

# The Sousa Notes

Home and School Association Newsletter – September/October 2018

## A Note from Dr. Meoli

This summer I learned a lesson from a local cetacean.

Early one morning, towards the very end of June, I was on my bicycle doing my Long Beach loop when I noticed a couple of people on the boardwalk pointing towards the ocean. I glanced over to see something splash fairly close to shore; alternating between watching where I was going and trying to see what the attraction was, I finally looked seaward in time to see a humpback whale breach within 100 yards of the shore. I have walked, run, and biked the Long Beach boardwalk for decades and—although I have occasionally heard others tell me they have seen a whale—I had never before that day. I kept cycling and kept trying to catch glimpses of a fin or tail until I passed by where the whale was swimming. I was making good time and, with about five miles to go, was very hesitant to interrupt the workout; eventually I pulled up and turned around.

The whale rewarded me, and a growing crowd of onlookers, by blowing, breaching, diving, and tail slapping for about the next ten minutes. As more surfers entered the water to follow, the creature headed away and eventually submerged for a long enough period that most of us gave up and went back to our business. What a spectacular display! What good fortune that I was at that place at that time and that I had been cued in to divert my attention by some fellow beachgoers!

Had I stayed “focused” on the task I had set for myself, I’d have missed it.

As an educator, and a parent, it reminds me of two important things: that children really do need time to “stop and smell the humpbacks” (to mix my metaphors!), and that, sometimes, the tasks we see fit to set for them may be neither the ones that catch their attention nor the ones that eventually yield the best results.

In this age of public number flogging—both psychometric and financial—our salt water cousin is wise to remind us that the joy of discovery may not always be easily scored nor conveniently efficient.

As I begin my 43rd year as a teacher, I do have both some perspectives and some opinions on the magnificent endeavor of educating children. I can tell you without a scintilla of exaggeration that EVERY year I have been an educator (spanning five districts and three states) has been categorized as a “difficult” one in terms of finances. I can also tell you that there is ALWAYS that voice proclaiming “if you can’t measure it, it didn’t happen.” Sometimes, however, the angels of reflection, wonder, and awe are lost in the Hades of accountability.

Although I have often thanked them in these Sousa Notes pages, I want to particularly recognize our Sousa HSA for their strong support of some of the more important programs our children will enjoy this school year from RULER to mindfulness, from Dancing Classrooms to integrated movement residencies with American Ballet Theatre and Rachael and Michael Kosch, to yoga and Taekwondo, to Submerge Storytelling and Soundwaters Boat Trips, to new playground equipment/game stencils/kickballs, to the River of Kindness and the Fifth Grade Art Project. These are not extras and they are not superfluous; they are the very kid friendly “draws” that attract our children to challenge their minds, charge their bodies, and calm their souls. None of these programs/items would exist without the hard work, love, and support of our Home School Association and all of you parents and teachers who comprise its membership. THANK YOU!

All of this from a mammal that thinks it’s a fish.

Sincerely,  
Dave Meoli

## Upcoming Events OCTOBER 2018

1st-5th - Allergy Awareness Week

4th - Picture Day

5th - Spirit Day (Wear Red!)

8th - Recess

11th - Dads’ Night Out, 8pm, Port Washington Yacht Club

24th - Unity Day (Wear Orange!)

24th - Food Day

24th - Conversations with Dr. Meoli, 7pm, MPR (Multi-Purpose Room)

24th - HSA Meeting, 7:30pm, MPR

29th-Nov.3rd - Winter Coat Drive

31st- Halloween Parade, 9:15am, Black Top

## Sousa Welcomes



### **Ms. Nicole Brunetto - Orchestra Teacher**

After spending the past two years raising her son Noah, Ms. Brunetto is so excited to be back at Sousa teaching orchestra.

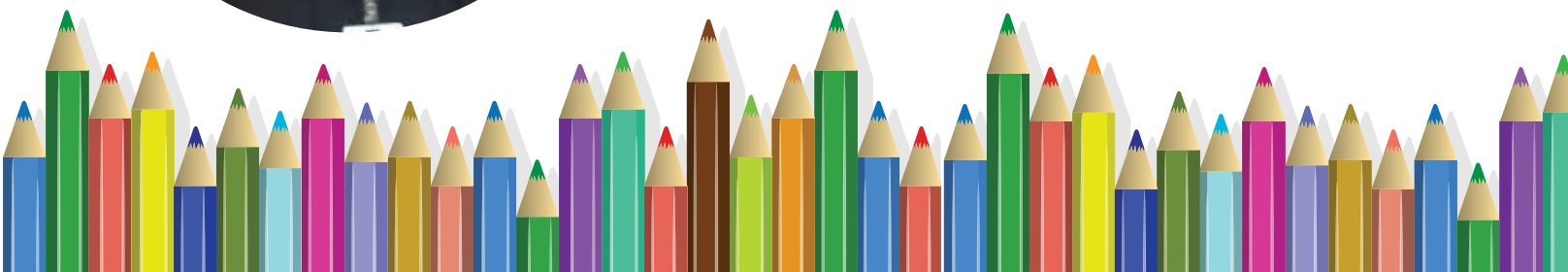
### **Audrey Weiss - Teaching Assistant**

Ms. Weiss is excited to join the Sousa family, after being a teaching assistant in the Port Washington School District for the past 24 years, including at Guggenheim and Daly. Her two favorite foods are pizza and lobster!



### **Anna Mele - Teaching Assistant**

Ms. Mele joins Sousa from Daly Elementary School, where she was a teaching assistant for the past 13 years. She loves to read and is very happy to be a part of the Sousa family!



## Sousa Welcomes



### **Lorraine Klapper - Teaching Assistant**

Ms. Klapper has been working in the Port Washington School District for four years at Salem Elementary School and her favorite food is eggplant parm! k.

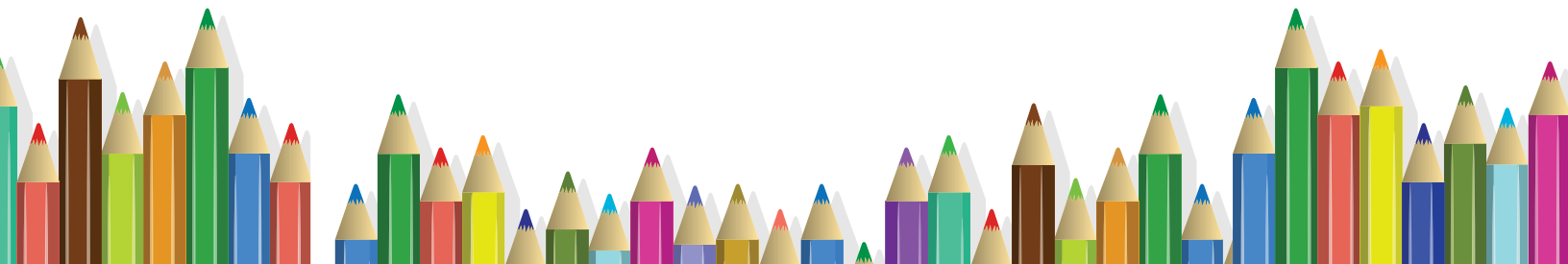
### **Dr. Justine Koo – Psychologist**

Dr. Koo is replacing Dr. Fitoussi who transferred to Weber. Dr. Koo worked previously at the Middle Country School District in Suffolk. She spends a lot of time with her niece and loves skiing. She is very happy to join our Sousa community.



### **Jill Saltzman - Teaching Assistant**

Ms. Saltzman has been working in the district for 12 years at Salem elementary school. She enjoys relaxing at the beach and is thrilled to be at Sousa.



# Sousa Shows Its Pride

In case you missed the Pride in Port parade, Sousa again showed its pride in droves. The theme of this year's Sousa float was an homage to the Port Washington sand miners, an original float idea by the Kollappallil Family. Sand mining is an important part of Port Washington's history. The estimated 140 million cubic yards of sand mined from the 1870s until as recently as the 1980s was used in the concrete of New York's infrastructure and buildings, including the Chrysler building, the Empire State building, the Queensborough bridge, the FDR Drive, and the West Side Highway, among other notable New York City structures.

Anthony Lomoriello, known as "Tony" around town, worked for McCormack Sand Company in the 1980s until they closed down, where he was responsible for dispatching the tugboats that transported the sand barges from the Long Island Sound to NYC. His daughter Gina remembers going with her brother Dan to the "Land of the Sand Pits" – as they were referred to – where they would climb, somersault and slide down the massive sand dunes. His grand-daughter, Christie, who is now a fifth-grade student at Sousa, was proud to help build the float this summer. "This is the history of our town and it's our job to make sure we tell it to our kids and to all new members of our community." said Mat Lanfant, member of the Pride in Port Committee, and chair of the Sousa Float Committee for the past five years.

A special thank you to the Port Washington Public Library for sharing their archived historical pictures, to local business Chief Graphix for printing them, to all the volunteers - parents and kids alike – who spent countless hours building the float this summer, and to all who participated at this year's Pride in Port parade, making it such a fun day for everyone. **Go Sousa! Go Vikings! Go Port!**



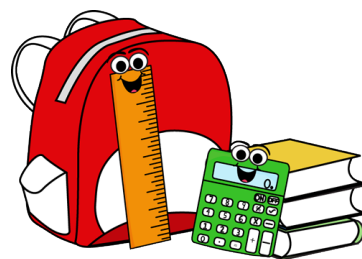
## The Sousa Home and School Association Kicks Off First Meeting

The Sousa HSA held its first meeting on Friday, September 14th. Discussions were held regarding the HSA's busy summer (buying outdoor toys, new school planners and new appliances), events just held such as the Open School Night, and the many upcoming events (Allergy Awareness Week, Photo Day, Dad's' Night Out and many more!). The HSA budget for the current school year was reviewed, discussed and approved. The HSA helps fund many grants like Dancing Classrooms, Submerge Storytelling and Taekwondo, as well as a multitude of events throughout the year that are listed below. Feel free to join any committee at any time of the year! The HSA is always looking for volunteers. Please go to [www.sousahsa.org](http://www.sousahsa.org) for committee sign up forms or to learn more about what the HSA does to better the lives of our Sousa students. Thank you to all of you who have contributed your time or paid dues. The next meeting will be held at 7:30 PM on Oct. 24th... Save the date!



## Sousa Welcomes New Parents

As the children entered Sousa for the first time on September 5th, parents of Kindergarten and students new to Sousa were comforted and greeted by parent volunteers of the Sousa HSA (Home School Association) at the annual New Parent Breakfast, held at the Port Washington Yacht Club. It was very nice to meet and greet all the new parents who joined our wonderful community. Here's to a great year for all our new families!



## New Apparel Is Available

Our Sousa Apparel Committee, headed by Karena Healy and Candace Sciortino, has been busy with sales at the New Parent Welcome Breakfast and Open House. Stock up on the newest styles - including the popular dabbing bulldog - for Sousa Spirit Days! The next in-person sale will not be until the winter, but apparel can always be purchased through the online store at [myschoolanywhere.com](http://myschoolanywhere.com).



Do you have any photos from Sousa class trips or activities?  
Show off your child's artwork, accomplishments,  
prizes won, etc. in The Sousa Notes.  
Please send any photos, articles to your class  
liaisons or directly to  
Rod at [rodn29@gmail.com](mailto:rodn29@gmail.com) or Mat at [lanfant@msn.com](mailto:lanfant@msn.com)

## Garden Update

The children will soon be back in the Sousa organic vegetable garden, harvesting last year's crops (we had beautiful corn and beans among others), cleaning up spent plants and spreading compost on the garden beds before winter. We will resume planting in the garden in March. If you are interested in being a part of the garden committee, please contact Kate Walz at [kmwalz@hotmail.com](mailto:kmwalz@hotmail.com). Kate would like to thank all the committee members for their help in maintaining the gardens over the summer by weeding, watering and harvesting. The gardens would have certainly perished if it wasn't for all their hard work!



## Update on the Fifth Grade Art Projects - Class of 2017 and 2018

Often the creative path is filled with surprises and challenges, and our Fifth Grade Art Projects over the last two years have been no exception. Some of you may recall that for 2017, students created pieces for an interlocking, painted, laser-cut aluminum sculpture that has been surprisingly challenging to piece together. This summer, the Keeney-Bailey family volunteered their backyard as a construction site and, with Daniel Bailey's expert technical skill, Annie Fensterstock, Mike Romero, Mat Lanfant, and Mr. Moore were able to put most of it together. Within the next several weeks, a slab of concrete will be poured on the lawn between the cafeteria and the parking lot, and installation will begin!

Last year our fifth graders hand-built wonderfully large decorative vessels that will outline the garden near the front door of Sousa. These will be installed once the footprint of the future security vestibule has been established. We look forward to having a beautifully refreshed green area at the front of the school when the 2018 installation is completed!



## Kindergarteners and First Graders Learn Creative Dance



Thanks to Sousa HSA funding, over the next few weeks, Sousa kindergarten and first grade students are once again participating in a special dance and movement class with Michael and Rachael Kosch. We are thrilled to have both back at Sousa! The Koschs have been offering dance workshops in Port Washington for more than 20 years. Michael is a pianist and composer and Rachael is a former Martha Graham dancer who began working here when the Port Schools had a K-12 dance program with the Graham School and ABT. Rachael has an extensive repertoire of elementary workshop offerings developed through her collaboration with our classroom teachers over the years. She infuses her creative dance classes with elements of modern dance, ballet, mindfulness and theatrical training, drawing on themes such as the seasons, holidays and tie-ins from each grade level's curriculum. Ask your child to show you how to melt like a candle, hug a pumpkin, fly like bats and float inside a space bubble!

## Dancing Classrooms

1-2-Cha Cha Cha.... The fifth graders have started their Dancing Classrooms program and it looks like there are a few Fred Astaire/Ginger Rogers out there! All fifth graders will meet twice a week with a dance instructor to learn ballroom dances. The program, funded by the Sousa HSA, HEARTS and the Ed Foundation, will culminate with a night of ballroom dancing in December.



## Science on the Sound – Floating Classroom

All Aboard!! A group of students who missed the scientific boat adventure SoundWaters last year (rained out) were treated to a makeup class trip and got to discover Long Island Sound's ecology and biology while sailing aboard the schooner SoundWaters. Students investigated how plants and animals survive daily environmental changes, examined macro and microscopic organisms, raised the sails and more! The program offers a rigorous STEM investigation into habitats, animal adaptations, water quality and food web/bio accumulation. Technology rich, with hands-on experiments, this program is fully funded by the Sousa HSA. The entire fourth grade will share in this experience in the spring.



## Interview Series

Caleb, a Sousa fifth grader, recently interviewed Sousa's Band teacher Mr. Viavattine ( Mr.V) so we can learn more about him. Here is the transcript:

Caleb: Where did you grow up?

Mr. V: I grew up in a suburb of Rochester, NY called Fairport.

When did you start playing instruments?

Mr. V: I used to sit on my dad's lap and play drum set at age 2 (My dad is a professional percussionist). I started taking piano lessons from my mom (a piano teacher) at age 3, and began the saxophone (my primary instrument) the summer before 5th grade.

What was the first school that you ever taught in?

Mr. V: The first school I taught in was a grade 4-5 elementary school called the Fred W. Hill School in Brockport, NY (Rochester). I was a long-term substitute for a woman who had a baby during the half year between my Bachelor's degree and my Master's degree and taught 4th and 5th grade band.

What is your favorite instrument?

Mr. V: As for listening, I love listening to any instrument that is played well, and have learned a lot from listening to instruments besides the saxophone. I love to teach and play every band instrument, but feel most comfortable with woodwinds.

What is your favorite type of music?

Mr. V: My favorite type of music is jazz, but classical is also a favorite of mine.

Where is your favorite place to eat in Port Washington?

Mr. V: My favorite place to eat in Port Washington is Hickory's BBQ on Port Washington Boulevard. I also like Amalfi's.

What college did you go to?

Mr. V: I received my Bachelor's degree from the Eastman School of Music which is a music conservatory in Rochester, NY. I received my Master's degree from the University of Miami, Frost School of Music.

Out of every song in the world, what would be your favorite?

Mr. V: This question is WAY too difficult, as my listening tastes change constantly depending on my mood, and what I am studying at the time! My current favorite jazz tune is "September in the Rain" and my favorite classical piece at the moment is Chopin's "Nocturne #2 in Eb major".

Thanks for interviewing me!





**THE SOUSA HSA WOULD LIKE TO**

# **THANK YOU!**

**Without your support – both financial and time –  
we would not be able to do all the things we do:**

- New Parent Breakfast
- New Additional Playground Equipment (coming soon!)
- Welcome Back and End of the Year Picnics
- Sousa Float
- Sousa Buddies
- "Green" Assemblies
- Allergy Awareness Week
- New Stair Decor and Painted Classroom Doors
- Sousa's Got Talent Show
- Pizza Workshop
- Toy Swap
- Book Fair
- Dad's Night Out/ Mom's Night Out
- Sousa Social
- Mother's Day/Father's Day Fair
- Dancing Residency for K-1st
- Yoga
- American Ballet Theater Residency for 2nd
- Taekwondo for 3rd
- Submerge Storytelling for 4th
- Soundwaters Boat Trip for 4th
- Dancing Classrooms for 5th
- 5th Gade Festivities
- Cultural Arts Assemblies
- Sousa Garden
- Literacy Night
- STEAMM Night

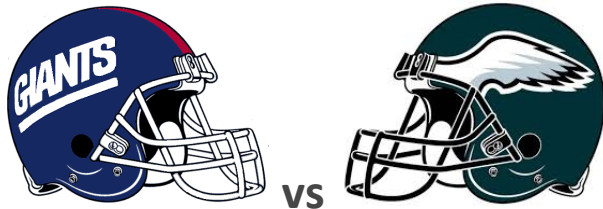
**We appreciate all that you do and give to our Sousa students!  
To donate, please go to [sousahsa.org](http://sousahsa.org)**



The Sousa HSA Invites All Super Dads to the Annual

# DADS' NIGHT OUT

OCTOBER 11TH  
AT THE  
PORT WASHINGTON YACHT CLUB



Game starts at 8:30pm

Have fun **AND** support SOUSA. Come watch the game with your friends and win SWAG, all while supporting OUR kids and OUR school. Last year we set records at this event, raising money for our kids that helped fund a number of programs - including Sousa's amazing Science Fair. Let's keep it up and smash the records again this year. Go Sousa!

\*\*Credit Cards Accepted\*\*



DAD'S NIGHT OUT – THURSDAY 10/11

I would like to help – here is my contact info.

My Name: \_\_\_\_\_

My email: \_\_\_\_\_ Please print clearly

YES, I'm in!

I would like to show my Sousa Spirit and

make a donation even though I cannot attend \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Please make all checks payable to SOUSA HSA, Inc. / Memo: Dads Night Out)

# See you there!

Thursday, 10/11  
8:00pm

PW Yacht Club  
1 Yacht Club Drive  
Port Washington, NY

\$25 Admission includes food, a beverage, a lucky ticket.

You can win:  
Collector's items,  
Sports Tickets,  
Broadway Tickets,  
SWAG, Local Merchandise

We are  
**SOUSA STRONG!**