

# PS Backpack87News

Volume 25, No. 12

The Weekly Newsletter of the PS 87 Community | [www.ps87.info](http://www.ps87.info)

Dec. 3, 2015

## From the Desk of the Principal

Dear Families,

As we come to the end of the first term of the school year, I wanted to take this opportunity to remind everyone of a few procedural items.

**In case of an emergency:** In the wake of the tragedy in Paris, a number of families have been creating or re-evaluating their emergency plans. Because of this, we have received a number of questions about what happens if a life-threatening event should occur here in New York. In the event of an emergency here in the city, we will keep your children here in the building until they are picked up from school. If we have to evacuate the building for any reason, we will inform families to call 311 to find out the location of the students. We will stay with the children at the evacuation location until everyone is picked up. We can release the children to people listed on the blue card without issue, so now would be a good time to make sure that your blue card information is up to date.

**Report cards:** Report cards will be distributed on Friday, Dec. 11. If you have questions once you have received the report card, please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher. The teachers have time set aside every Tuesday to meet with parents.

**Payment for milk:** When we serve chocolate milk on Wednesdays, we have an unusually high number of children taking milk — but not every child is paying for it. Please note that if your child is taking milk only, the cost is 25 cents. Your child can pay 25 cents when he or she receives the milk, or parents can send milk money to school at the start of each month. If paying by check, make your check out to "PS 87 Lunch Program." If your child pays for school lunch, they receive one carton of milk at no extra cost.

Finally, I want to close with some great news. After being out for several months on a medical leave, Margaret Lerner, our parent coordinator, will be returning to work the week of Dec. 7. She will be transitioning in on a part-time basis. Once we work out her exact hours, we will make that known to all families.

Cordially,

— Monica Berry, PS 87 principal

*Have a question for Principal Monica? Go the PS 87 web page at [www.ps87.info](http://www.ps87.info) and click on the "Ask Monica" box at the top of the left-hand column. Or e-mail your question to [backpacknews@yahoo.com](mailto:backpacknews@yahoo.com).*

<b>PS 87 CALENDAR</b>	
<b>DECEMBER 2015</b>	
7-11	Wellness In The Schools' Bean Lab. <i>Details on Page 2.</i>
10	<b>PA GENERAL MEETING</b> , 8:35 a.m., cafeteria
10	Teacher Appreciation Dinner, 6 – 9 p.m., Landmark on the Park, 160 Central Park West. <i>Details on Page 2.</i>
11	Report cards sent home with students
11	<b>WINTER HOLIDAY FESTIVAL</b> , 6 p.m., auditorium. Potluck dinner follows at 6:45 p.m. <i>Details below.</i>
21	SLT meeting, 4:15 p.m., location TBD
24-31	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> , winter recess
<b>JANUARY 2016</b>	
4	<b>SCHOOL RESUMES</b>
5	Dual Language breakfast meeting, 8 a.m., library
6	PA Executive Board meeting, 6:10 – 8 p.m., library
14	<b>PA GENERAL MEETING</b> , 6:30 p.m., auditorium
18	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> , Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
22	Family Fit Night, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
25	SLT meeting, 4:15 p.m., location TBD
28	No school for Pre-K students
29	<b>PAN-ASIAN LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL</b> , 6 p.m., auditorium. Potluck dinner follows at 6:45 p.m.
<b>FEBRUARY 2016</b>	
1	<b>PS 87 SPIRIT DAY</b>
2	Dual Language breakfast meeting, 8 a.m., library
3	PA Executive Board meeting, 6:10 – 8 p.m., library
8	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> , Lunar New Year
11	<b>PA GENERAL MEETING</b> , 8:35 a.m., cafeteria
15-19	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> , mid-winter recess

## Winter Holiday Festival on Dec. 11

PS 87 families are invited to celebrate holiday festivities from around the world during Winter Holiday Festival, an annual program organized by the Parent Association's Culture and Community Committee. The Festival begins Dec. 11 at 6 p.m. with a 40-minute show in the school auditorium that celebrates holiday festivals from different cultures, including Chanukah, Christmas, Kwanzaa and more. PS 87 students will sing, dance and recite poems.

A potluck buffet in the cafeteria will follow. This is a free event, so parents are asked to bring any dish they would like to share: a favorite holiday treat, a cultural tradition, or just good food! No contribution is too big or too small — all of it will be gobbled up.

## Students to make hummus in Bean Lab

Next week, PS 87 students will be making hummus during Bean Lab sponsored by Wellness In The Schools. WITS labs are a series of seasonal cooking classes during which children prepare and taste simple, delicious recipes focusing on a featured ingredient. Taught by Chef Cynthia, the WITS labs introduce the importance of eating locally and seasonally, the fundamentals of cooking, and the essentials of nutrition. Students then learn and complete a basic recipe using the ingredient. Recipes are given to children to take home, and at least one of the recipes is prepared in the cafeteria during the lab week. These classes bring children and their families together to learn about healthy cooking and eating, using seasonal produce and inexpensive recipes. WITS labs are made possible thanks to the generosity of Whole Foods Market, OXO and Gotham Greens.

## Support our school through Family Giving

The Family Giving pledge drive is the Parents Association's campaign to collect donations from PS 87 families. Money raised through Family Giving pays for essential programs not covered by the city and state. Our PA pays for critical components ranging from supplies and furniture to substitute teachers, kindergarten assistants and literacy intervention. Your donation to Family Giving also pays for informative assemblies, chess instruction, ballroom dancing, wellness programs, recess coaches, library books and more — in short, all the programs that make this school such a special place.

Family Giving's goal is 100 percent parent participation. The suggested donation is \$900 per child (the amount the PA spends annually on each student) but donations of any amount are appreciated and welcome. The PA is a nonprofit organization, so donations made before Dec. 31 will be deductible when you calculate 2015 taxes. You can donate online today! Go to [www.ps87.info](http://www.ps87.info) and look for the Family Giving logo on the right side of the page.

## Follow the PA on Facebook and Twitter

The PS 87 Parents Association now has a Facebook page to keep parents updated on events and share noteworthy information. We are listed as "PS 87 PA," so look up the page and join the group! You can also follow the Parents Association on Twitter: @PS\_87\_PA.

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## Pitch In: Volunteer Opportunities

### Do you believe in magic? Help the Auction!

PS 87's 2016 Auction is already off to a strong start. On March 12, the Parents Association will host our school's largest fundraiser, supporting approximately half of the PA budget. Every penny we raise supports critical programs including academic and arts enrichment, kindergarten assistants, literacy intervention, substitute teachers, recess monitors, wellness initiatives, and more. The Auction Committee is looking for volunteers to help support this vital event. Visit [www.ps87.info](http://www.ps87.info) for a list of donation ideas and links to donation forms.

### Support Ronald McDonald's Parents Pantry

Community Service will be collecting toiletries and paper goods for the Parents Pantry at the Ronald McDonald house. Help families with children who are ill during the holiday season. Drop off paper goods and toiletries to the bin in the lobby by the women's bathroom.

### Teacher and Staff Appreciation Dinner

The Special Events Committee is hosting the annual Teacher and Staff Appreciation Dinner on Thursday, Dec. 10, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Landmark on the Park, 160 Central Park West. Volunteers are needed to help with set-up (4:30 to 6:30 p.m.), service and support during the event (6 to 9 p.m.), and clean-up (7:30 to 9:30 p.m.). Time slots are flexible; volunteer for as little as two hours between 4:30 and 9:30 p.m. This is a hugely popular event with our teachers and staff. We look forward to working with all of you to make it a success again this year.

Volunteers are also needed to make or buy appetizers and desserts. Food items need to be dropped off at the venue, completely cooked and ready to serve, by 4:30 p.m. on Dec. 10. To contribute food or volunteer, or for more information, please e-mail Judy Chin at [jchin2014@gmail.com](mailto:jchin2014@gmail.com) or Caryn Weinberg at [carynweinberg@gmail.com](mailto:carynweinberg@gmail.com).

### Shop smarter: Supermarket tour Dec. 7

Join PS 87 parent and author Natalya Murakhver on a 45-minute supermarket tour. Learn how to decode labels and stock your fridge and pantry with high-quality, cost-efficient staples. Discover the healthiest, freshest, most versatile ingredients. Get label-reading tips, unmask hidden ingredients, and help make the most of your precious time and resources when shopping for food. A tour will meet in front of the school building on Monday, Dec. 7, at 5 p.m. Please sign up in the lobby on the PA bulletin board or send an e-mail to [pa-wellness@ps87.info](mailto:pa-wellness@ps87.info).

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**Deadline for Dec. 10 issue:** Sunday, Dec. 6, at midnight

**Editor this week:** Skip Card