

families first basket raffle

Families first will be holding a basket raffle to assist in their extensive programs. A retired 1989 Longaberger Large Market Basket.

Contents:

Winter Lace Afghan 46" X 54"
2 Placemats & Napkins

Vanilla Home Fragrance w/ Glass Container
Tickets 1/ \$2.00; 3/\$5.00 and 7/\$10.00

For more information contact: Frank Jones, Families First Director, at 610-863-3688 or email him at jones.frank@penargylsd.org. All proceeds will be used to support the programs of Family First.

it's a family race

by Andrew Salamone

On Friday October 10th, Families first will be holding their 7th annual 5K race, and one mile fun walk. The race and fun walk will begin at 9:00am; registration at 7:45am. Before October 1st, it will cost \$15 per person, or \$30 per family, to register. After the first, it will cost \$18. If you register, you will receive a shirt, bagels, and entertainment. The race will start at Wind Gap Borough Park. The fastest male and female will receive an award. The race and fun walk will happen rain or shine.



by Ryan Hutchison

Families First is a local non-profit organization based at the Wind Gap Middle School dedicated to helping students and families in need. It is a community organization started by school administrators, teachers, secretaries, and community representatives. It offers a long list of different programs to assist students and low-income families. Some of these services include referring families to resources for issues that they may need assistance with, assisting families with school-related matters where they might need guidance, giving Christmas gifts to needy children, and even a mobile dentist office to uninsured families. Frank Jones is the head of Families First. This is a wonderful organization which makes life better for disadvantaged families and children that he runs.

Q: What is Families First?

A: "It is a family center that provides family assistance, advocacy, and referral services."

Q: What do you do as the head of Families First?

A: "I develop programs, provide staff and volunteers, and do fundraising, write grants, and do community outreach"

Q: How long was Families First around?

A: "Since 2002"

Q: What does Families First do in the schools and the community?

A: "In the schools, there is the Learning Together program at the high school, which is a mentoring program for grades 9-12. At the middle school, there are several programs, such as the Across Ages Program, which is also a mentoring program, and after school tutoring/homework assistance. In the community, we assist families and children in all aspects of needs"

Q: What is Families First's mission statement?

A: "To provide resources and advocacy to families in need in the Pen Argyl Area School District"

Q: Where did you graduate from high school and college?

A: "I graduated from the High School of Commerce in New York City and I graduated with a degree in social welfare from Adelphi University in Garden City, Long Island and I received a certificate in non-profit management from Columbia University"

Q: What are some of your hobbies and favorite things to do?

A: "I like skiing, basketball, football, reading, and traveling across the world. My teams are the Lakers, Eagles, and Penn State and my favorite places I have been are Innsbruck, Austria, and Tignes, France."



R. Hutchison, Echo

mr. peck

by Regan Murphy and Libby Krincek

Mr. Peck is Wind Gap Middle School's new world history teacher for seventh grade. He replaced retired Mr. Renaldo. Mr. Peck grew up in Nazereth, Pennsylvania, and enjoyed school as a kid, knowing he one day wanted to become a teacher. To achieve his goal, he attended Moravian College, and majored in education. When we asked him how he liked it here at WGMS, he replied, "I love it! It's way better than last year!" referring to the school he taught at the previous year. To our surprise, he told us that he had coached soccer for two years. Not basketball! When he saw the look on our faces, he laughed and told us that thinking basketball was realistic, since he is six feet six inches.

courtesy of D. Riker

vandegrift

by Josh Salamone and Johnny Albanese

Mrs. Vandegrift is a new addition to the WGMS faculty, and we took some time to get to know her a little better.

Mrs. Vandegrift is a mother of two children, Christi, who is a sixth grader here in the middle school, and

Michael, who is a third grader at Plainfield. She is interested in music and also has a degree in art. She plays the flute professionally, sometimes performing with local music groups. Mrs. Vandegrift says she would enjoy teaching music to 6th and 8th grades, which are the grade levels she currently works with. Although she now resides in the Pen Argyl area, she grew up in Easton, and graduated high school there. I am sure that she will become a great part of our school, and a grand addition to the school's staff.



J. Salamone, Echo