



Harrington The Herald

Harrington School
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Nov/Dec 2012

Volume 15, Issue 2



Details available online

NOVEMBER

- 1 PTA Gen. Mtg 6:30
- 2 Walk to School
- 6 **No School**
(Prof. Dev.)
- 6 Nat'l. Voting Day!
- 8 METCO FF Day
- 12 **No School**
(Veteran's Day)
- 13 Gr. 3 Family Math Night
- 21 **Early Dismissal**
- 23 **No School**
(Thanksgiving)
- 27 Gr. 4 Family Math Night

DECEMBER

- 4 Gr. 5 Family Math Night
- 7 Walk to School
- 7 Let's Chat! Night
- 13 METCO FF Day
- 13 5th Grade Chorus, String Band and 4th Gr. Strings 9am
- 24 - 31 **No School**
(Winter Break)



Parent Opportunities

• **PTA Positions** (p. 2)
Executive Committee, as well as various PTA leadership roles

From the Principal

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

Dear Parents,
 "Happiness leads to success."
 "Happiness is a choice." According to Shawn Achor, author of The Happiness Advantage, happiness is not the result of success; rather it is the necessary foundation. I first learned about this research in an article that was published in Harvard Business Review. ("*Positive Intelligence: Three Ways Individuals Can Cultivate Their Own Sense of Well-Being and Set Themselves Up to Succeed*") Harvard Business Review, January-February 2012 (Vol. 90, #1-2, p. 100-102) The best part was learning that we can increase our happiness through our mindset. Ninety percent of our happiness comes from within us. "Research shows that when people work with a positive mindset, performance on nearly every level – productivity, creativity, engagement – improves."

Achor makes a compelling case for choosing happiness and developing the habits that build happiness. He offers several concrete ideas that make a difference in how we view the world. Achor encourages us to take the 21 day challenge and look for 3 positive encounters each day. As we scan our world with gratitude for these moments, our brain actually changes with more positive emotions. When our brain is happy we learn more and are able to solve more complex problems.

I encourage you to take a look at a short TED Talk presented by Shawn Achor. I have included the link below. Achor is an entertaining and thought provoking speaker. I bought

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From the PTA: Fundraising?

Coleen McAdam, mcadamtwins@verizon.net

Why do we fundraise? Fundraising at Harrington School is one of the most creative and rewarding jobs of the PTA Executive Committee. Not only are fundraising activities fun for everyone, they directly support the education of our children and financially support our teachers here at Harrington. For example, our Fall Festival for the Arts, which took place last weekend, was a success all around. It exceeded its goal, contributing valuable dollars to the PTA's fundraising goal, and uniting the Harrington and larger Lexington Community for a true celebration of the arts! These funds will support upcoming arts programs for every grade level, such as:

- Kindergarten Chinese Ribbon Dancing
- 1st Grade Wingmasters (learning about birds)
- 2nd Grade Tide Pools of New England
- 3rd Grade Kitchen Chemistry (from the Discovery Museum in Acton)
- 4th Grade Star Lab (from the Museum of Science)
- 5th Grade Electromagnetic Day (from the Museum of Science)

Fundraising dollars from the Silvergraphics Art fundraiser, Luminary Night, and Shop at Wilson Farm Day make it possible for the PTA to provide folders, wet wipes, paper towels, tissues, and hand sanitizer for each classroom. Funds that we raise from these events also allow us to provide discretionary funds for the principal and staff, so that they may purchase additional educational tools as they see fit for their individual instruction needs. In addition to raising money,

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the book for myself and my adult children. When faced with our life challenges, which will happen, this research continues to remind me of the importance of our social network. "Strong social support correlates with an astonishing number of desirable outcomes," writes Achor. "[H]igh levels of social support predict longevity as reliably as regular exercise does, and low social support is as damaging as high blood pressure." When we are positive it is contagious; it helps us and everyone we encounter. Keep smiling.

http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/en/shawn_achor_the_happy_secret_to_better_work.html



PTA Nominating Committee

Harrington is **looking for three parents** to help with a short-term assignment as a PTA Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will be charged with finding people to volunteer for the PTA Executive Committee. For the 2013/14 school year we need the following:

- President (or a team of two Co-Presidents, if two friends wanted to do it together)
- VP of Fundraising
- Secretary
- VP of Community-Building
- VP of School Support

The PTA is also looking for **individuals to fill the following leadership roles:**

- Teacher Liaison
- School Committee Liaison
- Communications Chairperson
- Co-Chair for Big Backyard
- Chairperson(s) for Green Team
- Chairperson for Sports Outings
- Chairperson for Library
- Chairperson for Fall Fundraiser
- Chairperson(s) for Fall Festival for the Arts

our fundraisers are great community-building events, and give us an opportunity to welcome, meet and socialize with all Harrington families, both old and new. Some upcoming events to put on your calendar are:

- Luminary night (kits will go on sale during the week of October 28th. Luminary night is Sunday, December 2nd)
- Parents' Night Out (Saturday, February 2nd) - a night to mix and mingle with "the grown-ups" and focus on fun, not fundraising.
- Spring Fair (Sunday, June 2nd) - our biggest and most fun day to celebrate the end of school!

Each fundraising event can only be successful with everyone's help and support! We are indebted to the creative and dedicated Harrington parents who spend many volunteer hours organizing, planning and running each and every fundraising event! Thank you! We could not do it without you!



Harrington School Council

Michelle Motta Dardeno, mdardeno@hotmail.com
School Council Co-Chairperson

- **Have you ever wondered what a School Site Council is?**
- **What is its purpose?**
- **What does it do for and at Harrington?**

School councils are the part of the Education Reform Law of 1993 that ensures the meaningful involvement of parents and community members. School councils are considered municipal agencies and their members, although they serve without compensation, are considered municipal employees for purposes of the conflict of interest law. The law outlines four major areas of responsibility for councils. School councils are to assist principals in:

1. Adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards
 2. Identifying the educational needs of students attending the school
 3. Reviewing the annual school building budget
 4. Formulating a school improvement plan
- Over the course of a year, a typical council might consider the goals of the school or district

and then work with the principal to evaluate the school's progress toward those goals. In this evaluation, the council might consider school test scores, parent surveys and input from students, when appropriate. After looking at the big picture of the school's progress, the council and the principal create a plan for improvement.

The Harrington School Site Council (HSSC) consists of our school principal, 4 parent representatives, 4 teacher representatives and one community member. We meet once a month and conduct meetings under Open Meeting law, which means they are open to everyone and both agendas and meeting minutes are publically available. The 2012-2013 HSSC meeting schedule is located both on the Harrington website as well as posted in the display case at the school entrance.

Last year, the HSSC conducted its first survey in an effort to gain a better understanding what Harrington is doing well and areas that could use improvement from the parent perspective. We were very pleased with the strong response and for the meaningful feedback. The summarized results can be found on the school website under the Site Council tab. A number of action items have resulted from the survey. A third Harrington-specific goal was added to the 2012-2013 School Improvement Plan (SIP) entitled "Parent Education & Collaborative Engagement" and also can be found on the school website under the Site Council tab.

Specifically, a new collaboration to provide information on core curriculum and instructional methodology ("what we teaching and how we teach it") was explored and included. As a result, the Harrington "**Let's Chat**" series was launched in October with the "LET'S CHAT: HAWKS" morning discussion on October 26th.

Additionally, a **Suggestion Box** has been installed in the school entrance. We hope that this will serve as an effective method to provide praise, comments and suggestions. It will be actively monitored by the HSSC parent representatives. All notes will be organized by common theme and brought to the following HSSC meeting for attention by the appropriate responsible group and tracked. If an individual response is requested, it must be accompanied by contact information.

Please feel free to contact any HSSC member with questions about attending a meeting,

questions or suggestions. The 2012 - 2013 School Site Council Members are:

- **Elaine Mead** - Principal, Co-Chair, emead@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us
- **Micah Viana** - Parent Representative, Co-Chair, micah.viana@hotmail.com
- **Michelle Motta Dardeno** - Parent Representative, PTA Liaison, mdardeno@hotmail.com
- **Amy Chamberlain** - Teacher Representative
- **Judy Crocker** - Community Member
- **Rucha Londhe** - Parent Representative
- **Geri O'Neill** - Teacher Representative
- **Cindy Salamone** - Teacher Representative
- **Khurshida Shahidullah** - Parent Representative
- **Nancy Taylor** - Teacher Representative



Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

Judy Crocker, rjcrocker@msn.com

<http://ci.lexington.ma.us/committees/sidewalk/saferoutes.cfm>

Harrington needs YOU to help kick-off a PTA-Safe Routes To School (SRTS) program for our community! Volunteer time is 1-3 hours /month. Find out what Lexington's other 5 elementary schools already experienced with this dynamic program. SRTS has been endorsed by the Harrington Site Council and PTA, but needs YOU to get the program off the ground!

Neighborhood by neighborhood, SRTS has been successful in making our community's sidewalks and bikeways a safer, more attractive transportation option for our students. Focusing on safety, exercise, and fostering a sense of community, it has been effective in *increasing* the number of students who walk, bike, bus, or carpool and in *decreasing* the number of cars and idling at our schools.

SRTS is modeled after national and international programs. More than one-third of the state's towns participate. SRTS in Massachusetts is parented through the Massachusetts Dept of Transportation. As are the other local programs, Lexington's SRTS is sponsored by local PTAs, overseen by the Lexington Sidewalk Committee, and works closely with DPW, Engineering, LPS Transportation, Facilities, and the Planning Board. The program is endorsed by the Selectmen, School Committee, Superintendent, and the Police. Historically, SRTS does not directly deal with vehicular traffic patterns. For more information see the website.



Luminary Night

Coleen McAdam, mcadamtwins@verizon.net

The fourth annual **Luminary Night in Lexington** is scheduled for **Sunday, December 2nd at 5pm**. This is a wonderful opportunity for families of all ages, religions, and backgrounds to come together, to enjoy the beautiful sight of neighboring homes lit up, and to give back to your community. This year, ArtSpan (which offers visual arts programs for the community) at the Munroe Center for the Arts will lead this wonderful event. We feel this is a great partnership that highlights the importance of Arts and Children in our town. Each participating organization will receive 50% of the proceeds of each kit that is sold, after cost. Luminaria are lit in Lexington's neighborhoods, public spaces, and historic . They glow in unity as we enjoy this non-denominational holiday celebration.

This year, we are hoping you will participate in **Luminary Night** in the following way:

- Purchase a luminary kit (complete with bags, votive candles and safety instructions)
- Luminary kits cost just \$20 for 15 individual luminaria
- Illuminate your walkway and light your luminaria on Sunday, December 2nd at 5pm
- Encourage your neighborhood to join in this beautiful sight with a street stroll and hot chocolate
- **Remember Harrington School receives 50% of the proceeds, after costs.**
- Look for the order form in your child's home folder

Please note the order deadline of **Monday, November 12**.

Library News

Laura Szaro, lszaro@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us

The school library program at Harrington is off to a great start this year. I'm enjoying getting to know all of the students and have been very glad to see their enthusiasm for reading and learning. In **library classes** recently, kindergartners and first graders have been participating in author studies of Jan Brett and Kevin Henkes. Kindergartners were even able to see a special video message from Jan Brett that I recorded at a recent book signing. Students in second grade are learning about Native

American folktales to support the Social Studies curriculum and will visit the library with their classroom teachers soon to do research. Students in grades 3-5 are learning how to navigate the library and search the online catalog to find books of interest to them in our Call Number Challenge. Fifth graders also recently completed a research project on famous scientists and inventors using the Independent Investigation Method (IIM) in the library.

There have also been exciting new **additions to the library's collection**. Thanks to the support of the school community at Sponsor a Book, held at the International Food Festival, we were able to add 63 new books to the library for students and teachers. Sponsor a Book was a wonderful success and we are very grateful to all those who made contributions. In addition, as a result of a generous LEF grant received last year by elementary librarians and ELL teachers, the library now has 85 new curricular and fiction books for our world language collection.

Finally, it has been a pleasure meeting and working with all of our **parent volunteers**. Our volunteers play an essential role by helping students during book check-out, shelving, and assisting with projects in the library. Thank you to all of our library volunteers and if you are interested in joining their efforts please email me.

LEF Awards Grant Funding

The Lexington Education Foundation (LEF) is pleased to announce **it has awarded \$320,366** in grants for 2012-2013! LEF has united private donations with business sponsorships to offer \$149,435 in technology and associated training; \$64,620 in professional development; \$44,627 in innovative curriculum; and \$32,500 in school community grants. LEF grants fund innovative instruction across a wide spectrum of academic disciplines, technology and training, and professional development. Fellowships are available for teachers to attend courses, seminars, and workshops to improve professional practice. School community grants fund smaller-scale educational initiatives or community-building activities at each school. Among the 33 grants awarded, four grants involved iPads, including a pilot iPad program enabling 50 LHS sophomores to access online textbooks, electronic note taking and graphic organizers.





LEF Calling All Trivia Buffs!

781-372-3288, or bee@lexedfoundation.org
lexedfoundation.org

On Wednesday, **November 14th**, Lexington Education Foundation will host its 17th annual Trivia Bee at Cary Hall in Lexington. You won't want to miss this fun and exciting town-wide tradition, with a twist, in honor of Lexington's 300th. Over forty teams sponsored by local businesses, organizations and individuals test their trivia know-how in this friendly battle of wits, while raising funds to implement innovative ideas and technologies that benefit students in every Lexington Public School classroom. Many local civic organizations and all nine Lexington Schools will be represented. "Bee" prepared for some questions relating to Lexington's Colonial period in celebration of the 300th! Admission is free and fun for the entire family.

If you would like to **form a team** to try to unseat last year's winning team, the EGgHeads or participate from the sidelines by sponsoring a teacher team from one of the nine public schools, a town employee, or general sponsorship of the event, team sponsorship is a tax-deductible fee of \$375. Through your support you will "bee" investing in our schools. For more information about Trivia Bee team participation or sponsorship, or to view awarded grants, please visit our secure website.

Come cheer on our Harrington teacher team: Harrington Hawkettes - Jen O'Donnell, Nancy Taylor, Sahr Moussa & our **Harrington parent team:** Harrington Hawks - Jennifer Gerfen, Martin Hwang, Flavia Vidal.

The Lexington Education Foundation is not affiliated with the Lexington Public Schools.



Let's Chat!

Michelle Motta Dardeno, mdardeno@hotmail.com

BREAKING NEWS: The Harrington School Site Council (HSSC) "Let's Chat" series was launched on 10/26 with much success! A big thank you to all faculty, parents and HSSC members present.

The group gathered in the cafeteria to start the day with **coffee and conversation**. Members of the **HAWKS** task force - Amy Chamberlain, Karen Hall, Jen O'Donnell - shared how the HAWKS pro-social program at Harrington is expanding this school year. The entire school will continue the focus on the individual HAWKS attributes of Honesty, Accountability, Work, Kindness, Self-Control. The group shared that this summer, "Harry the Hawk" got a pair of binoculars and uses them to spot Harrington students and faculty exhibiting HAWKS behaviors. These are captured as "HAWKS sightings" and are posted on a bulletin board and highlighted during Friday morning announcements. Parents are invited to participate to submit HAWKS sightings also. The collection box is located in the school lobby.

Parents offered some great **suggestions** to the task force members to further enhance the program which included the addition of a student representative to the task force and adding visual HAWKS reminders in areas such as the cafeteria and playground. The next "Let's Chat" series discussion is scheduled for **Friday, December 7th** from 8:30-9:00. Keep your topic ideas coming!



Baby Ducks at Fall Festival Animal Petting Zoo
- Isabel Siu-Zmuidzinas, Fifth Grader



Fifth Grade Perspectives!

Harrington school Fall Festival for the Arts!

Lily Sheth, Fifth Grader

The fall festival was a great success. There were plenty of fun things to do like visiting the baby animal petting zoo, watching performers, colonial crafts, and a giant slide! It was also fun to see all the performers from around Lexington perform. They showed great talent and diversity. I also liked seeing the whole school come together in this fabulous event. I was there from setup to clean up and it was never boring. My brothers and sister also enjoyed it proving there is something for everyone! For me the best part was dancing onstage to Gangnam Style with the rest of the fifth graders! All in all it is a great event that everyone seemed to enjoy.



Fall Festival: Children's Craft Market

Grace McLaughlin & Navya Krishna, Fifth Graders

This year at the Harrington Fall Festival for the Arts there was a Children's Craft Market. There were many creative items for sale such as soaps, jewelry, ornaments, cards, friendship bracelets, origami, braided yarn, paper fortune tellers and slime. Business was a little slow in the beginning but in the middle it picked up. The customers seemed very excited that the students were selling this year. One customer said, "It is great to see what the kids have made and all of their creative ideas." Another customer said, "I think that this is a great way for children to become entrepreneurs and to learn how to run a business."

Harrington Elementary School

Big Back Yard Walks

Kurissa Choi, Fifth Grader



When is there time for going out into the trees and plants to explore? I've always looked forward to this part of the year, when you can go out and observe nature's plants. To have an outdoor activity with my friends from class.

Lately, the weather's cold so it's chilly when we go out. It's so important to dress accordingly to the weather, so you will not catch a cold. This fall we observed the branches, leaves, flowers, roots, seeds, and fruits of the plants. Every station outside had either a branch, leaf, flower, root, seed, or fruit. As we visited each station we observed and drew what we saw. Our group leaders taught us about photosynthesis and we discussed about how the specific part helped the plant to survive. We discussed about the chlorophyll in the plants and how their system worked. All the groups rotated around the yard studying, observing, and drawing. When we started to go inside we thanked our group leaders and went up to our classroom. We took the sheets of drawings and put them into our science journals. It had been cold outside but we made it inside and learned new things.



Artwork from the 5th Grade Ecosystem Walk

- Brian Chong, Fifth Grader



International Food Night

Katherine Chen, Fifth Grader



Wow! International Food Night is always something to look forward to! You can try out tons of new foods from all around world, plus enjoy them with friends and family. This year there were so many great foods to try out- including sushi, noodles, some wonderful soup, delicious cheese pizza, and more than four or five different kinds of pasta, which, if I do say so myself, was wonderful! But that isn't it, since there was so much more delicious foods. There was also dessert-cookies, great pie, baked pastries, cake, and many others. And something really cool is that a chef came and made these great salmon-on-cucumber treats-and the students from Harrington got to help out! Now that's really pretty awesome. Come and join the fun at the International Food Night!



Singing at the Halloween Assembly with Ms. Stumpf & Mr. J



MCAS Testing

Please note the following dates for your child's testing when planning your calendars.

ELA Testing (March 18- April 5)

March 19, Grade 4 - Long Composition Day
March 20 - Grade 3 ELA Session 1
March 21 - Grade 3 ELA Session 2
March 22 - Grade 5 ELA Session 1
March 25 - Grade 5 ELA Session 2
No Testing on March 26 & 27 (Passover Holiday)
March 28, Gr 4 - Long Composition Make-up Day
March 29 - Holiday No School
April 1 - Grade 4 ELA Session 1
April 2 - Grade 4 ELA Session 2
April 3 & 4, Conference Days – Make-Up Days as needed

Math and Science Testing (May 6-May 21)

May 6 - Grade 4 Math Session 1
May 7 - Grade 4 Math Session 2
May 8 - Grade 5 Math Session 1
May 9 - Grade 5 Math Session 2
May 10 - Make-up Day
May 13 - Grade 5 Science Session 1
May 14 - Grade 5 Science Session 2
May 15 - Grade 3 Math Session 1
May 16 - Grade 3 Math Session 2
May 17 - Make-up Day

Halloween Assembly

Oliver Clackson, Fifth Grader



Boo... What a Halloween assembly we had! I saw some great costumes! From superheroes to Egyptians! I loved the outfits! It was awesome! I saw loads of costumes. A transformer, a skeleton, a football player. I didn't find most scary, but certainly entertaining! It was great! And who could forget the music! I loved it! Have you noticed that "Fly, Fly Witchie" has the the same tune as Go Go Harrington? Anyway, it was one of the best yet!



Heartfelt Thanks...

... to **Khurshida Shahidullah** and **Jing Sun Zheng** for organizing and running a delicious International Food Festival and kicking it up a notch with the crowd-pleasing cooking demo! And to **Henrietta Mei**, who ran the festival for years and is now a Clarke parent, but who came back to help.

... to all the folks that volunteered their time to the Fall Festival for the Arts, and especially the **Co-chairs Claire Sheth** and **Elizabeth McLaughlin**, it was a fabulous time!

... to the **5th Grade Committee**, especially **Michelle Mabardy** and **Katie Cutler** for all they did to make the refreshments/lunch fantastic for everyone at the Fall Festival!

... to everyone who has found the new Harrington **Suggestion Box** (It's in the entryway- on the left as you enter- between the glass doors) & added a suggestion.



... to **Flavia Vidal** & **Julie Vincent** for kicking off the year with a Harrington Reads book club meeting.

... to **Pamela Cohen** for organizing, running, and devoting so much time to Big Backyard and getting things rolling once again this year.

... To **Toni Daugherty** for organizing school picture day.

The Harrington Herald

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The Harrington Herald is the monthly newsletter of the Harrington PTA, published six times a year. In keeping with 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.

Visit the Harrington School website for online editions and archives at <http://harrington.lexingtonma.org>.

Next Submission Deadline: 20 December

