

# The Sousa Notes

Home and School Association Newsletter – December 2018

## A Note from Dr. Meoli

As a musician and educator, it delights me to no end that two quite popular seasonal songs were penned in the town where I grew up. The lyric for the first, “Over the River and Through the Woods” (usually associated with Thanksgiving) was written by Lydia Maria Child on a farm in the sleepy little town of Wayland, Massachusetts and references the winding Sudbury River which, when it breached its banks in the spring, literally ran through my back yard. Maria (she hated the name Lydia) also wrote over 50 books, one of which, *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans* might have been the first anti-slavery book in this country, pre-dating *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* by two decades. She and her husband, David (!), were friends with such luminaries as Edgar Allen Poe and Oliver Wendell Holmes and crossed paths with a like-minded proponent of women’s suffrage, Alva Belmont—a Port Washington resident. You can’t make this stuff up.

The Childs attended services in the Unitarian Church in Wayland center (still standing—one of the church’s buildings was the subject of a “This Old House” episode) where the song, “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear” was first performed. The minister of that church and the composer of that carol, Edmund Hamilton Sears, preached sermons that also touched upon not only the evils of slavery but the equality of women and men. Sears lived in a house at the intersection of Plain Road and Claypit Hill Road—right around the corner from the one I lived in over 100 years later. A plaque now marks the spot where his house once stood.

These tunes and images mark a very special time and place for me—I hope they do for you as well. Over the next few weeks, whether or not “to grandmother’s house” you go, and whether or not there is “white and drifting snow”, may you find “peace on earth” and “good will to men” in your seasonal festivities. I would like to wish everyone in the extended Sousa family a restful vacation and a warm, wonderful holiday season!

Dave Meoli



## Upcoming HSA Events January 2019

- 1/4 - Spirit Day**
- 1/7 - 1/18 PARP (Parents as Reading Partners)**
- 1/19 - Pizza Workshop 10:00 AM**
- 1/19 - Toy Swap 11:00 AM**
- 1/21 - Martin Luther King Day - No School**
- 1/25 - HSA Meeting 8:15**
- 1/25 - Family Book Fair Night 6:00 PM**
- 1/25 - Sousa’s Got Talent Night 7:00 PM**
- 1/28-1/30 - Book Fair**

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



### Third Grade Engineers

Sousa third grade students just completed a PEP (Port Enrichment Program) enrichment unit with Mrs. Zeh. The students explored various engineering concepts by building structures with KEVA planks. In the final sessions of the unit, students worked in groups to design, sketch, and build a bridge. The students needed to make sure the bridge span was wide enough and tall enough for their model boat. Also, the bridge needed to have a flat deck which could support a model car. Here is just one photo of the many amazing bridges.



### A Wild Kingdom on Long Island

The fifth graders went wild at the Nassau County Museum of Art! The current exhibit is called "Wild Kingdom: 100 Years of Animal Art." The major talents represented in the exhibit whose paintings, drawings, and sculpture have immortalized the wild kingdom includes many top artists, including Pablo Picasso, Marc Chagall, John James Audubon and Jeff Koons among many others (there are over a hundred works on view). As a special treat, a lavishly colorful installation by the world-renowned artist and designer Hunt Slonem is transforming the elegant rooms of the mansion into a dream-like sanctuary for parrots, rabbits and butterflies, his signature motifs. Their guide pointed out to the students that each room had a theme, and by using clues in the paintings and the setup, the students were able to discover what those themes were. For more info about the exhibit: <http://www.nassaumuseum.org/>



### First Graders Visit the Cradle of Aviation Museum

3-2-1, Takeoff! The first graders at Sousa continued their studies of Earth and Space by taking a field trip to the Cradle of Aviation Museum. There they learned about astronauts, space shuttles and planets, got to explore all kinds of airplanes and aviation methods throughout history and realized the important role Long Island played during the early years of flight. The students were able to connect their knowledge from their unit in school and apply it to everything they saw at the museum. The students truly had a blast!





## Our Treats Reached Our Troops!

The boxes of Halloween treats that our students collected for our troops were received. Below is a nice thank you note from Commander Lee Thomason, the commanding officer of the USS MITSCHER, that we wanted to share with you and our students. Thank you again for your participation in this amazing program.

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From: "Thomason, Ashley L. CMC (DDG57)"  
Subject: A HUGE THANK YOU

Good afternoon,  
I hope this message finds you doing well. Our Sailors recently received and opened the boxes of candy that were sent by the students of John P. Sousa Elementary School. Our Sailors are extremely thankful for the kind gesture and generous care packages provided by these outstanding students. Attached are a few photos of our Sailors opening the care packages. Thank you again for all that you did to make this possible.  
Sincerely,  
CMDCM Lee Thomason



## A Thank You Note from the Sousa Community Outreach Committee

Fall is a festive season. Halloween, Thanksgiving and many religious holidays take place during this time of the year, making it a very busy time for everyone, including the Sousa HSA Community Outreach Committee. From Treats-for-Troops to the Winter Coat Drive, and from the Holiday Drive to the Make-A-Child-Smile Toy Drive, the Committee is always amazed by the generosity of the Sousa community. We are lucky to have so many people donate their time and/or money to help our neighbors in need. Your contributions, no matter how small, bring so much love and warmth to many families, and we sincerely thank you. We wish you a wonderful Holiday Season and a very happy and healthy New Year,  
Mathieu Lanfant and Ingrid Dudek Levine – Sousa HSA Community Outreach Committee Reps.



**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 and articles to Rod at [rodn29@gmail.com](mailto:rodn29@gmail.com) or Mat at [lanfant@msn.com](mailto:lanfant@msn.com)**



## Thanksgiving Baskets

The Sousa students and faculty worked hard to put together beautiful Thanksgiving Day baskets for some of Sousa's neediest families. Many of the Sousa teachers and educational assistants delivered these plentiful food baskets throughout Port Washington. Thank you to all the parents who donated the goods. This annual outreach effort helps our children learn that they are valuable members of the Port Washington community and that it is always important to help others.



## New Science Standards and Curriculum Reviewed at the HSA Meeting

During the last HSA meeting, a hands-on experiment and discussion were led by Dr. Meoli and Dr. Licato describing the current K-5 new science standards, which build upon themselves and get more in depth as the child matures. The district has adopted a Science 21 curriculum created by Putnam BOCES for grades K-2; the curriculum is still being developed for the upper grades and is expected to come on line one grade at a time over the next few years. Attending parents were given the opportunity to discuss the different one topic in the first grade curriculum and to experience an experiment on the shadows and phases of the moon that the first grade just finished. These new standards encourage our students to be inquisitive, curious and thoughtful learners. The future looks bright for our students! Come join us at our next meeting on January 25th at 8:15 am in the Multi-Purpose Room.



## Make-A-Child-Smile Toy Drive HSA Meeting

On behalf of Mrs. Reese and the Sousa Community Outreach Committee, thank you to all those who participated in this year's Make-A-Child-Smile Toy Drive. School Resource Officer Detective Anthony Guzzello, known around town as Officer Tony, picked up all the toys and will be distributing them to the children in need throughout our community, just in time for the holidays!



## Dancing Classrooms

Have you ever imagined your child dressed elegantly while gracefully ballroom dancing across a polished wood floor? Sounds like a dream, but to the parents of all the fifth graders it was a reality. On December 5th, all the fifth grade students participated in a beautiful night where they showcased their hard work of learning 6 ballroom dances in 10 weeks. Thanks to a grant from the Sousa HSA, the Ed Foundation and HEARTS, they were lucky enough to be part of Dancing Classrooms, a program which teaches ballroom dances to fifth grade students. As their teacher Miss Janna said, "They started the program as boys and girls and left as ladies and gentlemen." Bravo!



## Sousa Presents Its Social Emotional Learning at Conference

Mrs. Biblowitz and Dr. Meoli were invited to "share ideas from a school district successfully implementing Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Mental Health Regulations" at a conference at C.W. Post recently called, "Mental Health in our Schools: Healthier Minds, Healthier Children." They followed Dr. Marc Brackett, the Founding Director of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence (and codeveloper of the RULER program), and Amy Molloy, director of education for the Mental Health Association in New York state.



Mrs. Molloy began the program by reviewing the new Mental Health Regulations that were signed into law in July, 2018 that require instruction in mental health to all elementary, middle school, and high school students in New York. Dr. Brackett followed, sharing his research on the importance of emotional intelligence and linking social and emotional learning to the new standards. He also reviewed the effectiveness of the RULER program with its emphasis on recognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing, and regulating emotions for both students and adults in school settings.

Mrs. Biblowitz and Dr. Meoli then shared the "evolution" and growth of Sousa's social and emotional offerings starting with long standing programs for at risk students (such as Circle of Friends), and for all students (such as The Ambassador Program and No Name Calling Week), and highlighting community building projects and events such as the Fifth Grade Art Project, Whole School Assemblies (Unity Day, Sousa's Birthday Celebration, Hard Hat for Kids), and the River of Kindness. They ended their presentation, and the conference day, sharing how Sousa had created the Sousa Strong message and integrated it, along with the new Mental Health regulations, into the RULER program, showing examples of student work with Charters, the Mood Meter, and the Meta-Moment, and staff work with those same anchors and with professional development and turnkey training.

Dr. Brackett was very impressed with Sousa's work in this arena and asked if we would have a team present the school's work at the annual RULER Convention next year (we said yes!). We are Sousa Strong!

If you are interested in learning more about the new Mental Health Standards or RULER, you can check out the links below:

<http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/continuumofwellbeingguide.pdf>

<https://www.rulerapproach.org>

## Teachers Update

In science, **kindergartners** began their second unit on “Forces and Interactions: Pushes and Pulls.” The children investigate elementary principles of physical science. During this unit the children will explore how objects move in the world around us and observe how objects are affected when a force is applied to them. In writing the children are preparing to publish their first piece. It will be a narrative piece which includes labels and illustrations.



**First grade** went to the Cradle of Aviation's interactive “To the Moon” show. This was a great extension to their Sun, Moon and Stars science unit. In writing, they will be publishing their personal narratives.

**Second graders** have been working hard on their Realistic Fiction and will be sharing their published books with each other. Also, they have been conducting experiments to classify matter. In math, students have been adding three-digit numbers with regrouping.



Sousa **third graders** continued our Sousa Strong initiative by watching a live action play by the Broadhollow Theatre Company. During “The Bully Play” they learned about the different types of bullying and strategies that they can use to help deal with them. In science they are learning about forces and interactions in a variety of ways. Students began their voyage around the world in social studies. They have learned about world geography and are now ready to jump into North America. With the season of giving upon us, Sousa third graders did a Pajama and Book Drive. Through an organization called the Pajama Program and Scholastic, they are collecting new pajamas and books to donate before the winter break.



**Fourth graders** are in the middle of their multiplication unit. Students finished a three-week course on Expressive Elocution with Elise May. They used their family artifact speeches to help them learn how to become successful at public speaking. Students finished their unit on map studies and learned about the geography of New York.



The **fifth grade** has been very busy. They performed their Dancing Classrooms dances for their parents. This has been 13 weeks in the making and quite an accomplishment. Back in the classroom the students have begun to explore fractions within all the mathematical operations. They have studied the ancient cultures of the Maya, Aztec and Inca and seen how they used great engineering feats to adapt to their environment. They compared their governments, jobs, social hierarchy and many more aspects of the civilizations. The fifth graders have been busy learning the engineering process and trying it out. They also have completed their first set of book clubs based on Gordon Korman books.

### Physical Education Update

It is a very exciting time because students are currently in their gymnastics unit. Students learn a wide variety of skills and get to practice on different pieces of equipment. Tumbling skills on the floor, climbing ropes, balance beams, rings, uneven bars, and the vault are the stations that teachers set up in the gymnasium.



### Library News

Kindergarten - We have moved from nursery rhymes into folktales and have noticed how the stories get retold in different ways.

First grade - We are enjoying an investigation of different book formats, (ABC, 1-2-3, wordless, graphic design...) and how the author/illustrator can use them for different purposes.

Second grade - We did some real brain stretching by examining the use of visual representations (symbols) to help us understand and discuss abstract concepts such as idea, problem, chance, fear, and joy. We are now beginning a unit on literary genres.

Third grade – Students have been very engaged in an author/illustrator study of Chris Van Allsburg. His fascinating books have spark great discussions on perspective and creativity. We have also had fun finding Fritz the dog in each of the books!

Fourth grade - We have become more familiar with various reference resources. Students used the World Almanac for Kids to hone keyword identification and index skills in a friendly competitive challenge.

Fifth grade - Students now have experience with advanced search features and Boolean search terms. They are learning to apply the T.R.A.A.P. Test which provides criteria to evaluate their sources of information such as websites, etc.



## Math in the Morning - Sousa's Math Olympiad Club

43 fourth and fifth grade students signed up to be part of the Sousa Math Olympiad Club, which meets on Thursdays from 7:15 am - 8:15 am. During club meetings, Mrs. Zeh, the club adviser, works with the students to practice problem-solving skills, discuss different ways to solve a problem, and participate in the Math Olympiad Contests. There is one contest each month from November to March, and each contest has only five questions. The questions are very challenging! Visit the Math Olympiad website, <http://www.moems.org/> to see if you can solve the Math Olympiad Problem of the Month!



## Dads - Get Involved!

Our very own Sousa Dad Mat Lanfant made the newspaper this week as one of Long Island's PTA dads who make a difference in their district. Mat was nominated by our Superintendent Dr. Mooney, and out of all the dads in the LI districts, his story was one of the nine that got picked by Newsday. For the full article, visit <https://www.newsday.com/lifestyle/family/pta-dads-school-fathers-1.24320280>. Congratulations, Mat, for being recognized and thank you again for all you do!



 Happy Holidays



## Holiday Sugar Cookies

The children in Mrs. Wengenosky's class had a blast making holiday sugar cookies. From start to finish, they were the chefs. They read holiday/winter stories in between and even played a word scramble game with the words "WE MADE SUGAR COOKIES." The children were able to make quite a few words! There was a lot of creativity and thought put into the shapes they chose and the accompanying decorations. When the cookies were done, they enjoyed them with hot chocolate. Here is the recipe: <https://cookiesandcups.com/easy-sugar-cookies-recipe/>  
Happy cooking!



## Apple Turnovers

Ms. Szillus's class visited the cooking lab for some fun fall cooking. The children learned how to make apple turnovers using a recipe that can easily be recreated at home.

Showing off their measurement skills, the class combined ingredients and then creatively found different ways to fold their apples into the dough. One of our class moms read while the turnovers cooked. The class exercised their attentive listening skills during *The Stolen Smell* and *How Tiger Got His Stripes*. This was no easy task as the cooking lab filled with the amazing aroma of caramelized apples! After a little glaze, the hot and delicious apple turnovers were ready to eat. Try it out!

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### 20-Minute Apple Pie Turnovers:

- \* 1 large granny smith apple diced very small
- \* 1 package of crescent rolls
- \* 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- \* 1 tablespoon of butter
- \* 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- \* 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- \* 1 tsp corn starch
- \* parchment lined baking sheet, small stock pot, wooden spoon, knife

### Glaze:

- \* 2 cups of Powdered Sugar
- \* 1 tablespoon of Milk (a tiny bit more if you find it too thick)



### Directions:

Pre-heat your oven to 375, and prepare baking sheet with 8 crescent rolls spread into triangles. Add apples, butter, and spices to your stock pot and stir for about 3 minutes over medium-high heat. Add in cornstarch to thicken up the filling and stir well. Once it gets thick and caramel-like remove from heat. Add a little filling to each center of these rolls, and then fold and tuck them. Bake for 15 minutes. Place them on a serving dish and garnish with glaze.



## Thankful for Mrs. Reese

Ms. Petrides' class began the month of November with "30 Days of Thankfulness." The children and adults in the room drew pictures of the things they were thankful for. The pictures were all randomly numbered and placed on the bulletin board. Each day the class star had the job of turning over a picture. The children were excited and eager to see whose picture was going to be revealed. On November 8th, the class was thrilled to reveal... Mrs. Reese's picture that Axel proudly drew! Our special board showed that we are thankful for so many special people at Sousa, Mrs. Reese being one of them.



## Mindfulness Residency

The first graders just completed their ten-week mindfulness residency. The program, led by Stacey Gross of Mindful Kids New York, was funded by an Ed. Foundation grant written by Sousa teachers Julie Anzalone, Maria Buffolino, Marissa Johnson and Jamie Greenberg. Each 30-minute workshop focused on themes such as mindful bodies (listening and focusing), mindful breathing (tools to quiet one's mind and be still), generosity (how helping others and/or receiving help feels good), mindful thoughts (both understanding and labeling past and present thoughts, and sending kind thoughts), mindful seeing (fostering an awareness of their surroundings, children noticed things in their classrooms for the first time that had always been there), mindful walking (observing plants and animals), mindful eating (being aware of the texture of foods), "creating spaces" (being aware of other people's emotions) and "five things we like about ourselves." Each lesson featured a guided meditation for 2 minutes at first and then built up to 3 and 5 minutes as the children progressed in the program. This wonderful program will next be introduced to the second graders over the coming weeks.



## Thank You to All Parents for Your Support

Fall Fundraising 2018-19 has come to an end and was a great success! Together, the KidStuff Coupon Book and Winter Wonderland fundraisers raised more than \$7,800 for our Sousa HSA! The generous support of our Sousa families will help us continue to finance important programs and enrichments for our Sousa students and families, such as Science Night, Literacy Night, new playground equipment (see picture of our latest addition), dance residencies, taekwondo residency, Dancing Classrooms, STEAM Night, the Sousa Garden, New Parent Breakfast, Fifth Grade Party, Sousa's RULER initiative, our iconic Float and much more! All of our Sousa students and families should feel very proud of their great job fundraising this year. For those of you who have not yet sent in payment for the KidStuff book we sent home, it's not too late to help us reach our fall fundraising goal of \$8,500! Please send in cash or check (made out to "Sousa HSA, Inc.") for \$25. Thank you all again for your continued support of our HSA!



*Happy Holidays*



Happy  
New Year