

Merriam PTO N2K (Need to Know)

From the PTO Board: Tina Hamilton, Alycen Nigro, Lisa Sippy, Kavitha Hegde

WEEK OF 9/09/13

Welcome to the first full week of school! This newsletter is brought to you by the Communications Team and is meant to give you the latest and greatest news and information from around the organization.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 9/9 Monday – New Parent Coffee 9:00 am, PTO Meeting #1 9:45-10:30 am (Topic: Intro to PTO)
- 9/17 Tuesday – Open House Night
- 9/25 Wednesday – School Pictures
- 10/4 Friday – Community Day
- 10/8 Tuesday – PTO Meeting #2 7.30 pm
- 10/14 Monday – No School (Columbus Day)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We are in need of the following volunteers:

Room Parents: Becoming a Room Parent can be a great way to get involved with your child's class. Please see flyer sent home to learn about typical Room Parent responsibilities. If interested, please contact Anne Corkery at acorkey@hotmail.com.

Merriam Wear Coordinator: We are looking for a coordinator to collect orders using Excel and help with the distribution once the items arrive. For more information, please contact Alycen Nigro at alyheels@yahoo.com.

Front Office Volunteers - We are in need of volunteers for the Merriam School front office to help with dismissal forms. The commitment is from 9-10 a.m., and you can choose to help on Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday. If you are interested in volunteering or would like more

information, email Joanne Mills at jmills@abschools.org.

Friday Mail Team - Come join a group of fun and friendly parents at 9:15 am on Friday mornings to assemble information packets that go home every week. Please contact Karen Brandstein at kmwb1@yahoo.com.

School Committee Representative – We are looking for 2 representatives need to attend 10 School Committee meetings each year and report back to the Merriam Community.

NEW PARENT COFFEE & PTO MEETING

Ed will welcome new parents with a coffee on Monday, September 9 at 9 am. We'll meet in the first floor conference room, and will answer any questions you have about Merriam.

Immediately following New Parent Coffee, all parents are invited to join us for the first PTO meeting at 9.45 in the school conference room. The Merriam PTO is made up of all parents and guardians of Merriam School, as well as teachers and staff. PTO meetings generally include PTO business by the PTO board, grade level reports by teacher representatives and a topic for discussion. The topic for this meeting will be a PTO overview and a review of the 2013-2014 budget and calendar.

OPEN HOUSE NIGHT

Open House Night is Tuesday, September 17. Kindergarten parents should arrive at 6 pm, all others please arrive at 7 pm. We will meet in the cafetorium where Ed will talk about the upcoming school year, the PTO board will review its goals, and you'll meet the teachers. Next, it's off to grade-level presentations, and finally your child(ren)'s classrooms. The night will end at 8:30 pm.

MERRIAM SCHOOL DIRECTORY

The Merriam School Directory is in the works! If you have not yet done so this school year for **each** of your Merriam children, **please** visit PowerSchool to review your information and make any necessary changes.

Here's how (separately for each child):

- 1) **Log in to PowerSchool** at <https://absis.ab.mec.edu/public>. Log in with your child's username and password (you should have received their username/password at your child's last conference.) If you can't find this information, contact Joanne Mills in the Merriam office at 978-264-3371.
- 2) **Click "District/Parent Group Permissions" on the left-hand side.** The lower part of the page, "Parent Group Permissions," will display the answers you provided on the Emergency Contact Information page, and give the option to approve or decline having this information in the Student Directory. **To include each piece of info, make sure the button on the right says "Yes."**To make changes to the information, go to "Emergency Contact Information."
- 3) **Click the "Submit" button** at the bottom to save your changes.

If you have problems or questions or prefer not to use PowerSchool, contact Sarah Lent at sarahlent.home@verizon.net or at (617) 290-7466.

If you are interested in placing an ad in the directory to advertise your business, please

contact Brooke Gould at brookcgould@gmail.com.

DIRECT APPEAL

The Merriam PTO has a fundraising goal of **\$90,000** for the 2013-2014 school year. We need to raise \$90,000 to keep our dedicated classroom assistants. Traditionally, we've organized an auction as our main fundraiser. This year, we're going to try something new: a Fall Direct Appeal. If each family contributes \$250, we'll meet our goal. Stay tuned for the appeal letter which will be emailed and sent home in backpacks mid-September. If you'd like to donate now, you can donate online at www.biddingforgood.com/merriamschool. Simply click on the "Donate Cash" link on the left-hand side. Your donation is tax-deductible and may even be eligible for matching by your company.

IN THE COMMUNITY – TOUR OF THE MORRISON PROJECT

On Sunday, September 8th at 1:00 pm, members of the Morrison Farm Committee will conduct a public site walk of the town-owned farm land. The committee is planning for improvements that will make this already beautiful and historic piece of land even better suited for people to enjoy nature and appreciate Acton's history.

The Morrison land was purchased by a vote at Town Meeting in 1997 for \$2.7 M. It now supports a healthy community garden, a new orchard, meadows that are a haven to many wildlife species and a fantastic community of birds. None of these areas will be changed. The committee plans to have a boardwalk/path built along the edge of Ice House Pond so that the area can be more accessible for hikes, fishing and contemplation. In addition, there are two historic elements on the property: Robbins Farm cellar hole, and the remains of the old ice house foundation. Both of these sites will be preserved. The back portion of the land is a pine forest that will stay intact. The committee plans to have this area designated as conservation land so it cannot be disturbed by later generations.

The Morrison Farm is located at 116 Concord Road, between the Woodlawn Cemetery and Ice House Pond.

The September 8 walk is open to all ages and will be the perfect opportunity to see what is now on the land, and to learn more about the improvements planned by the Committee. The walk will last about an hour and walkers should wear sturdy shoes. A walk specifically geared toward elementary school parents, students and teachers will take place on Thursday, September 19 at 2:00 pm. For more information visit:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-Morrison-Farm/440958762661833> or email: MABAshton@aol.com.

The committee plans to offer additional site walks throughout the fall:

Sunday, September 15, 4:00 pm

Thursday, September 19, 2:00 pm *Geared toward elementary school parents, teachers and students*****

Saturday, September 28, 9:00 am

Sunday, October 6, 11:00 am

Saturday, October 12, 3:00 pm