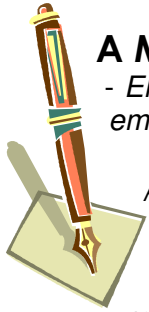


the HARRINGTON HERALD

Harrington School • 328 Lowell Street • Lexington, MA 02420 • (781) 860-0012

Elaine Mead, *Principal* Suzanne Chersonson & Mary Ann Stewart, *PTA Co-Presidents*



A Message from the Principal

- Elaine Mead,
emead@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us

At this time of the year, students are comfortable in their classrooms, routines are established, and the stimulating grade level curriculum is in full swing. While we are actively engaged in this current work, we are also beginning to plan for the future. Budgets, staffing needs, and program development are topics discussed at all levels of the school system. At Harrington, initial conversations regarding student placement begin this month. This complex process requires a thoughtful approach that requires significant time.

The teachers and I will work together closely to create balanced classes, heterogeneous groups of children with a range of talents, abilities, and personalities. Our primary goal is to develop positive groupings for each student and a class that will work well together. Many factors must be considered and information is gathered from a variety of sources. Although placement decisions are ultimately a school responsibility, parents can provide valuable insight regarding their child as a learner.

Prior to April vacation, a letter will be sent home to inform parents of the placement process, the timeline, and to provide an opportunity for written parent input. In addition, you are invited to join me at a "Principal's Dialogue on Placement" at Harrington School on Wednesday, March 26th from 7:00-8:00pm. The purpose of this conversation is to share ideas and priorities regarding this important process.

I look forward to continuing our work together this year and I am energized by the possibilities as we plan for the future. Thanks to all of you for your support of your children and of Harrington School. Together, we make this a wonderful place for children and their families. If I can be of assistance to you please email me or call the school office at 781-860-0012.

A Message from PTA Co-President

- Mary Ann Stewart, MaryAnn@RedOnionDesign.com



Our PTA meeting on Friday, March 7th is an opportunity to bring questions and concerns to Principal, Elaine Mead, and Harrington School Counselor, Amy Chamberlain. Perhaps you have a fourth or fifth grader and you would like to help her make a good transition to middle school. Do you have particular questions about curriculum being used? The PTA Café will open at 8:45 AM in the cafeteria. Come have a cup of coffee and share your questions and concerns, socialize and schmooze.

Another opportunity to ask questions is at a forum at Clarke Middle School Tuesday, March 4th at 7:00 PM. We all know that effective teachers
...**Continued** on page 3



March Calendar

	Science Enrichment programming for 2 nd Grade, 8:45 am
4	Harrington Reads (7:00-8:00pm, Gr. 4 and 5)
5	ACT programming for K-Ribbon dancers 9 - 11 am
6	METCO Family Friends Day
7	PTA morning coffee (8:45am) in the Cafeteria
12	Gr. 2 and 3 concert: 9:00am performance for school; 7:00pm performance for parents
13	Kindergarten Orientation night 7 - 8pm
13	5th Gr. student/parent dialogue @ LHS
17	Kindergarten Registration Drop off
18	Science Fair (7:00 - 8:30pm)
19	ACT programming for 1 st Gr. - author 9 - 12pm
21	No-school - Good Friday
24	1st Gr. Family Math Night 6:45-8:30
25	Grade 4 MCAS - Long Composition
26	Grade 3 MCAS - Reading
26	Grade 4 MCAS - English Language Arts (ELA)
26	Principal's Dialogue on Placement -7:00 - 8:00 pm
27	Grade 3 MCAS - Reading
27	Grade 4 MCAS - ELA
28	Grade 3 MCAS - Reading
28	Grade 4 MCAS - ELA
31	Grade 5 MCAS - ELA
31	ACT programming for 3 rd . GR. - Bay Colony Educators

Harrington PTA Presents



Q & A with Principal, Elaine Mead &
School Counselor, Amy Chamberlain

Friday, March 7, 8:45 AM - 10:00 AM

Are homework expectations manageable?
Do you have concerns about your child transitioning
well to Middle School?
What about Scott Foresman, Everyday Math, or other
curricula?
Do you have questions or concerns you would like to
have addressed?

All parents are invited.
Bring your questions, thoughts, and
comments and join us for coffee, support,
and conversation!

PTA Co-Presidents *continued...*

have a profound impact on student achievement. What happens when a school system hires 25% new staff in two years? What happens when teachers collaborate on best practices to address challenges in teaching? What happens when the focus shifts from "What did I teach" to "What did they learn"? Come find out how "professional learning communities" are changing your child's classroom experience.

And, speaking of your child's classroom experience, Parent-Teacher Conferences are coming up next month - you will likely receive a notice about scheduling an appointment soon. A conference is important and now is a good time for families to prepare. Teachers need your help to do a first-class job. The conference is an opportunity for you to ask questions about the class and your child's progress. It is also a good time for you and the teacher to work together as a team to discuss ways you both can help your son or daughter. There are some questions to

consider before the conference and you may find them on page 4 of this issue.

PTA presidents across Lexington have been asking questions about how we can help our children be more resilient, motivated, and balanced. We are sponsoring psychologist, Dr. Robert Brooks, to come and speak to Lexington parents on April 8, at 7:00 PM at Clarke Middle School - we hope you will save the date and plan to attend. Dr. Brooks is from Needham and has lectured nationally and internationally to audiences of parents, educators, mental health professionals, and business people on topics pertaining to motivation, resilience, self-esteem, and family relationships, to name a few. He has also written extensively about these topics. He has not presented in this area for about five years and we think he will deliver a lot of value to parents. Look for the flier with more details to come home in backpacks, or go to his website: <http://www.drrobertbrooks.com>

School Committee Update

Mary Ann Stewart, PTA Liaison



Discussion of full day kindergarten (FDK) and a commissioned report on closing the achievement gap interspersed the School Committee's deliberation of FY09 Budget details. Please view the full report on the Achievement Gap, as well as the PowerPoint presentation given to families in Boston on January 30, on the LPS website: <http://lps.lexingtonma.org/>

FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN

Public discussion of FDK continued for more than two hours Saturday, February 9. The meeting, originally scheduled for the Selectmen's Meeting Room in the Town Office building, had to be moved to Cary Memorial Hall in order to accommodate all who had come out to express their views on the superintendent's proposal to implement FDK this fall 2008. Each elementary school currently houses three half-day kindergarten classes as part of the school's operating budget. Details for funding the FDK program is still in discussion as we go to print.

THE 2008-2009 BUDGET

The Committee approved the FY09 Operating School Budget at a scheduled public meeting Monday, February 11 (Fiscal Year 2009 begins July 1, 2008 and includes the 2008-2009 academic year). The final Summit Collaboration Meeting between the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, Appropriation Committee, and

Capital Expenditures Committee on Wednesday, February 13, saw that number adjusted down by \$294,868 for a new budget figure of \$64,548,189. The reduced budget amount reflects the application of a credit which will be applied to LABBB tuition invoices for FY09. The FY09 Total Budget Request (Municipal and School) will be presented to Town Meeting Members for their review before discussion at Precinct Meetings in March; the public school budget will appear as a single line item (line 1100) to be voted by Town Meeting Members as part of the annual Town Operating Budget during Town Meeting which begins Wednesday, March 19, 7:30 PM at Cary Memorial Hall. The Financial Articles, including the Town's Operating Budget, will be taken up first.

2008 TOWN MEETING

Town Meeting continues every Monday and Wednesday night until all of the articles contained in the Warrant are voted upon; there are sixty articles this year, one quarter of them Citizen's Petitions. All residents of the Town should have been mailed a hard copy of the Warrant; view the 2008 Annual Town Warrant on-line at the Town of Lexington website: <http://ci.lexington.ma.us>

Residents are encouraged to attend Town Meeting. Sit in the balcony or in the back section of Cary Hall; residents may address the Town Meeting, but may not make motions and must not participate in any votes. The proceedings of Town Meeting sessions are usually made available for home viewing on local cable TV - check your provider for listings.

Box Top Tuesdays

- Ellen Cameron,
eusol@aol.com

Box Tops are doing very well. We just counted our Box Tops since November and reached \$450.00 for Harrington School. This year we will beat our goal. Thanks to everyone who clips and saves and brings them in every Tuesday! Lets try to match this amount from now till June!



Silent Auction Items Needed

Most of you may know we are celebrating our community at a Harrington Hurrah on April 4th. To raise some money for our school we need donations for a silent auction table. Do you have tickets to a sporting event you don't need? A profession you can donate hours? Put together a basket with some friends? A second home that someone could use on or off season?

Send any donations to Ellen Cameron at eusol@aol.com so we can discuss or answer any questions you may have.

Early Childhood Screenings

Elizabeth Billings-Fouhy 781-860-5823



Lexington Public School's Special Education Early Childhood Department conducts educational screenings

throughout the year at parent request. Early childhood screening is performed for preschool children, aged three, four and five years, whose parents or teachers have a concern about a suspected disability. A screening may include: a parent interview; a health history; a check of a child's cognitive, language and motor development, vision and hearing. A screening will only occur with parent or guardian consent. The primary rational for screening is to help children who need services gain access to them at a very early stage to prevent the occurrence of more severe problems. This screening is not intended to determine readiness for kindergarten. If a parent has a question about a preschooler's development and would like more information about screening and evaluation services or would like to make a screening appointment, please call Elizabeth Billings-Fouhy (above).

Notes from the Music Room

- Holly Stumpf



The Harrington students and I are very grateful to both the Lexington Education Foundation and the Friends of Lexington Music Art and Drama Students for some wonderful additions to the music room. As a result of a grant written last spring, the LEF purchased three large drums for Harrington. These drums will provide exciting new possibilities when the students are doing creative work and they are searching for a precise sound to express an idea or character. They will also add a new depth to the drum circle experience. The drum circle facilitation training during the summer of 2006 was also funded by the LEF so this year's grant builds on work that has already begun.

The support of FOLMADS in underwriting two grants has also contributed to the music room at Harrington. One grant provided for the purchase of two medium-sized drums, which complete the drum circle and other drumming experiences. The second grant allowed the purchase of a voice-activated cassette recorder.

This device provides students the opportunity to record their work and then immediately listen to it so they can appreciate and evaluate their own achievements.

LEF and FOLMADS are constant supporters of the students and teachers in Lexington and their work enriches our lives. We are very thankful.



Thinking About Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Mary Ann Stewart

Conference dates at Harrington are coming up next month on April 2nd, 3rd, 9th, & 10th. Before you attend your Parent-Teacher Conference, find out from your child which subjects he likes the best and the least. Ask why. Also, if there is anything your child would like you to talk about with her teacher.

It is helpful if you let the teacher know if you have particular issues you would like to discuss; many teachers request this information in advance of the conference. Make a list of topics to discuss, along with questions about academics and behavior. Questions you ask can help you express your hopes for your child's success in class and for the teacher. It's a good idea to ask the important questions first, in case time runs out. The teacher's answers should help you both work together to help your child. Here are some questions you may want to think about before the conference:

- What subject does my child like most? Least?
- What can I do to help my child with subjects he finds difficult? How can I help him study? Prepare for class? Improve her work? A good time to ask these questions is when his teacher gives you samples of your child's work.
- Is my child trying as hard as she can?
- Does my child participate in class discussions and activities?
- Is my child in different classes or groups for different subjects? Which ones? How are the groups determined?
- How well does my child get along with others?
- Have you noticed changes in the way my child acts? For example, have you noticed squinting, tiredness, or moodiness that might be a sign of physical or other problems?
- How are you measuring my child's progress? Through tests? Portfolios? Class participation? Projects?
- What kinds of tests do you give? What do the tests show about my child's progress? How does my child handle taking tests?

Help your child understand that you and the teacher are meeting to help her. When a child knows his parents and teachers are regularly working together, he will see that education is a high priority requiring commitment and effort.



School Nurse's Notes

Margaret Waugh, RNBSN

mwaugh@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us

Many of you may have heard through the media that those flu shots we got last fall did not cover all the flu strains that have been identified. Students and Staff at Harrington have been suffering from Flu, colds, strep throat and ear infections. Hopefully, the February vacation gave all of us, including the germs, a time to rest and recuperate! The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has produced many materials to inform the public about the Flu. I have copies of a booklet "Flu what You Can Do" which you can pick up in my office. It gives tips on caring for your family at home who have the Flu.

Bits and Pieces

- Please remember to dress your children for outdoor recess. Boots, snow pants, hats and gloves/mittens are necessary to keep safe, dry and active during recess. We will be going outside unless it is below 20 degrees, raining or playground conditions are unsafe.
- Make sure your child has something to eat before school and pack your child a snack each day. Children need a snack between breakfast and lunch to refuel their bodies for optimal learning. Fruit, cut up veggies and other nutritional snacks keep growing bodies healthy.
- 5th grade students will be bringing home notices for the annual Postural Screening Exam scheduled for mid-late March. This is a state mandatory screening for all students in grades 5-10.
- Registration for students entering Kindergarten in September will be held at Harrington School on Monday March 17 from 9-11am. Completed registration and medical forms may be dropped off at that time. Deadline for all registration materials is April 1st.
- All medical forms can be downloaded online from the Lexington Public Schools website, www.lps.lexington.org. Click on the Schools link, then click on downloadable forms. You may also pick up copies of forms in my office.



The Green Team

- Ellen Cameron, eusol@aol.com

For those who want to cut down on the endless catalogs that get delivered to your home, here's an idea from a Harrington Family, log onto: Catalogchoice.org Catalog Choice is a free service that lets you decline paper catalogs you no longer wish to receive. Reduce the amount of unsolicited mail in your mailbox, while helping to preserve the environment.

Of course if you enjoy browsing through catalogs, make sure you recycle them after you are finished reading/ordering.

A simple thing to do: shut off your computer when you are not at home. Yes, the sleep mode does use less energy, but if you aren't home you aren't using the computer and you are wasting energy and wasting carbon emissions. So log on and off whenever you are able.



Lexington SPED PAC

The Special Education Parent Advisory Council invites you to join us at 7:30pm on Thursday, March 6th for a discussion about educating children with disabilities at Lexington High School. The Lexington High School administrators who will be speaking are Dr. Michael Jones, LHS Principal, Ms. Sherry Coughlin, Interim Department Head for Special Education, and Mr. Lester Eggleston, Director of Guidance. The meeting will take place in the Library Media Center at LHS, room 147. After the presentation there will be an opportunity to network with other parents.

If you have any questions or a need for accommodations, feel free to contact the PAC co-chairs, Dale Hernquist or Kevin Johnson. We hope to see you there.

Raising Resilient Children & Adolescents

Dr. Robert Brooks

April 8, 2008, 7-9pm

Jonas Clark Middle School Auditorium



Advocacy in Action

-
By Mary Ann Stewart

Two years ago, I wrote in this newsletter of my experience participating in my first National PTA Legislative Conference in Washington DC. The experience caused me to think about the democratic process and the importance of advocacy.

Last Monday, February 25 - Thursday, February 28, I joined 250 state PTA leaders in Washington DC for the 2008 Legislative Conference sponsored by National PTA. All fifty states were represented, as well as from the Virgin Islands and the European Congress. All convened to address, among other things, the achievement gap, child nutrition and school lunch programs, and the need for increased education and IDEA funding. On our last day, state PTA representatives went to Capitol Hill for scheduled meetings with their elected Congressional Legislators.

Four of us from the Massachusetts PTA Board met with our Massachusetts delegation. Most of our meetings were short, about half an hour each, but provided sufficient time to build upon established relationships and to express our concerns. We had a lengthy and substantive meeting with Senator Kennedy about the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act, now languishing in limbo until after the presidential election. He was very interested in hearing our perspective - the perspective of parents with children in Massachusetts public schools.

States and local communities, with the federal government as a critical third partner, have a shared responsibility for maintaining public schools and assuring that all children have equitable access to a high-quality public education. Across our country and Commonwealth, schools lack resources for critical programs needed to reduce the achievement gap and to overcome barriers to learning that threaten the quality of education for every child and leave our most vulnerable children behind.

A unified voice makes an impact. Our government, our civic engagement with it and our participation in it, is what makes the difference to our elected officials to create the kinds of policies and laws that we want. With so many PTA leaders walking the long, hard halls of Congress that day, we were truly speaking for every child with one voice.

You are invited to the
HARRINGTON HURRAH!
Family Night

What: Just a party to celebrate our school

When: Friday, April 4th from 6:45pm - 9:00pm

Where: Harrington School...where else?!

Attire: Harrington Spirit Wear (available that evening)



What's Happening:

- Desserts and Drinks
- DJ Dave playing dance music, running games, and giving out prizes
- 5th Grade Canned Food Drive (to benefit Lexington Food Pantry)
- Mural Slide Show
- Silent Auction

RSVP: A response is greatly appreciated, as is helpful for planning (however not required). Please respond by March 28th.

For questions or volunteering contact:

- Jacqy Fiore jacqyfiore@rcn.com
- Katie Cutler katiepcutler@rcn.com

Tear Off and Return by **March 28th** to box at PTA Central outside the school office,
with checks made payable to **Harrington School PTA.**

Tickets are \$5 each or \$20 per family, plus 1 canned good collected at door

Please contact Katie, Jacqy or Mrs. Mead if cost is a concern!

NAME: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

#___ Individual Tickets (\$5 each)

#___ Number in your party

#___ Family Tickets (\$20 each)

___ I am willing to volunteer(30 minutes)at this event.



Don't forget to include your check with this form!

Our Heartfelt Thanks to ...



...our amazing BINGO volunteers: **Joanne Kaye** (chair) and **Beth Gaudette** (Joanne's right hand), **Peggy Gibson**, **Mrs. Beth Nasson**, **Ellen Cameron** (MC), **Beth Mace**, **Julie Vincent**, **Diane Coste**, **Mrs. Rose Culkins**, **Mrs. Elaine Mead**, **Mrs. Heather McConnell**, **Mrs. Sally Josiassen**, **Mr. Joe Josiassen**, **Helen Goodreau**, **Ms. Mary Yardley**, & **Kerry Heyda**...the special people at **Rancatore's**, **Bertucci's**, **Catch a Falling Star**, **Candy Castle**, **Not Your Average Joe's**, **Whole Foods** (Woburn), **Lexington Flick**, & **Trader Joe's** (Burlington), who donated fabulous BINGO prizes...and to our dedicated custodians **Mr. Paul Cuzzupe**, **Mr. Mark Freitas**, and **Mr. Ron Miles** for their help setting and cleaning up - you rock!

... **Mrs. Widhu** for use of the Library to greet our community readers and for flexibility with her library schedule...**many teachers** who also rearranged schedules to accommodate the community read aloud times...community readers **Robert Beaudoin**, **Norman Cohen**, **Christina DeMambro**, **Bill Gore**, **Peter Kelley**, **Jeanne Krieger**, **Colleen LeMay**, **Sheila Levitan**, **Ruth Lynn**, **Hank Manz**, **David Pinsonneault**, **Joe Rancatore**, **Gail Wagner**, and **Lynn Wilson**...and to **Doreen Mitchell**, **Andrea Caplan** and **Catherine Murphy** who arranged for them to read to our students.

...**the Resnick Family** for counting our collection of box tops!

...the tireless crew of MURAL volunteers: **Tracey Mackley**, **Stephanie London**, **Jason MacFadyen**, **Irene Lee**, **Leslie Zales**, **Hua Dong**, **Anne Stevens**, **Genevieve Ng**, **Holly Boker**, **Katie Cutler**, **Irene Lee**, **Andrea Caplan** (volunteer coordinator), **Kerry Hughes**, **Diana South**, **Shelley Isaacson**, **Cristina Burwell**, **Nikki Okubo**, **Helen Goodreau**, **Judith Mulvihill**, **Christina Carrez**, **Ellen Cameron**, **Kathy Thompson**, **Sheri Foreman**, **Iris Rozenberg**, **Kirsty Collis**, **Suzanne Chersonson**, **Jonathan Reich**, and **Miriam Fein-Cole**...the Mural Project Team Members for their vision and direction: **Mr. David Crump**, **Doreen Mitchell** (project manager), **Angelique Swingle**, **Ms. Roberta Wehmeyer**, **Andrea Caplan**, **Shelley Isaacson**, **Ellyn Rossi**, **Cristina Burwell**, **Ms. Cindy Salamone**, **Mrs. Susie Woodland**, **Mrs. Geri O'Neill**, **Mrs. Amy Chamberlain**, and **Mrs. Elaine Mead**...and to the **Lexington Education Foundation (LEF)** for providing the funding for this unique and special mural.

...**Amy Zaslow**, **Suzanne Kouri**, and **Raana Khavandgar** for organizing the 19th Annual Talent Show...**Mrs. Elaine Mead**, **Mrs. Jen Minasian**, **Mrs. Holly Stumpf**, **Ms. Nicole Rhodes**, **Mr. Paul Cuzzupe**, **Mr. Mark Freitas**, and **Mr. Ron Miles** for their support and assistance with many logistics before and after the show...Family Volunteers **Andrea Caplan**, **Michelle**

... continued on next page

Choi, Lynda Cutrell, Jennifer Jo, Joanne Kaye, Cathy Kim, Michelle Mabardy, Doreen Mitchell, Karen Skoff, Roberta Wilson, and ALL of our parents who were so willing to help in a pinch...Fifth Grade Volunteers **Kayla Bordley, Reed Callahan, John Caples, Amelia Cecere, Felipe Chamon, Amy Ding, Fiona Dougan, Annie Douvas, Helen Fiora, Lenae Fiora, Caroline Forlenza, Janelle Franklin, Camille Fraser, Raymond Gong, Brigit Ingwersen, Maria Ioakimidis, Jake Klinzing, John Lahiff, Megan Logan, Rhea Malafeew, Ana Manuelian, Ilise Martel, and Bella Orcutt** for announcing the acts and terrific support during transitions...the ever-energetic Harrington Groovers **Ms. Mary Yardley, Mrs. Cindy Salamone, Mrs. Joan Tempesta, Ms. Kristen Kilday, Mrs. Geri O'Neill, Ms. Glenda Little, Mrs. Holly Stumpf, Mrs. Liz Class, Mrs. Elaine Mead, Ms. Kathy Martin, Ms. Amanda Doyle, Mrs. Mary Turo, Ms. Sahr Khan, Mrs. Susie Woodland, Ms. Edie Lipinski, Ms. Heather McConnell, Mrs. Amy Chamberlain, Mrs. Laurie Sanroma, Mrs. Margaret Waugh, Mrs. Maureen Wojcik, Mrs. Beth Nasson, Ms. Nicole Rhodes, and Ms. Denise Omobono** for their fabulous dancing and amazing school spirit...**all of the awesome Harrington students** who generously shared their talents with the Harrington community...and to **all appreciative audience members** who came out to support everyone.

the HARRINGTON HERALD

Layout & Submissions: Cristina Burwell - ristinaburwell@mac.com

Proofreader: Duncan Stewart - fduncanstewart@aim.com

The Harrington Herald is the monthly newsletter of the Harrington PTA, published ten times a year. In keeping with the PTA Newsletter Policy, the *Herald* will print items directly related to the schools and their PTA's. This includes curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities that are PTA - or system-supported, and school-sanctioned projects. All articles are subject to editorial discretion.

Newsletter material may be emailed to Cristina Burwell (see above). If you cannot email your submission, please call her to make other arrangements for delivery.

Visit the Harrington School Web Site at <http://harrington.lexingtonma.org>.

Webmaster: Jerry Michelson: jerry@michelsonshoes.com



Next Submissions Deadline: March 20, 2008