

# THE VILLAGE BLUEBIRD



## SEASON'S GREETINGS

It is hard to believe that winter and the holiday season are fast approaching. We want to say, thank you for your support and involvement thus far. Our school would not be the great place of learning that it is without the outstanding work of our students, teachers and our entire community. We have accomplished so much since school began and we hope that you will continue to be active supporters of the events planned for the rest of the year.

Throughout December, students are demonstrating trustworthiness, generosity and compassion by supporting our annual Young Scholars Institute Holiday fundraiser. Please read more about this service learning project on page 3. Villagers will also participate in holiday learning activities and celebrate the season during winter parties sponsored by our gracious room parent volunteers, music concerts and our annual school-wide sing-along. Read more in this issue about the great work of our PTA, upcoming events and ways you can get involved.

With the New Year drawing near, this is a perfect time to develop or review expectations with children by setting personal and family goals. We will certainly be setting goals at school and reminding children of all the things we can do together to make our school year safe and productive.

In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. our character education trait for the month of January is *fairness*. Ways to practice fairness will be shared during our morning announcements, teachers will discuss Dr. King's goals and accomplishments, and the library will feature books about him and related traits and principles.



We wish you and your extended families the very best this season! Have a safe and peaceful recess and a wonderful start to the New Year!

*Ms. Lacy and Mr. Hadinger*

### IMPORTANT DATES:

- December 7: Winter Choral Concert, VES, 7:00
- December 9: End of Marking Period, YSI Gift Due
- December 12: PTA Mtg, VES, 10:00, Gift Card Fundraiser Money Due
- December 13: BOE Mtg., UMS, 7:30
- **December 23: 1:30 Dismissal, (Parent Pickup Begins 1:15) Report Cards available online/MAP Reports Home**
- **December 24-January 2: Winter Recess, School closed**
- **January 3: Schools Reopen**
- Jan. 10: BOE Mtg., UMS, 7:30
- Jan. 18 : PTA Meeting, OHES, 10:00
- Jan. 13: 4th Grade Author Visit—Wendy Mass
- **Jan. 16: Martin Luther King Holiday, Schools Closed**
- Jan. 24: BOE Mtg., UMS, 7:30
- Jan. 27: New Year Around The World Celebration, VES, 7-9
- Feb. 7: 3rd Grade Author Visit—Seymour Simon
- Feb. 11: PTA Invention Convention
- Feb. 14: Valentines Character & Caring Parties; BOE Mtg., UMS, 7:30
- Feb. 15: PTA Meeting, VES, 10:00
- **Feb 17: Staff Dev, Schools Closed**
- **Feb. 20: Presidents' Day Schools Closed**
- Feb. 28 BOE Mtg., UMS 7:00
- March 1: Montgomery's Night Off
- March 2: Read Across America
- March 14-15: Music Concerts, MHS 7
- March 22: 4th Grade Art Show
- **March 27-30: Optional Conferences—1:30 Dismissal**
- March 30: Montgomery's Got Talent

## Teaching the Value of Generosity



As the holiday season approaches, it is natural for our minds to be focused on both giving and receiving. In fact, flipping through the channels on your TV, you can find commercial after commercial, advertising the great new flashy products that have just been released. It is very easy for children to take these short and alluring clips and create magical lists of all the things that one would like to have. As a result, children can receive the message that what they get is more important than what they give.

Generosity, simply put, is giving to others. However, remembering Winston Churchill's famous quote, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give", can help us understand the true importance of generosity. It is not the giving of a gift that makes someone a generous individual. Generosity should instead be defined by one's selfless desire to provide assistance where it is needed and to show compassion where it may be lacking thereby encouraging the feeling of joy through the simple act of giving.

To help our children grow into generous adults, we must be good role models. There are many ways we demonstrate generosity throughout the day. Giving an item of material worth is one way to exhibit generosity. However, generosity can also be displayed in acts of kindness that come from your heart. Giving your time, or a friendly ear to someone who needs to talk are examples of how we can gifts of the heart. Also, lending a helping hand, or giving encouragement to someone in need of support are other ways we can model generosity.

It is important to find something that will work for your family that can be incorporated into your daily routines. Finding time to share these moments with your children can help them understand the true value of generosity. It can also provide an opportunity to do something as a family.



*Mrs. Fornal and Ms. Laera in Guidance*

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## Young Scholars Institute Project 2011



Village School teachers and administrators will be delivering the VES holiday gifts to the Young Scholars Institute in Trenton on Saturday morning, December 17th.

The generous gifts are the result of the efforts of our caring VES students, parents, PTA and staff. Ms. Lucas is coordinating the effort for our school community in her role as Coordinator of Student Service Learning. Many other VES staff members are playing important support roles throughout the drive including Ms. Ciosek, Mrs. Bonnet, Mrs. Pignataro, and Ms. Laera. With money collected by our VES students and staff, Wegmans Supermarket of West Windsor will be delivering turkey dinners that will be provided to the families of the children receiving gifts.

Many present and former staff members, district administrators, colleagues from other schools, and the VES PTA members are supporting additional YSI children and their families. Our Peer Partners and teachers motivated our students through posters and lunchroom presentations, and they will help load Mr. Hadinger's van with the gifts on Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. Students are raising money by performing chores or giving up some of their own savings. Institute staff members, the children and their families are very grateful for the generosity of our school community. In the past staff members who stayed to greet the families said that the Young Scholars were thrilled when they received their presents and meals, and some asked about our school and students. This effort is a wonderful correlating activity for the holiday season, and for VES's December character education theme of respect.

*Mr. Hadinger, Vice Principal*



**UNICEF Total: \$3527**

*Thank you children and families for your support!*



### Musical Notes and Concert Information from Dr. Bell and Dr. Goldman

*The Fall Chorus will be presenting a Concert on Wednesday December 7<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm in the VES Gymnasium under the direction of Dr. Bell. The choir has been working hard on proper singing technique as well as performance etiquette. They will sing 6 Seasonal Songs along with a special Song they will perform with the String Ensemble. The String Ensemble under the direction of Dr. Goldman will be presenting several pieces as well. We look forward to kicking off the holiday season and seeing everyone there on this festive evening.*

*Note: Beginner orchestra rehearsals will begin Jan. 10<sup>th</sup> and take place on Tuesdays before school.*

### Band Highlights and School Day Concert Information from Ms. Houston

The 4<sup>th</sup> grade band students are getting ready to present their first concert. Band #1 will be performing on Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup> and Band #2 will be performing on Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. Both concerts will take place at 9:50 AM in the Village School cafeteria. Parents are welcome to attend this short, informal concert. Due to the fact that the concert will only be 15-20 minutes, there will not be any evening performance for the band in December. Evening concerts will take place in March and June.

The band students have been playing their instruments for about 2 ½ months and have learned how to properly hold their instruments and produce a sound. They have learned 6 notes and are able to play songs and read music using these notes and simple rhythms. The students will be performing some of the songs that they have learned at the concert. Almost all of the songs that will be presented will be performed in unison, meaning that all of the students in the band will be playing the same notes at the same time. Playing in unison is the first step towards learning how to play in a group. The students have learned how to watch a conductor and to listen to each other in order to play together. The fundamental skills that the children have learned during these months will serve as a basis for all future learning and future performances.



### Report Card Access

Village Elementary School will post Marking Period 1 report cards online on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. They will be available to view, print, and save until January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Since schools are closed during the break and technical support is not available, it is important that you take a moment now to log into ParentResources to verify that you have access. To log in:

1) Visit <https://parents.mtsd.k12.nj.us>

2) Enter your username, which is your email address, and your password. If you forget your password, use the "Forgot My Password" link just below the Login button. Your password will then be sent by email in a few minutes.

If you are unable to log in or do not have an account, please contact Geoff Simpson at [gsimpson@mtsd.us](mailto:gsimpson@mtsd.us).

A reminder and additional report card information will be forwarded during the week of December 19<sup>th</sup>.

Also note that MAP Score Reports will be sent home on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.



### Notes from the Health Office

We are starting to see an increase in viruses and bacterial infections. The VES Nurses would like to remind you of Health Office requests that are beneficial to your child/children, as well as the entire school community. Children should be fever free for 24 hours or in the case of a bacterial infection such as strep throat, be given an antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to school. Instead of waiting the 24 hours, many students return to school after being given fever reducing medication, however they have not completely recovered and are still contagious. We ask everyone to consider the health of all our students. Thank you for your kind support.



The VES Nurses



**Remember to dress children appropriately for outdoor recess! Label your child's belongings and check the lost and found in the cafeteria for missing items!**

## PTA Corner

Dear VES Parents,

Here we are at the close of another year and welcoming in the new and what a great year it has been! The PTA works incredibly hard to enrich our children's lives through the programs we support.

Here are just a few of the 2011-12 programs that are being funded by your PTA dollars:

- **Stage**---- new lighting, sound system and stage curtain
- **Author Visits and Assemblies** - \$9000 in support of special events and programs such as author visits for both the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade and a special end of year assembly for the whole school.
- **Field Trip Funds** - \$5000 to support one field trip for each grade.
- **Teacher Grants** - \$8,000 for teachers to purchase items for their classrooms that would not be covered by the school budget to enhance the children's learning experience.
- **Other** – Additional dollars fund items such as school supplies for our subsidized students, back to school folders for all students, family events and more.

We would like to thank all the families who participate and volunteer in the PTA. We are always looking for new faces so if you have not joined the PTA we invite you to --- it's not too late. Visit our website at [vespta.org](http://vespta.org).

We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season and look forward to seeing you in the New Year!

Christine Petrane and Christine Zoffinger-Guidette

PTA Co-Presidents and the PTA Executive Board

### Upcoming Events:

**NEW YEARS AROUND THE WORLD** – Hold the date and celebrate a VES tradition! Join us on **January 27<sup>th</sup>** for DJ and Dancing, games and fun.

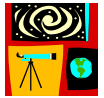


### 2012 Science & Invention Convention

Is your child innovative, creative, and has a passion for science? Join us for this joint MMS PTO & MES PTA event for 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders on **Saturday, February 11, 2012** at the Montgomery High School. At this exciting non-competitive event students will prepare a project in advance to discuss with evaluators (our parent-volunteer judges). All participants will receive a t-shirt, certificate and medal!

Registration can be completed and paid for on-line (through Pay-Pal) at the MES PTA website [www.vespta.org](http://www.vespta.org). The \$17 per student entry fee per includes a t-shirt, medal and certificate of completion and science demonstration for participants and their family. *Please note: this event is not a fundraiser.*

Please contact co-chairs Khurt Williams [khurtwilliams@gmail.com](mailto:khurtwilliams@gmail.com) for MMS and Amy Haberman Gomez [amyhab5@gmail.com](mailto:amyhab5@gmail.com) for VES with any questions.



**Montgomery's Got Talent-** Come One, Come All to Montgomery's Big Top! Montgomery's Got Talent is coming to the MPAC stage on **March 30<sup>th</sup>**. We are looking for youth acts to participate in MGT. Registration for participants will begin in early January, 2012, so please begin practicing! The MGT committee is also looking for volunteers to help with this great community event, so if you are interested in assisting in the planning or execution of the Greatest Show in Montgomery, please contact Courtenay Hansen at [cchansenesq@aol.com](mailto:cchansenesq@aol.com).



**VES Parent's Night Out-** Save the Date for our VES Parents' Night Out featuring a Wine & Beer tasting, Wine Arbor and Silent Auction. This amazing fundraiser will be at Cherry Valley Country Club on **Saturday, April 21** starting at 7:00pm. You can expect dinner fare, sparkling wine, and desserts in a vineyard setting with at least five of the premier wine and beer vendors in our area. Be sure to book your babysitter soon!



## No need to wait in long lines to purchase Holiday Gift Cards!



***Let MES PTA do the shopping for you!***

MES PTA is pleased to continue a convenient fundraiser that allows you to purchase gift cards and earn money for our school!

Log on to [www.glscrip.com](http://www.glscrip.com) to see a list of all gift cards available that may not be listed on the order form.

Order forms and check payments (please make checks out to *MES PTA*)

**must be in by Monday, December 12<sup>th</sup> to guarantee delivery via backpack mail on or before December 16<sup>th</sup>!**

\*Gift cards are purchased at face value – the PTA receives a % rebate from the company - there are no purchase fees or costs to you. Have a question? Contact either: Lisa Lavake ([llicata@its.jnj.com](mailto:llicata@its.jnj.com)) or Josephine Turner ([djrmturner@aol.com](mailto:djrmturner@aol.com))

# VES PTA – Holiday Gift Cards 2011

Please return order form and check made out to **MES PTA** in an envelope marked "VES PTA Gift Cards" via backpack mail by **MONDAY, DECEMBER 12<sup>th</sup>**.

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Child's Name/Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Product	\$	%	Qty	Total \$	Product	\$	%	Qty	Total \$
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**MOST POPULAR:**

**DINING:**

Barnes & Noble*	\$10	9%			Applebee's*	\$25	8%		
	\$20	9%			Dave & Busters	\$25	13%		
Dunkin Donuts	\$10	4%			Chili's	\$25	11%		
Gap/Old Navy	\$25	14%			P.F. Chang's	\$25	8%		
iTunes	\$15	7%			Subway*	\$10	3%		

**TRAVEL:**

Panera Bread	\$10	9%			Disney*	\$25	2%		
	\$25	9%			American Airlines*	\$100	8%		
Starbucks	\$10	9%			Shell* (+\$5 off JiffyLube)	\$25	2.5%		
	\$25	9%							
Amazon	\$25	4%							
	\$100	4%							

**KIDS:**

**TWEENS/TEENS:**

Build-a Bear	\$25	8%		
Aeropostale	\$25	7%		
Children's Place	\$25	12%		
AMC/Loews Theatres	\$25	12%		
Toys R Us	\$20	1.5%		
(Single Admit)	\$9.50	16%		
<b><u>OTHER:</u></b>				
American Eagle	\$25	10%		
ShopRite*	\$25	4%		
Body Shop	\$25	8%		
WalMart/Sam's Club*	\$25	2%		
Dick's Sporting Goods	\$25	8%		
Kohls*	\$25	4%		
GameStop	\$25	4%		

**CLOTHING/ACCESSORIES:**

**TOTAL DUE:**

Bloomingdale's*	\$25	12%		
J Crew	\$25	13%		
LL Bean*	\$25	15%		
Macy's*	\$25	10%		
TJ Maxx/Marshalls*	\$25	7%		

(Please make checks to **VES PTA**)

**GIFTS FOR TEACHERS, COACHES, SITTERS, & MORE:**

Target	\$25	2%		
Bath & Body Works*	\$10	18%		
Bloomingdales	\$25	12%		
CVS*	\$25	7%		
Michaels	\$25	4%		

**For a complete list of ALL available retail cards and additional \$ increments noted by \* - please go to the PTA tab on the VES website.**  
 (% indicates rebate to VES PTA)

MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Blazer says, "Be Your Best at VES!"  
Village Elementary School  
Home of Blazer the Bluebird  
100 Main Boulevard  
Skillman, NJ 08558



Susan E. Lacy, Principal  
Email: slacy@mtsd.k12.nj.us  
Alfred Hadinger, Vice Principal  
Email: ahadinger@mtsd.k12.nj.us  
Phone: 609-466-7606  
Fax: 609-4667196  
Absence Reporting Line:  
609-466-7610

WWW.MTSD.K12.NJ.US



MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

MISSION STATEMENT

*Our mission as a forward-thinking community is to ensure that students grow into confident, compassionate, and successful learners in a global society by providing engaging and challenging educational experiences in a student-centered environment.*

Emergency School Closing Information

In the event of inclement weather, hazardous road conditions, or any other emergencies requiring us to close schools for one day, **AlertNow phone messages** will be used to notify families. You may also check the following:

- **Message Line: 609-466-7610**
- **District Website: www.mtsd.k12.nj.us**
- **NJ 101.5 FM**
- **Channel 14 (Local Access Cable)**

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* Get the latest weather updates and \*  
 \* information from our VES weather \*  
 \* station and camera by clicking on \*  
 \* WeatherBug at the VES site! \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

**VES Families:** In the event of an emergency school closing, the 6-day rotation cycle will remain unchanged. For example: If we have an emergency closing/snow day on Day 1, the following school day will remain Day 2. Missed days will be made up later in the school year. See the district calendar for details.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* *December's Pillar of Character is Trustworthiness and January's Pillar of Character is Fairness!* \*  
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Traffic Safety Reminders



**After School Pickup:** If you need to pick your child up at the end of the school day, park in the new back lot and enter through the cafeteria doors or park on the right side of the back driveway that is between the school and the traffic island. **Please do not park on the roadway itself as it creates a traffic hazard.** Students will be dismissed to the cafeteria for parent pick-up at 3:45 p.m. as instruction takes place up until this time. Parents must sign children out in the cafeteria. Send a note to your child's teacher in the morning if you plan on picking up your child in the afternoon or if your child is attending an after school activity. **Without a note, children will be sent to their buses.** Midday and end of day pickup requests can be disruptive to instruction and are difficult to honor as dismissal information is confirmed early in the day.

**School Day Parking:** Parents/visitors may park in our new front visitors' lot, our side lot, or our large new lot in the back between 9:30 and 3:45. When parking in the back lot, visitors will, in most cases, need to walk around VES and enter the front main entrance as all doors are locked at 9:30. **Please do not park on or block roadways.** If you absolutely must park on a roadway, use caution and park on the far right side. **Parking is always prohibited in designated fire zones and in the bus driveway.**

*Support Junior Girl Scout Troop 60625 and their 1st Annual Halloween Costume Swap coming October 2012*

Help save resources and reduce waste. **Drop off costumes for all ages at OHES and VES November 30th –December 16th** or contact Kate Reynolds [katemcrey@verizon.net](mailto:katemcrey@verizon.net), Barb Kocis [barbkocis@yahoo.com](mailto:barbkocis@yahoo.com) or Gina Papa [ggpa-pa17@comcast.net](mailto:ggpa-pa17@comcast.net) to drop off costumes throughout the year.



Please help Girl Scout Troop 1058 collect items for the SAVE animal shelter. We are looking for donations of dog and cat treats, food, toys, collars and kitty litter. We will be collecting in VES and OHES **December 1st and 20th.** Be a Friend to a Homeless Animal!



YWCA After School Program at VES

The YWCA of Princeton provides childcare before and after school for children who attend VES. The YWCA tailors its hours to accommodate working families, and offers children diverse and enriching activities in a safe and nurturing environment. Registration packets will be available in the main office. For more information, you may visit our website at [www.ywcaprinceton.org](http://www.ywcaprinceton.org) or call the YWCA After School Program Office at: 609-497-2100 X327. Please clearly state your name, your child's name, and a phone number where we can return your phone call.