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Family Newsletter



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PTA Fall Festival and Silent Auction is Saturday, October 24th

Please join us between 11:00 am and 4:00 pm for a day of fun at the Fall Festival and Silent Auction. Parents, teachers, and students have been working hard to make this year's event fun and exciting for everyone. Rain or shine, bring your friends and neighbors for games, activities, and the much anticipated auction. See you there!

Union Mill Celebrates Red Ribbon Week

Red Ribbon Week will be celebrated October 24-30 at Union Mill. This week reminds our students to always be drug free. Each day, our SCA officers will appear on UMTV news and share the importance of choosing to be drug free. This week is in honor of Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, a U.S. Drug Enforcement Agent who was kidnapped and killed while investigating drug traffickers in Mexico in 1985. Since 1986, Red Ribbon Week has reached millions of children and is recognized by the U.S. Congress. On Friday, October 30 we are asking all of our students and staff to wear red to symbolize our commitment to being healthy and drug free. Kudos to our UMES counselors, Kimberly Shoemaker and Wendy Lindner, for planning and implementing this event!

PTA Alternative Education Committee Holds Coffee to Benefit UMES Children

The PTA Alternative Education Committee will hold a coffee on Wednesday, October 28th at 9:00 am in the cafeteria. All parents are invited to attend to learn more about the Alternative Education Committee, to begin planning for National Inclusive Schools Week in December and to share ideas and community resources that would be beneficial to our children. Younger siblings are invited to attend as well. For more information, please contact Melyssa Plath melplath@cox.net or Nicole Moore garyandnic@verizon.net.

Thank You for Your Continuing Support for the Barraza Family

Two Fridays ago, we sent home a letter to all sixth grade parents sharing the sad news experienced by the Barraza family, a friend and neighbor in our community. About two weeks ago, they lost the top two floors of their home in a tragic fire. Fortunately, everyone was able to leave the house before they were seriously injured. The Barraza family made arrangements so that they can continue to remain in our school community. The outpouring of support by our community has been truly heartwarming. This past Monday, we were able to provide the family with a large envelop of gift cards that our families donated. I know that these cards are greatly appreciated as they will help this family purchase much-needed clothing and basic needs, all of which were destroyed in the fire. We are still collecting gift cards for the Barraza family. If you wish to donate a store gift card, please send the card to school and we will make sure that it is given to the Barraza family. On behalf of the family, we thank you for your generosity and well-wishes.



UMES Teacher Sews Pencil Bags for Students

Sara Kennedy, UMES staff member, sewed 140 pencil bags for elementary students in Guatemala. Dedicated sewing volunteers from all over the USA have sewn more than 1,600 pencil bags to date. Thank you to teachers like Sara who make an impact on our Union Mill students as well as those in other countries. Well done!

Parents and Staff Make Health Screening a Success!

Carmen Linn, UMES Health Room Aide, reports that Union Mill had another successful year for health screening! With the help of parent volunteers, we screened 174 Kindergarten, 3rd grade and new- to- the- county students. A big thank you goes to Teri Assel and Chris Warhurst our health screening parent coordinators who recruited enough parent volunteers like Karen McCranie, Karen Speer, Diana Summers, Natalie Kiefaber, Cindy Rushing and Patricia Moran to help with the vision and hearing screening. We could not have done it without you! A special thank you also goes to Wanda Peters for setting up the screening area in the green pod. Thanks, Wanda, for finding the right extension cords for the good-lites (eye charts) and audiometers. Thank you teachers for being prompt and arriving on schedule during screening day. Your students were ready and alert for screening. THANKS AGAIN!

Screening Follow-up Notice

If you received a referral letter regarding your child's vision or hearing following the UMES annual health screening, please return the completed form to advise us of your follow-up action, and your physician's findings and recommendations. These completed reports are entered in your child's health record as corrections of the deficiencies which may affect school performance. If you have misplaced the letter, a phone call to Mrs. Carmen Linn, School Health Aide, at 703-322-8510 will suffice. If you need additional help securing a physician or optometrist, contact Susan Shadis at 703-322-8500 or susan.shadis@fcps.edu. All inquiries will be treated confidentially.

Family Life Education Opt Out Forms Information

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) provides a comprehensive, sequential Family Life Education (FLE) program for kindergarten through grade twelve. The FLE program is designed to provide students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to make healthy, responsible, respectful, and life-enhancing decisions related to human growth and development, relationships, substance abuse, and emotional and social health. Instruction is seen as a partnership among parents and guardians, the school, and the community in supporting the learning essential to the development of strong families, positive relationships, and a healthy community.

Parents/guardians may choose to opt out their child of all or part of the Family Life Education program. Students opted out are provided with age-appropriate, non-punitive alternative health instruction, and every effort is made to foster respect for family choices. If you wish to opt out your child from all or part of FLE for this school year or would like more detailed information about grade level programs, please access the opt out forms, opt out letter, and program descriptions for each grade level at <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/OMSI/fle/index.htm> If you have already submitted an FLE Opt-Out form this year, your wishes have already been noted; it will not be necessary to complete an additional form to have your child excluded from FLE lessons. Please note, however, that an Opt-Out form submitted last year will not automatically exclude your child from FLE lessons this school year. FLE curriculum and media may be reviewed at UMES. Program questions may be addressed by Elizabeth Payne, Health and Physical Education Coordinator at 703-846-8666.

Come Take a Journey to the Great Pumpkin

Journey to the Great Pumpkin is a much anticipated event here at Union Mill. The children look forward to participating in a challenging obstacle course set up in the gym the last week of October. Each obstacle is designed to promote physical fitness through muscle building, flexibility, and hand/eye coordination. Some of the events include a scooter ride on a batmobile through the bat cave, crawling through tunnels in the haunted corn fields, the pumpkin shoot, the spider toss, swinging over the snake pit, crawling under the spider web, a cardio workout or an abdominal workout in the pumpkin patch, and a walk over the bridge (balance beam) into the land of the ghouls.

The **journey** is not complete until the children touch the nose of the great pumpkin and then they start the fun all over again from the beginning. Our SCA officers help us decorate the gym for the big event. Stop by this year, the last week of October (Tuesday through Friday), and see for yourself what is going on inside the gym.

Southwestern Regional Planning Study Committee

The first meeting for the Southwestern Regional Planning Study Committee will be Thursday, Oct. 29, at 7 p.m., in the Liberty Middle School Cafeteria. PTA presidents were asked to identify representatives to serve on the new study committee to review the issues, determine solutions, and document advantages and disadvantages. The main issues are whether to move forward with renovations to Clifton Elementary or to close the school. The study named the campus of Liberty Middle School as a place to build a new 950+ student elementary school that will help with alleviating the overcrowding of schools in the southwestern part of Fairfax County. Tracey White, UMES PTA President, has appointed Alaine Walsh and Al Francese to the committee. The meetings are open to the general public, but Alaine Walsh will be providing an update during the next PTA General Membership Meeting on Tuesday, November 3rd. If you wish to contact either Alaine or Al, their email addresses are as follows: alainek@yahoo.com and Albert.Francese@ferc.gov.

Reminder eCART Assessments to be Administered in November

Third Grade Reading	11/09	Fifth Grade Reading	11/05
Third Grade Mathematics	11/16	Fifth Grade Mathematics	11/12
Fourth Grade Reading	11/10	Sixth Grade Reading	11/06
Fourth Grade Mathematics	11/17	Sixth Grade Mathematics	11/11

UMES Calendar At a Glance						
25 B Week Red Ribbon Week Oct. 26-30	26	27	28 Alternative Ed. Coffee	29	30 Principal Coffee	31
1 November A Week	2 Parent/Tchr Conferences No School	3 Parent/Tchr Conferences No School	4	5 5 th grade Reading eCART	6 6 th grade Reading eCART	7

Please join Mrs. Shadis and Mrs. Drummond for a Morning Coffee or an Afternoon Tea this school year!

Each meeting features a “Topic of the Day” and time for open discussion. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the school, voice your opinions and concerns, and meet the school administration in a very informal, small-group setting. In the October 16th Friday Folder, each family received a survey of topics for the Principal Coffees and Teas. Please think of topics that might interest you, and also put these dates on the calendar:

- Coffee: Friday, October 30th from 8:45-9:45 in the cafeteria. Topic of the Day – H1N1
- Tea: Wednesday, December 2nd from 2:00-3:00 in the cafeteria
- Coffee: Thursday, January 14th from 8:45-9:45 in the cafeteria
- Tea: Tuesday, February 23rd from 2:00-3:00 in the cafeteria
- Coffee: Monday, March 22nd from 8:45-9:45 in the cafeteria
- Coffee: Friday, April 30th from 8:45-9:45 in the cafeteria
- Coffee: Tuesday, May 25th from 8:45-9:45 in the cafeteria

