



Mid-Winter 2009 Newsletter

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Drum Roll, Please....



Greetings from our Executive Director:

As the month of December, and 2009, races by at lightning speed, I wanted to touch bases with you ... just one more time before the next decade begins...☺

We have witnessed several 'alumni' moments in the last week that has affirmed our sense of community. I'd like to share them with you!

- ▶ An alumni grandparent has, over the last few years, anonymously supported our staff during various times of the year. This year, the donor requested 'a nice, sit down dinner for your staff where they will know how valuable they are to the children and families of Middle Earth'. Well, we accomplished the goal I believe! We had a wonderful dinner at Legend's Restaurant on Thursday, December 8th; 27 staff members could attend; and it was so much fun to be together at a very nice restaurant! Hey, we all clean up pretty well! We had so much fun.
- ▶ An alumni family has called and asked if 'Middle Earth still collects donations for the staff holiday bonus fund'. When the answer was yes, they said 'the check is in the mail!'!!!!
- ▶ Three alumni employees came in this past week and re-applied to work here! Out of the three, two are employees we'd gladly welcome back! ☺ ☺ ☺
- ▶ And, oh my goodness: literally as I'm typing the above information about alumni moments, my email indicated that an alumni family just donated through our online giving opportunity, Click and Pledge. It can be found on our 'support our future' link on our website. Instant affirmation of community! We are grateful that they asked that their donation go to our Staff Holiday Bonus Fund!

As the Executive Director, it makes me warm and fuzzy that our relationship building is, in fact, very important, indeed. I'm proud of our Middle Earth family! I am humbled and honored by each of these moments.

Integrated Business Core (IBC)/OU: With much appreciation and excitement, Middle Earth will be accepting approximately \$12,175 from the DryBC sales of OU waterproof blankets! The students did a wonderful job of marketing, selling, inventory control, financial accounting – all of the aspects of running a business in just one semester's time. And, we were the recipient of hundreds of hours of volunteer time, as well! This has been an exciting time for our organization. Thank you to each of you that purchased &/or sold blankets!

DRYBC
Keepin' you Crimson & Cozy



Thank You Everyone! The December 3rd, **Celebration of Families**, was a wonderful evening for our organization. To each of you, we want to express our gratitude and appreciation for so many things! Thank you for.....

- ▶ Giving us the opportunity to care for and love your child(ren)
- ▶ Sharing with us your time and resources, and great food during the pot luck!
- ▶ Being a part of the community that we know and love as Middle Earth

As I walked through the building that night, I marveled at the calm feeling and happy sounds. There were a lot of people here, too! It was so calm and organized, I sat with the Administrative team and worked on a little project! Thank you to everyone for sharing with the classrooms, the families, and.....Middle Earth!

Board of Directors Information

I would like to welcome new Board members and officers to the leadership team of Middle Earth! Officers for the upcoming year are:

- Kim Teuscher-Board Chair (Ella – Tot II)
- Ruth Ann Ball-Vice Chair (retired, CECPD,OU)
- Elaine Bradshaw –Secretary (alumni parent, Donovan and Elizabeth)
- Unfilled-Treasurer (formerly held by Kim Teuscher)

Returning members are:

- Sue Crites (alumni parent, Courtney, freshman in college!)
- Dawn Hallman (Makenzie, alumni/ Katelyn, Tot I)
- Melissa McLawhorn Houston (Robbie, Pre-K and Matthew, Discoverers)
- Stacy Cook (Ainsley, Tot I)

New members are:

- Buffy Meiser Herren (Grady, Discoverers)
- Amber Bui (Hudson, Tot I)
- Russ Gammill (Kate, Serendipity)
- Anthony Wuestenfeld (Cooper, Tot I)
- Tracy Schumacher (Jake, Tot I)

Thank you to these volunteers who share their expertise, leadership, and financial resources to Middle Earth. I have a great list of bosses, yes? Without their support and guidance, Middle Earth would be a very different place, indeed. Thank you all!



Here's a little reminder about the Staff Holiday Bonus Fund from Board Chair, Kim Teuscher:

It's not too late to contribute! If your family would like to participate, please know that any amount is very much appreciated! Please indicate "Holiday Bonus Fund" in the memo section of your check. In addition, please remember that Middle Earth is a non-profit organization and your "Bonus" gift is tax deductible! We would like to distribute the bonuses on Friday, December 18th so everyone can have their bonuses before Christmas. So that we can have a complete accounting of all of the contributions, we need to have all donations by Wednesday, December 16th.

The staff and teachers at Middle Earth provide an education for our children, which is second to none. The "Holiday Bonus Fund" is a wonderful way to show our appreciation for their hard work all year long.

Kim Teuscher, for the Board



Inclement Weather Update

The process that involves posting school closings on the major television stations has been revised. To their credit, the stations are working to streamline which programs are listed so that the 'scroll' of names doesn't take forever and a day to review! (those of you that have waited to see if Middle Earth, or another school, is listed – you know what I mean!).

The 'systems' focus is: schools, state/government offices, and large businesses. I have been in contact with the station responsible for this transition, and have lobbied long and hard that Middle Earth should be included in this opportunity to post school closings within the new guidelines. However, to date, we have not been 'invited' to participate (with a password, login opportunity, etc.). Therefore, we have to move on and devise alternative forms of communicating with staff and families should Middle Earth be forced to close due to unsafe travel conditions.

At this time, we will:

- ▶ Use our mass email blast to communicate
- ▶ If lack of electricity is a reality, we will try to use the homeroom phone lists and call families. We will work with the Family Leadership Committee to see if this is realistic, and perhaps encourage 'phone trees' to lighten the load of calls.
- ▶ We will investigate a message system where we can say "Middle Earth is closed due to weather" or something. Licia, I'm writing this without even visiting with you about it. Sorry! We'll figure it out ☺.

At the very least, I wanted you to know that at this time we will not be able to post Middle Earth on the major TV stations when we are trying to communicate a school closing. I'm pretty tenacious; I'll keep after it you can bet your sweet bippy ☺.

Remember, we will be closed these dates:

- December 24 & 25
- December 31 & January 1

I love you all, Happiest of Holiday times to each of you, and – as always – I hope you get the chance to make new memories! As time goes by, they are becoming more and more important to me,

Elizabeth