underway and presently include Field Hockey, Floor Hockey, California Kickball, Soccer, Flag Football, Basketball, and Ultimate Frisbee.

The fifth grade D.A.R.E. program commenced during the week of October 3rd under the guidance of Officer Tallmadge. October 3rd was also the start of "Week of Respect." Many classroom activities were held that focused on the new anti-bullying, harassment, and intimidation laws.

Parents of new students to Valley View School had an opportunity to have their children fingerprinted on October 4th. The students were bussed to and from Bayberry school where the event was hosted.

Dr. Nancy Richmond was the keynote speaker for the staff as part of the district's In-Service program on October 10th. Dr. Richmond addressed the staff on "When the Cook Tastes the Soup...Using Feedback to Enhance Student Learning". The afternoon sessions focused on Rubicon Atlas Curriculum Mapping.

Interim notices were mailed during the week of October 10th to parents/guardians of students with a C- or less in classes for the first marking period.

A Fire Prevention Assembly will be held for fifth grade students on October 13th. Students will watch an informative video on fire safety and learn about special equipment used to rescue people trapped in burning structures. Students in all grade levels participated in the Fire Prevention contest. Posters for judging will be picked-up on October 12th. WEF will hold an assembly for the Minutes to Win It - A Race to Read event on October 17th. The contest will end on October 28th.

School photographs will be taken by Life Touch Studios on October 26th in the gymnasium. Re-takes are scheduled for November 30th in the All Purpose Room. An Eighth Grade Parent Meeting is being planned for November to discuss eighth grade activities, the class trip to Philadelphia, graduation, and fundraising opportunities. Flu shots will be available to the staff on October 25th from the school physician, Dr. Frank.

The after-school tutorial program, Pursuit of Excellence, will be starting soon. Teachers will provide instruction in Language Arts and/or Math to at-risk students. The program is expected to conclude before the winter recess. The Miles for Smiles Walk-a-Thon will held on October 31st. The event is sponsored by the Community Outreach club. The club raises donations and collects countless food items for the Somerset County Food Bank. This year the "Walk" includes a Halloween Costume contest. Students will also try their skill and luck at various game booths in the APR.

Looking ahead to November:

November 1-4 Candy Drive – Mugs for Hugs
November 7-9 Parent/Teacher Conferences
November 10-11 School Closed –NJEA Conference
November 14-18 American Education Week
November 15 First Making Period Ends
November 23 Distribution of Report Cards/One Session Day
November 24-25 Thanksgiving Recess
November 29-30 Holiday Boutique
November 30 School Photo Retakes

Bayberry Principal – Mrs. Nunn

Mrs. Nunn reported that Bayberry had just finished a Week of Respect, and that a highlight was an assembly: Magic with a Message (she thanked PTO Cultural Arts for sponsoring). This week is Fire Prevention Week and today is a fire prevention assembly. The Watchung Fire House will hold an Open House Sunday, 10/16, during which the winners of the poster contest will be announced.

2nd graders have a field trip to Jenkinsons' Aquarium on 10/12; 4th graders have a field trip to Raptor Trust on 10/12,13 and 14; kindergarteners have a field trip to Crayola Factory on 10/14.

Teachers had an In-Service day on Columbus Day. In the morning Dr. Nancy Redmond made a presentation on the importance of feedback. In the afternoon teachers were trained on the Rubicon atlas curriculum planning system.

- 10/17: WEF will kick off its “Minutes to Win It” reading challenge;
- 10/19: 4th Grade Family Fun Night;
- 10/21: Officer Phil assembly, emphasizing safety: stranger danger, careful crossing streets, wearing seatbelts.

- Halloween: All parents are invited to watch the parade but only Class Parents may attend class parties. People providing snacks, crafts, games etc. may drop them off the week prior or on Halloween at a table at the entrance. Parents are reminded not to wear masks. People providing snacks are reminded to check with the nurse about student allergies. There is no rain date for the parade. If it rains, students will parade around the hallways, but parents cannot attend.

- 11/7: Report cards will be sent home
- 11/14: American Education week
- 11/17 Family Reading Night
- 11/18 Meet & Greet for parents of prospective kindergarten and preschool students

A question was raised about the online access of some 4th grade textbooks. Mrs. Nunn said she thinks that, while the books are accessible online, the school didn't purchase online access.

Teacher Liaison – Ms. Kaitlyn Rydberg

Ms. Rydberg reported that the VV Student Council had taken responsibility for Halloween festivities. The Halloween parade would be merged with the VV annual walkathon. Students in costume are asked to raise at least \$1 to participate in the walkathon/parade around the lake. For every \$5 students raise they receive a miles for smiles bracelet. The students voted on a costume theme: movie, tv or book “characters”. Students will also be able to sign up in advance to participate in a costume contest; they will receive a tag and judges will be posted around the lake. The student council will also provide game booths in the APR. Winners will receive points and at 2:30 grand prizes will be awarded and announced at an all school assembly. Grades 5&6 will walk twice around the lake from 1:20 – 2:00; grades 7&8 will walk twice around the lake from 1:50 – 2:30. Grades 5&6 will run the booths while the grades 7&8 walk and vice versa. Proceeds from the walkathon benefit VV's various

community service projects including adopt a family, senior luncheon, mugs for hugs, etc. Parents may watch the parade at the lake and attend the 2:30 assembly. The walkathon rain date is 11/1.

Ms. Rydberg also reported that VV will hold a Soldier Drive beginning 10/14. Each homeroom will have a box for donations and students receive a raffle ticket for each item they donate. Raffle winners will attend a breakfast in the teachers' lounge.

Committee Reports

Watchung Wear – Lauren Krouk and Teresa Schaefer

The Boardmembers were all wearing Watchung Wear tee shirts and sweatshirts. Orders that had been placed online by 9/30 are expected to arrive around 10/19 and will be sent home with students. We made around \$400 profit. The “store” will reopen in November. Lauren asked for suggestions on items to add – people suggested flannel pants and bumper stickers.

Ice Cream Social – Edie Belcastro and Mike Santucci

Edie reported that the way to have a successful event: have an awesome co-chair, an amazing team, and lots of whipped cream! We served 21 gallons of ice cream, lots of syrup and sprinkles. We served over 500 bowls of ice cream and everyone seemed to have a great time. A lot of teachers were in attendance and one told Mrs. Nunn, “this is the best night ever!” Edie thanked her co-chair, Mike Santucci, the Watchung Little League and the Watchung Youth Services. Someone suggested that the sound on the movie was too low.

Bayberry Picture Day – Wendy Ruta

Wendy reported that picture day went very well. She had plenty of volunteers and that, because of an issue with rescheduling the pre-school, there was an unavoidable back-up on Friday, but everyone was patient and cooperative.

Scrip – Sandi Hammer and Wendy Ruta

Wendy reported that last week they submitted the first order, which was over \$2,000. She thanked Allyson Crystal, last year's Scrip Chair, for her help. They will have Scrip gift packages for sale at the holiday boutiques.

Innisbrook Gift Wrap Sales – Kristin Rizzi and Greta Santucci

Kristin reported that we made a \$4,400 profit on over \$8,700 in sales. The merchandise will be delivered on 11/1 and distributed on 11/2 and 3. She will need volunteers to unload the truck and help distribute the items.

Bayberry Food Sales – Susan Ober, Christina Colonias, Marybeth Lijo

Susan reported that BB food sales had gotten off to a rocky start because of some challenges with consolidating the reports from the online system, and that some kids had not gotten the specific food they'd ordered but that, because we ordered plenty of extra food for the first couple weeks everyone had been fed. The reports are now corrected. The 1st session ends 11/30; the new session begins 12/1 and online ordering will be 11/1 – 16. The food sale volunteer teams have been great but a few more people are needed – interested people should contact Marybeth Lijo.

Valley View Food Sales – Georgia Glasser-Nehls

Georgia reported that VV food sales, too, got off to a rough start because the APR was under construction and therefore we had no place to store ice cream and snacks. The administration provided a refrigerator and freezer and things began running more smoothly. The APR is back in service. They have plenty of volunteers. Someone mentioned a concern that her kids were purchasing too many sugary snacks and Georgia said the overall menu meets the state guidelines for fat and sugar content.

Bayberry Library – Elyn Margulies

Elyn reported that the library was running well and that all new volunteers had been trained. She said they need volunteers for Mrs. Tolomeo's, Mrs. Meyers' and Mrs. Imbimbo's classes as well as substitutes.

Bayberry Cultural Arts –

Michelle Hwang reported that the 1st assembly was a magic show with a message about bullying and that the children enjoyed it.

Bayberry Holiday Boutique – Christine Ead and Christine Listorti

Christine Ead reported that there will be some changes this year and that some vendors will be replaced. She is exploring new merchandise – things that are inexpensive enough for the students to purchase and some with higher prices that would appeal to parents. She is also considering a cheesecake sale and had samples to taste at the meeting. She had a signup sheet for volunteers. The date is 12/1&2, with evening hours on Thursday, 12/1.

Valley View Holiday Boutique – Cindy Huljack

The Boutique will be held 11/29&30, with evening hours on the 29th. They are exploring new vendors and asked for ideas for vendors with merchandise of interest to boys.

New Business

Michelle Hwang reported several community items of interest to the PTO:

- **Hearts of Watchung** are holding a “**Candy is Dandy**” candy drive – there will be a bin in the Watchung Library for people to contribute extra Halloween candy. They also have an “**Adopt a Family**” program where people can donate holiday gifts for an area family in need. The contacts are Nan Fechtner and Cindy Homer.
- **WEF** is sponsoring a “**Minutes to Win It**” reading challenge. Wendy Ruta reported that WEF purchased the gift card prizes through the PTO Scrip program.
- Someone mentioned that the recent **Noble Prize winner for Physics, Adam Riess, was a graduate of WHRHS** and that he had credited a 9th grade science teacher with inspiring his interest in science.
- Someone requested that there should be “emergency” parking spots available for people picking up sick children.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, November 15th at 9:30am in the BB APR. (Nov. 8th is a one-session day).

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Ober
Recording Secretary
October 16, 2011