



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Saturday, 9/10, 10am–2pm
Back-to-School Playdates

Tuesday, 9/13, 8:45am
**Welcome Breakfast for
New Parents**

Friday, 9/16, 8–11pm
**Parent Get-Together
At The Parlour**

Monday, 9/19
Annual Appeal Drive begins

Thursday, 9/22, 6:30pm
**First PTA General Meeting
All Are Welcome!**

Monday, 9/26
**Innisbrook Giftwrap Catalog
Sale Begins**

Thursday & Friday, 9/29 & 30
**Rosh HaShana
NO SCHOOL**

Monday, 10/10
**Columbus Day
NO SCHOOL**

Wednesday & Thursday,
10/12 & 13 (tent.)
School Photo Days

Friday, 10/14, 8:45am
**PTA General Meeting
All Are Welcome!**

Saturday, 10/15
New York Cares Day

Monday, 10/17
Square1 Art Drive Begins

Friday, 10/21, 8:30am–12:30pm
Costume/Rummage Sale

Friday, 10/28, 6:30–8:30pm
**Dia de los Muertos
Halloween Party**

**BECOME
A PS163
CLASS PARENT!**

*Read all about why it's so
important on page 2!*



Wonderful 163!

News and Information from the PTA of **The Alfred E. Smith School**

SEPTEMBER 2011

Welcome back, Wonderful 163 Community!

We hope you all had a relaxing and fun summer. We would like to extend a special welcome to all our new students and parents!

We have an exciting school year coming up, with lots of things to look forward to. The PTA of PS163 (of which YOU are a member!) will be planning lots of fun events: several Chess Nights, a Halloween party, a Noche de Amor/Valentine's Day celebration in February, International Night in March, and, of course, the annual Spring Fair in May. Plan on attending these schoolwide events with your family, and help to organize them if you can.

We would also love to hear from you at the newsletter! Please send your ideas, suggestions or columns to: PS163newsletter@yahoo.com. You can also leave them in the newsletter mailbox located in the main office.

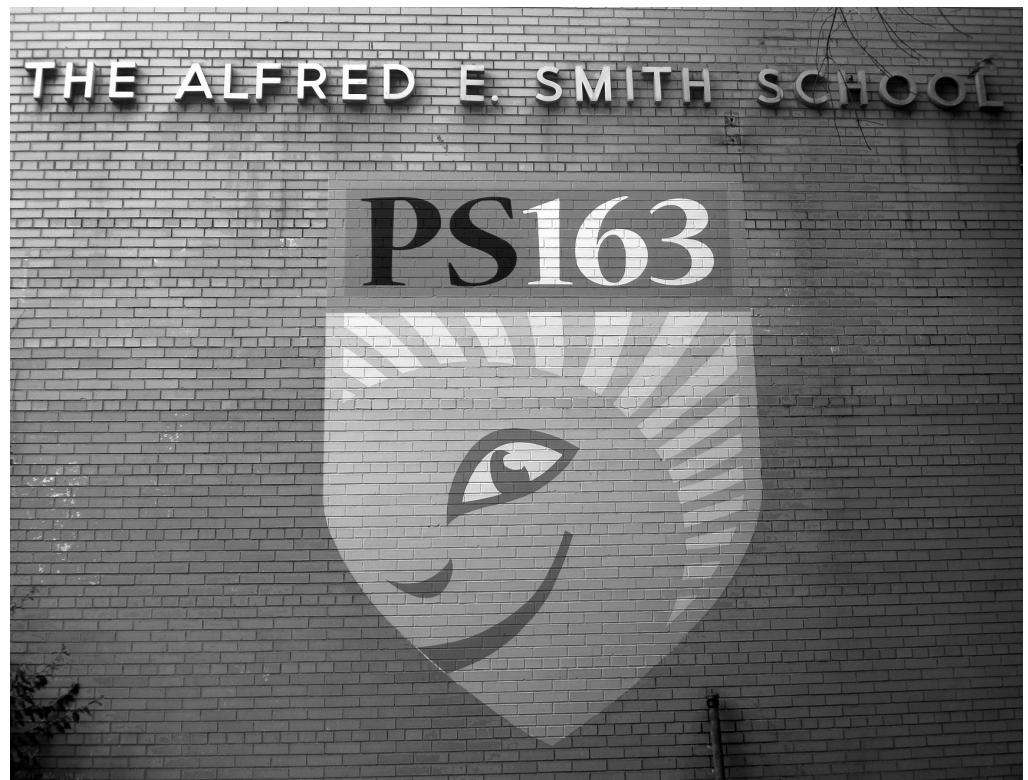
Have a great year!

—*Julia Heath-Gil*
Editor, Wonderful163

Attend the First PTA Meeting, Wednesday, September 22, 6:30pm

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Light refreshments and babysitting provided!

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If you are a parent or guardian of a child at PS163, YOU are a member of the PTA! The PTA does whatever it can to help the teachers and administration at PS163. And for the PTA to succeed—for your child's school to be the best it can be—we need your help! Make sure to attend the first general PTA meeting on September 22. Childcare will be provided, as will light refreshments and entertainment. You'll get a chance to hear from our principal, Dr. Pepe, and to learn how the PTA will spend the money it raises this year. Want to get involved? You'll have the opportunity to meet with organizers and sign up



Welcome back to sunny 163!

BACK-TO-SCHOOL PLAYDATES!

Sunday, September 10
Happy Warrior Playground
10am – 2pm

VERY USEFUL NUMBERS

Main School Number
212-678-2854

Nurse
212-865-6859

Parent Coordinator
Andi Velasquez



212-678-2854
ps163pc@yahoo.com

Guidance Counselor
212-678-2789

PTA Co-Presidents
Carrie Reynolds
212-222-8008
carriechase@earthlink.net
Wilma Lopez
646-671-7491
lopezwilma7@aol.com

How to Join the PS163 ListServ

Stay connected with other PS163 parents!
Join the PS163 internet community on
Yahoo Groups, where you'll be able to
receive email announcements
and send messages to other parents.

To sign up:

1. Go to www.groups.yahoo.com/groups/PS163NYC
2. Click on 'Sign Up'
3. Create Yahoo ID if necessary
4. YOU HAVE JOINED!

Any problems, contact the PTA Co-
Presidents Wilma Lopez
(lopezwilma7@aol.com)
or Carrie Reynolds
(carriechase@earthlink.net)

for a wide range of activities.

Remember, your child's school needs you!
Just a few of the things we need help with:
Lunch and Recess, Annual Appeal fundraising,
Newsletter, Auction, Book Sales, Garden, Technol-
ogy, Library, Grants, Community-Building Events,
Chess Nights, Magazine Drive, Enrichment Arts,
Spring Fair, anything else you'd like to see!

If you only have a few hours a month to donate,
we can set you up with a group that needs just
a little help. If you have lots of time to help, we
can find a big need area for you to work on. Most
importantly, we welcome your initiative to start
any projects that appeal to you.

Please come to the PTA meeting. If you can't
make it, get in touch with one of the PTA presi-
dents —Carrie Reynolds (carriechase@earthlink.net) or Wilma Lopez (se habla espanol; Lopez-wilma7@aol.com).

We look forward to a year of raising lots of
money, helping our kids, and having a blast while
we do it!

Back-to-School Helpful Tips

Do you remember your first days at school? They
were filled with anxious and exciting moments.
You wondered if you would make friends, like
your teachers, fit in. Your children are now
embarking on their own school adventure and
they might need a bit of guidance. Here are some
helpful tips to ease the transition from summer
fun to the structure of a classroom:

- Make sure your child gets to bed early, no later than 8:00pm. Young children need eleven hours of sleep.
- Come to school on time. Please bring your child to the Yard or to their kindergarten classroom between 8:35 and 8:40am. If you arrive late with your child you must go to the main office to receive a late pass. The number of arrivals and absences are noted on report cards.
- Attendance is key. Absences from school create gaps in your child's learning.
- Each child should have a backpack big enough to carry lunch, folders and books to and from school.
- Dress your child appropriately. All children are expected to sit on the floor in the meeting area and play during recess either in the yard or in the gymnasium. Please make sure your child wears the proper clothing for these activities. Also, dress your child in sneakers on the day he or she has gym.
- Make sure your child eats a healthy and substantial breakfast.
- Kindergarten parents, be sure to ask your teacher about afternoon snacks. Many teachers prefer that parents sign up for one or two

snack days out of each school month. The snack sign-up sheet will be posted in the classroom. A typical snack consists of juice boxes and enough pretzels, goldfish, animal crackers, etc. for the entire class. Juice boxes are easily distributed, clean, and much appreciated. Please note that snack cannot contain any peanut or milk contents.

- Read the notes that come home from the teacher and the school.
- Remember the value of positive reinforcement. Encourage your child with positive comments about reading, writing, drawing, and math done at home. Also, try to acknowledge any academic growth and positive changes in classroom behavior that teachers communicate to you.
 - Ask your child who he or she has played with, what books they have read, and what activities they took part in.
 - Read a book with your child or, if they are reading on their own, have your child read to you every night. Ask your child to retell the story. You might start by asking who is in the story and where it takes place. Let your child tell you about three events that occurred in the story, then ask what happened at the end. Things you can say to start a good book talk are: "I noticed..." "Why do you think..." "I know..." "I have a question about..." "This reminds me of the time..." "This book makes me feel..." "I wonder..." "I loved the part..." "Maybe..." "Show me where..."

Your interest in your child's school experience sends an important message:

SCHOOL IS IMPORTANT!

Become a Class Parent!

Being a class parent is one of the most important things you can do for the school and your child's class. The main responsibility of a class parent is to disseminate information to all of the parents. This involves creating a phone tree or an e-mail list to keep all parents up-to-date on classroom events, the need for classroom supplies, and important information from the PTA and the principal's office. This does not have to be a time-consuming job, and multiple class parents are encouraged. If you're planning on being a class parent this year, please send your name, e-mail address, teacher's name and classroom number to Cynthia Carris Alonso, carris27@aol.com

SUPPORT YOUR SCHOOL!
BUY A PS163 T-SHIRT!

Contact Melissa Welsh at
mmw7@columbia.edu