



SEPTA

SEPTA Newsletter
Fall 2006

Brick Township Special Education PTA

SEPTA Executive Board Officers 2006/2007

President

Brenda Calderone

1st Vice President

Patricia Marsden

2nd Vice President

Jeanette Smith

Recording Secretary

Dee Beringer

Corresponding Secretary

Kim Vaccaro

Treasurer

Candy Fredericks

General Membership Meeting Schedule

November 27th

January 23rd

February 26th

March 26th

April 23rd

May 15th

June 11th

Place & Time

Educational

Enrichment Center

107 Hendrickson Rd.

7:30 PM

President's Message

The Brick Township SEPTA is now in its third year and each day we are growing stronger. Our committees are working hard at finding new ways to benefit our members and their children. With the support of the Brick Township community, in and out of our schools, the Special Education PTA can accomplish what it sets out to do each and everyday. Our goal is to create fun programs, events and projects for the children in our district who have special needs, as well as keep you informed on important issues which a parent and/or teacher of a special needs child may need to know. You will be hearing from Melanie McGackin, Children's Programs Chairperson, on events she and her committee are planning for the children this year. Kim Vaccaro, our Adult Programs Chairperson, will inform you as to guest speakers we will have at our upcoming meetings. Annette Arthur, Ways and Means Chair, will get the word out on fundraising. Valarie Gray maintains our website and is always keeping us in the mainstream of technology with her savvy computer skills, so when you get the opportunity take a look at www.bricksept.org. Jeanette Smith, Legislative Chair, will give you up to date information on issues pertaining to Special Education at the local, state and federal levels while Karen Buchanan, our Juvenile Protection and Safety Chair, will keep you informed on programs relating to the protection and safety of our children. I have named but a few of our many committees which only goes to show how vast an area of special education as well as general education we cover.

We held our first General Membership Meeting along with a Meet and Greet on September 25th. We had a great turnout from Town Council members to paraprofessionals. I would like to acknowledge the Child Study Team members who came to support us. I neglected to include them in my introduction that evening and I hope they know how much we do appreciate all they do for our children. Thank you to everyone who participated and a very special thank you to the SEPTA Executive Board and their committees for all their efforts in making the evening a success.

The Brick Township Special Education PTA could not accomplish many of these wonderful things without the support from our members. We want to give back as much as we possibly can to the children and we cannot achieve this without your help. So please, become a member and help us reach our goals. If you would like to become a member, please contact Joyce Neafsey our Membership Chairperson at (732) 899-4925.

Have a wonderful year, we look forward to working with you and welcome to all our new members.

Brenda Calderone, President

Visit our website at www.bricksept.org for SEPTA news & events.

Message From Ocean County President

It was such a pleasure starting the Special Education PTA (SEPTA) in Brick Township. They are now in their third year and everything seems like it is going great. SEPTA has many good programs to offer. A very big thank you to their officers for getting this year off to a great start with the Meet and Greet in September. The event allowed everyone to witness what SEPTA is all about. Last year's cultural arts quilt project was wonderful. The Quilt is so BEAUTIFUL !!! A special thank you to Rhonda Malone for a great job putting all the beautiful art work together for our children. I hope that everyone will buy some raffle chances for the 50/50 raffle which is under way right now. It is a great way for SEPTA to make the money which is needed to benefit the special education children in Brick Township. SEPTA would not be able to offer these programs or events for the children without the success of their fundraisers, so PLEASE SUPPORT THE BRICK TOWNSHIP SPECIAL EDUCATION PTA by purchasing their fundraiser items and raffle tickets. I wish that we could get more SPECIAL EDUCATION PTA'S formed in Ocean County. If anyone knows of a school district interested please contact me at 732-920-0183. Keep up the GREAT WORK Brick Township.

Candy Fredericks, President
Ocean County Council PTA

Committee News

Membership

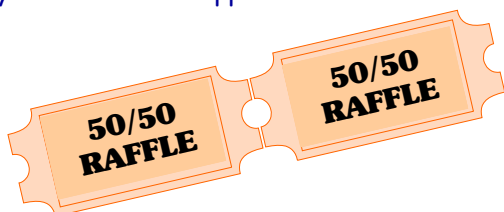
Joyce Neafsey, Chairperson

Our membership drive is off to a great start! We are looking for fathers, grandparents, and other caregivers to join our group. PTA's are not just for moms anymore. Get involved! If you need an application, please give me a call at 732-899-4925.

Ways and Means

Annette Arthur, Chairperson

Brick SEPTA's first fundraiser for the 2006-2007 school year is a 50/50 raffle. Raffle tickets are \$5.00 each and make great holiday gifts. The winning ticket will be drawn at our January 23, 2007 general membership meeting at the Educational Enrichment Center. Winner need not be present to win. Anyone wishing to either purchase or assist with the sale of tickets may contact me via telephone (732-701-1343) or email me at bricksept@aol.com. As always, thank you for your continued support!



Scholarship

Annette Arthur, Chairperson

This year Brick SEPTA will be awarding scholarships to two high school special education seniors who intend to further his/her education. A \$500.00 scholarship will be awarded to a Brick High School applicant and a \$500.00 scholarship will be awarded to a Brick Memorial High School applicant. Student or parent/guardian must be a 2006-2007 member of any local PTA or PTSA unit in Brick. Anyone wishing to receive a scholarship application may contact me at (732)701-1343 or psalmon@comcast.net.

Board of Education

Jeanette Smith, Chairperson

The Board of Education is the governing body charged with the responsibility to make sure that the school system adheres to regulations and statutes contained in the New Jersey Administrative Code and it conducts its business in accordance within guidelines established by the New Jersey Department of Education. Board of Education members are elected by the public and serve a three year term.

Committee News

Board of Education continued Jeanette Smith, Chairperson

The Board of Education generally meets twice a month. The 1st meeting of the month allows Board members to review items that they will be asked to vote on during the second meeting of the month. Different topics are discussed and voted on such as curriculum and instruction, finance and business, personnel (teaching and non-teaching) policy, and buildings and grounds to name a few. During each meeting, the board seeks public comment. You must state your name and address for the record.

Dates and locations of BOE meetings are posted on the Brick School website www.brickschools.org. Please check the website frequently as dates and locations can change.

Legislation Jeanette Smith, Chairperson

The SEPTA Legislation Committee has many goals and functions, one is to increase voter registration. We encourage all our members to become registered voters and have a voice in their community. Please check our website for a voter registration form.

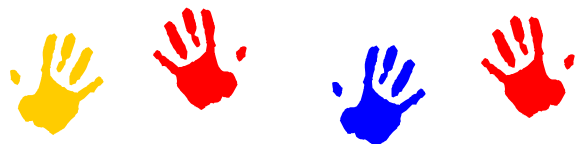
Another goal of the Legislation Committee is to increase awareness and advocacy of issues and legislation that affects our children and schools. National PTA is the 2nd largest non profit lobbying group on Capital Hill. National PTA, NJPTA, county councils and local units together have many notable accomplishments such as School bus safety laws, drinking while pregnant awareness signs in restaurants, school lunch programs, breakfast programs in certain qualified schools, and bicycle helmet laws to name just a few. Brick Septa's advocacy efforts have included voter registration drives, school budget awareness, supporting amendments to state law 1701 and bringing new ideas to the community such as the Challenger Summer Camp.

The SEPTA Legislation Committee also helps the parents of special education students understand the terminology, IEP process and laws of special education. Septa is in the process of compiling a handbook for our members. This handbook will contain information about our PTA, special education law, the IEP process, acronyms, terminology, links to helpful websites and more. It will be sent home to our members this fall.

To learn about what's happening on Capitol Hill you can sign up for a free email newsletter from the National PTA called *This Week in Washington* on their website www.pta.org. To find out what is going on in Trenton and across our state regarding education visit www.gscschools.org and become a Garden State Parent. It's free to sign up and you will receive emails regarding education issues in NJ. Also, the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has launched a new website www.idea.ed.gov dedicated to helping interpret and implement the new regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Cultural Arts Melanie McGackin, Chairperson

Started in the 2005-2006 school year, the Cultural Arts committee organized a quilt project. Each child who wanted to participate received a blank quilt square and were told to let their creativity show. The special education classes throughout our district were encouraged to participate either as a class or home project. The art quilt was titled "**Expressions of Young Minds**", and will be available for a period of time to each school in our district to display for all to enjoy. I would like to thank all parents and teachers who encouraged the creativity in our children who ended up submitting wonderful works of art. I would love to conclude with a very special thank you to paraprofessional Rhonda Malone for all her time and hard work which was truly a labor of love. This couldn't have happened without you.



Committee News

Programs

Melanie McGackin, Chairperson

Last year's programs brought families and friends together to enjoy a few fun filled days out. The children had a **spooktacular** time at our Halloween Carnival, and they loved Magician Bruce Bray's entertainment at our Ice Cream Social. The children and siblings also received a special letter from a well known friend named Santa...and he even enclosed some magical reindeer food so Rudolph could find his way. The last event of the 2005-2006 school year was a hit with a "Take Me Out To The Ball Game" celebration. Families spent the day at the Blue Claws Stadium watching the game and enjoying the festivities.

The 2006-2007 school year has begun and to start it off we had a "A Great Pumpkin Festival" celebration at Lake Riviera Middle School. Approximately 150 children and family members attended. Everyone enjoyed watching the movie "It's a Great Pumpkin

Charlie Brown". The children did a beautiful job on all the crafts and had fun playing game activities as well. Many smiles were seen as all gathered to enjoy a family lunch and end a very festive, fun filled afternoon. More to come this year will be our Santa Letter program, very popular last holiday season, and a family Character Breakfast scheduled for March of 2007. More information on upcoming events will be sent home in backpacks as the event gets closer. Information on these events will also be posted on our website at www.bricksepta.org.

Our events and programs have been successful thanks to all our hard working volunteers. Without the dedication and hard work of these volunteers our events wouldn't be possible. My sincere thanks to all. Your time and efforts are always deeply appreciated. Volunteers are always needed. If you're interested in volunteering you can email me at www.bricksepta@aol.com. Thanks again and I hope to see everyone at our next event.

AROUND TOWN by Barbara DeJessa



Special Program for Special Children

The Brick Challenger Program is very popular in Brick Township. This program is open to Brick Township children 5 years and older with physical or cognitive disabilities. It offers these children a chance to participate in different activities, events and sports throughout the year with others their own age and on their own playing levels. A few of their activities include fall soccer, winter basketball and bowling, spring baseball and summer horseback riding. To make it even more exciting for the children the Challenger Program presents each child with a trophy at the end of each season. The cost per program is \$5.00.

The Challenger Program also will hold special events throughout the year for the children. Their next event is their "**NIGHT WITH SANTA**" on December 16th from 4:00PM-6:00 PM at the Brick Recreation Center located in the Civic Plaza on Chambers Bridge Road. This event is offered to the children at no cost. Santa will have a surprise for all the little ones and DJ Nick Wickberg will be spinning holiday music for all to enjoy. If your interested in attending you must call 732-262-1165 to RSVP.

Their **2007 Bowling** is also coming up. Registration for this program is the week of December 11th at the Brick Recreation Center. Limited spots are available so don't hesitate to head down to the recreation center if it sounds like something your child would like. The dates for bowling are January 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th and February 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th. On March 3rd the children will receive their awards. Bowling 2007 will be held at Sea Girt Lanes. The cost of this program is \$5.00. For more information on 2007 Bowling or other programs offered by Brick Challenger call the recreation center at 732-262-1165.

The Challenger Program gets a thumbs up from Brick Septa. I hope all will take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to get your special children involved in some special activities.