



Harrington The Herald



Jan/Feb 2014

Volume 17, Issue 3



CALENDAR

[Details available online](#)

January

- 7 Gr. 2 Math Night, 6:45
- 9 Hobby Night, 6:30
- 16 METCO FF Day
- 16 Gr. 1 & 2 Concert, 7 pm
- 20 **No School** MLK Day
- 20 MLK Concert with 4th & 5th Graders
- 21 Gr. K Math Night, 6:45
- 24 Let's Chat: Report Cards
- 31 Harrington Parents' Night Out (proposed date)

February

- 4 Gr. 1 Math Night, 6:45
- 7 Bingo, 6:30
- 11 Gr. 3 Math Night, 6:45
- 13 METCO FF Day
- 17- 21 **No School**, February Vacation
- 24 Herald Submission Deadline
- 26 Science Fair, 6:30

March

- 4 Book Club (Gr. 4 & 5)



Parent Opportunities

- **Spring Fair**, p 2.
- **Harrington Newsletter**, p. 7
- **5th Grade Parent for Bingo Night**, p. 6

From the Principal

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

As part of our School Improvement Plan, the School Council hosts a series of conversations with parents on various topics of interest throughout the year. Our January "Let's Chat" will be related to state testing, MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) and the new PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) field test. If you have questions about these standardized assessments administered in grades 3, 4, and 5, please join us at 8:30am in the cafeteria on **Friday, January 24th**. "Let's Chat" is an informal conversation among parents and faculty who serve on School Council. Parents generally ask questions and offer their perspectives. I expect that we will talk about how we prepare for these tests at school and how we use the results to inform our practice. We want to partner with parents to find a balanced approach to standardized testing so that students enter the experience confident and comfortable.

Our instructional practices promote the skills and attitudes that help students be ready for MCAS. Our curriculum provides opportunities for students to read, write, and think across all the content areas. Developing the ability to focus and to exert effective effort are important in the daily learning process. A student's approach to learning and mindset matter. We want all our students to achieve at high levels and to show growth every year. These

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From the PTA

Courtney Walsh, Courtlynnj@yahoo.com
PTA VP Community Building

It would be easy to do nothing. Nothing is a lot easier than the effort spent in the planning and execution of a school event such as the ones that the PTA promotes each year. But these provide rich ways to connect with other Harrington families, and this in turn gives us a base for connecting to our milieu here and joining together to provide a full educational experience for our children. It also can promote self-esteem in our children and give them happy memories of their K - 5 childhood.

Now that the holidays are behind us, it's time to kick back and relax at some of Harrington's fun-filled social events. January kicks off with **Hobby Night** (January 9), where kids display what they're passionate about, from Barbies and baseball cards to Rainbow Loom creations. Come with your favorite hobby or just come to browse. **Bingo Night** (February 7), is an exciting, prize-filled evening featuring your favorite teachers and staff as number callers. Pre-order a pizza (all profits go toward 5th grade graduation) and make a night of it.

February break is the perfect time to perfect your project for the **Science Fair** (February 26). From the simple to the elaborate, every type of project is a hit at this fascinating fair. March brings spring and the **Talent Show** (March 28), a truly entertaining evening showcasing the diverse talents of Harrington's students (and sometimes the teachers join in the fun)!

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assessments are one measure of our effectiveness in meeting this goal. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website provides data for all schools in Massachusetts. A link to the Harrington results is on our website: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement_level.aspx?linkid=32&orgcode=01550030&orgtypecode=6&

In addition, in late spring two third grade classrooms at Harrington will be randomly selected by the DESE to participate in a field test of the PARCC End-of-Year Mathematics assessment. Unlike the paper and pencil MCAS tests, these will all be administered online. Since this is a field test, we will not get individual student results, however, we will learn through the experience. Tom Plati, Director of Educational Technology and Assessment, and Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development, are important individuals in the Central Administration in our work with state assessment. A Report to School Committee at the December 19th meeting can be found on the LPS website if you are interested in learning more. <http://lps.lexingtonma.org/Page/1921>

I look forward to seeing everyone in 2014 and I hope you will consider joining the dialogue on January 24th. Happy New Year!



Hobby Night

Seiza Viana, seiza.viana@hotmail.com

Mark Your Calendars:
This THURSDAY JANUARY 9!

If your child/children would like to participate, please send an e-mail to Seiza, above, with the following info:

- Child's Name
- Teacher's name
- Child's grade
- Hobby/Collection

It's always a fun evening! Even if you are not showing a hobby, please join us so you can see all the hobbies of the other Harrington students!

If you haven't attended these events before, be sure to put them on your calendar. We promise a fun time for all! Harrington is a great community and we want everyone to be an active part in it!



Spring Fair

Chris Palmer,

christopher_palmer@hms.harvard.edu

781-883-1862

Ask not what the Harrington School can do for your child. Ask what you can do for the Harrington School. **We need your help!! Yes, YOU!**

The Spring Fair is less than 7 months away and we are still in need of numerous volunteers to help out. The Spring Fair is the largest fundraiser for the Harrington Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), which in turn uses these funds to support our children and enhance their learning, support the teachers and staff, and provide equipment and programs for the school that wouldn't be available otherwise. There are many ways to get involved. If you have not been before, this event is filled with non-stop fun for the entire family, and includes things like a Giant Slide, Moon Bounce, dunk tank, cake decorating contest, class baskets raffle, "grab bag" game, fabulous food, fun games and tons of prizes. It's a great opportunity for all families to come together as a community, have fun, and show our support for the school and our children!



In particular, we need volunteers to lead the following areas:

1. Co-Chair - to help organize many aspects of the fair and lead the effort in 2015
2. Organize Prizes for the fair
3. Organize Surprise Gift Bags
4. Organize Cake Walk and Cake Decorating
5. Organize workshops, such as Legos or Crafts
6. Manage advertising and public relations for the Fair

We have many other roles, large and small! If you're willing to help out, please be in touch with this year's Spring Fair Chair, Chris Palmer, listed above.



Science Fair Wednesday, February 26

6:30pm - 8:00pm

Presenters & Observers Invited

HARRINGTON SCIENCE FAIR

Sangeeta Bhatia, sbhatia@mit.edu

Jagesh Shah, shah.jagesh@gmail.com

781-862-3029

Wondering where to show off your newest invention or latest scientific discovery ?

How about that vinegar and baking soda volcano or newfangled egg parachute?

Or your solar cooker or mud battery?

Lucky for you, the Harrington Science Fair is coming up soon. If, on the other hand, you are looking for some ideas check out these sources:

- Sciencebuddies.org
- All-science-projects.com
- Sciencefair-projects.org
- Sciencefairadventure.com
- Thehappyscientist.com
- **Cary library:** go to the children's section under J507.8 and nearby.
- **Harrington library:** find selected books that Ms. Szaro has put aside for children to take home.

Sign-up for table space by

Sunday, February 16

shah.jagesh@gmail.com



Harrington Game Night, December 2013



Big Backyard in Winter

Meg Muckenhoupt, megmuck@gmail.com

While Harrington's humans are turning up their thermostats and stuffing themselves into puffy coats, the animals around our school are adapting to winter weather too.

Some robins migrate south to warmer places for the winter, but some robins migrate to Massachusetts for the winter! Those birds spend their summer in northern New England or Canada.

Robins and other birds that spend the winter near Harrington grow extra feathers, and fluff them up when they roost, making their own puffy coats. During winter days, many birds eat all day long, storing up fat to keep themselves warm. You'll see winter robins hopping on Harrington's fields or eating berries in the bushes at the edges of the Old Harrington fields.

Monarch butterflies migrate too, flying to the Central Mexican Highlands each fall and back to Massachusetts each spring. You may find their caterpillars munching on the milkweed growing in front of the old Harrington School (and on milkweed at the Cary Memorial Library!) The eastern garter snakes in the Harrington woods also move in the winter, but not too far. They find dens in holes or rock crevices below the "frost line" where the soil freezes. There can be many snakes in one good den!

Then, the snakes hibernate. They stay still, lower their body temperature, and slow down their breathing and heart rate. By hibernating, the snakes can survive all winter without leaving the hole for food.

The wood frogs in the Harrington woods don't migrate at all. They just stay put! In the fall, wood frogs burrow under the dead leaves on the ground in the forest. Unlike most other animals, wood frogs can tolerate freezing. In the winter, they freeze; in the spring, they thaw out and hop away.

This is how the Harrington
Herald will look next year
unless someone volunteers for
the job.

Details listed on page 7.
Information transfer available during the 2013/14 school year.



HAWKS Roundtable Conversations

Julia Hendrix, emead@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us
Assistant Principal

Over the past three years, the Harrington community has become familiar with the HAWKS behaviors of Honesty, Accountability, Work, Kindness, and Self-Control. In the fall, a parent asked me in a conversation, "Have you asked the children what they think about HAWKS?" and from that question the HAWKS Roundtables were born.

HAWKS Roundtables are lunch chats with me. Children sign up by putting their names in a box in the office. I schedule grade level lunches during the week with children who request them. We sit in the lunchroom, eat together and talk about how things are going at Harrington. I started the year by asking the students, "How do you think things are going at Harrington? What do we do well and what could we do better?" As the year has progressed I might mention something to one grade-level group that another grade is thinking about and see what kind of discussion happens.

Some questions we've addressed this year:

- How do people behave at recess?
- What makes a good teacher?
- How do the older and younger students get along at Harrington?
- How can we help new people at Harrington (adults and children)?
- Are people kind and if they're not how can we help them with that?
- What food would you like to see at lunch and should we serve dessert at lunch?
- What does it take to be a good problem solver?
- Is there bullying at Harrington?

If you want to read some of the things students have said at HAWKS roundtables, check out the bulletin board across from the gym. We'll post statements from students on that board during the year.

New ideas have emerged from these roundtable conversations. These include:

- **Lunchtime guidance tables:** Students can sign up for grade-level lunches with Amy Chamberlain, school guidance counselor.

Discussion themes for these lunches are based on conversational strands from HAWKS roundtables. Some themes so far this year have been: ways to deal with annoying behavior, how to decrease competition and increase cooperation, and how to handle getting teased.

- **iPads for translation:** A fourth grade student expressed frustration at not being able to talk with the non-English speaking students and asked if we could use iPads for conversation with non-English speakers. Marilyn Friedman, the English Language Learner teacher, has begun experimenting with various translation applications with her students to find accurate and easy two-way translation apps. Some newcomers who do not speak English are already using these in their classrooms for communication.
- **Book Chats:** Once a month, Ms. Szaro, the school librarian, is hosting book chats at lunch for grade 2, 3, 4, and 5. Students sign up for these lunches and meet to talk about books. They've talked about particular authors or genres. Students have also brought favorite books to share with others.
- **Intergrade-relationships:** Students at all grade levels have talked about inter-grade relationships at Harrington. They want to know more students in other grades and have a chance to develop friendships across grade levels in school. All the students talk about how much they enjoy buddy classes. I've begun meeting with the 5th Grade HAWKS Council to brainstorm ways we can increase cross grade contact at Harrington.
- **The Buddy Bench:** Second graders are piloting a 'buddy bench' at recess. Students who are feeling a little sad or having trouble finding someone to play with can sit on this bench and other students take responsibility to talk to them and help them out.

Over and over again, I have been impressed with the depth of children's thoughts about Harrington and the community. Your children want Harrington School to be a supportive and caring community. They actively think about how to make this happen. Having the opportunity to talk with them about our school community has been informative and a real pleasure.



Arts Created Together (ACT)

K – 2: *Kristen Reed, kristen.e.reed@gmail.com*

On November 18th the Grumbling Gryphons worked with the whole school to produce *The Myth of Persephone*. Each grade had a role to play and with Ms. Wehmeyer created hats or pictures to illustrate their part. The Myth of Persephone tells the story of how the seasons came to be. Lord Pluto takes Persephone away from the earth and her mother, Goddess Demeter, and holds her captive in Hades, guarded by Cerberus, the Three-Headed Dog. The children chanted, sang, and danced as part of the production. Here are the roles each grade played:

- K: Fruit
- 1st: Seasons
- 2nd: Earth's Destruction: Volcanoes and Glaciers
- 3rd: Shades of Hades
- 4th: Greek Chorus (Tragedy and Comedy)
- 5th: Apollo's Muses

We received many comments that children loved the performance, were excited about the preparations, and enjoyed discussing the myth afterwards. A big thank you to Ms. Wehmeyer for helping with the preparations and to the whole staff for participating in the rehearsals and the performance itself!

The next day, on November 19th, the Grumbling Gryphons worked with the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades individually. In 2nd grade they all participated in Trickster Coyote: A Native American Story from the Plains. In 3rd grade they had an improvisational workshop based on the theme of the Declaration of Independence. In 4th grade they had a improvisational workshop based on the theme of immigration.



This was brought to Harrington by the ACT program (Arts Created Together).



Bingo Night at Harrington

Sandra Parks, Sandra_Parks@cable.comcast.com

Fun Family Night

Friday, **February 7th** 6:15-8pm

Looking for a fun family activity on a cold winter's night? Grab the entire family and come to BINGO night at Harrington. Never played before? Don't worry-half the fun of BINGO is learning how to play-it is the perfect game for kids of all ages.

Every year BINGO night puts smiles on everyone faces; win or lose the fun is guaranteed. The teachers get in on the fun by calling the BINGO numbers and there are great prizes from local businesses that go to the BINGO winners. Forget about cooking and support the 5th grade graduation with a pizza dinner before the games. We get the pizza and all pizza proceeds support the 5th grade graduation events. It will be a fun night for the entire family, so don't miss out.

Check your child's back pack and sign up for BINGO and pizza night at Harrington. Hope to see you all on February 7th!



5th Grade Parents who are able to assist at the Concession Stand, and with pizza during Bingo Night, contact:

Tanya Gisolfi - gisolfit@verizon.net. Please send a quick email now, so that plans can be made for this to run smoothly!



5th Graders manning the concession stand at Harrington's Game Night.



Wanted: Newsletter Editor

Cristina Burwell, cristinaburwell@mac.com

I have edited the school newsletter for eight years; now my youngest is ready to head to middle school and I will be leaving Harrington too. Those of you still at Harrington in upcoming years, and who appreciate the Herald as a vehicle for knowing what is happening in the PTA and at Harrington need to find a replacement.



Think now if this person may be you. Or consider another classroom parent (s) who may a possible choice. In a perfect world, this would be a parent who still has a few years left at Harrington.

During my tenure, I have collected information to transfer to the next editor. This includes policies and procedures, a flowchart of operations and a word-processing template.

The next editor can simply plug into this system and get running, or, he/she can create something completely different.

The job can also be **divided** into different jobs for multiple people: someone to receive submissions and drop them into the newsletter template (read: familiar with word processing software), another person to proof articles and yet another to pick them up from the printer and deliver them to Harrington.

The **benefits** are huge. This has been a wonderful way to meet new people and to connect to the community at Harrington. This task also has been one that I could do on my own time - when the kids were asleep for example.

So now I am using this space, somewhat selfishly, to request that a Harrington parent step up to take on the tasks of the Herald editor for the future. If we can get someone to pick up this mantle now, then I am available to transfer my knowledge real-time.

Please feel free to email me with any questions (I promise I will not railroad you into the position just for asking!).



Harrington at the Town MLK Concert

Hollace Stumpf, hstumpf@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us

Harrington Music Teacher

The Town of Lexington is redesigning the town celebration of Martin Luther King Day. Harrington Fourth and Fifth Graders have been invited to sing.

Fourth and Fifth Grade Students have received information about this event through a backpack flyer and the listserv. We hope lots of those students will be able to participate.

We invite all Harrington families to attend the event. On **Monday, January 20**, gather on the Lexington Green at 11:00 for the short walk to Cary Hall. The program at Cary Hall will be short and highlighted by the singing of Harrington students.

After the program, people will disperse to work on community projects. All children are invited to stay at Cary Hall and make cards for people in need.



Next Herald Submission Deadline:

24 February, 2014

(the Monday after break!)



Fifth Grade Perspectives

Before-School Sports

Zach Vincent & Kike Chamon, Fifth Graders

Before-School Sports is a great, energetic way to start the day for the 4th and 5th grades. It's a good way to spend time with your friends and Ms. Willey before school starts. Gabriel in Ms. Sanromá's class said his favorite games were basketball and crackabout. In crackabout you get to take one step and try to hit someone with the ball. Alex in Mrs. Class's class said his favorite part was getting to play in the morning. Before-School Sports is a program that started before Ms. Willey came. We are so happy she continued it when she came to Harrington. Christian, in Mrs. Hall's class, said the reason he did it was because it was fun when he did it last year. Before-School Sports is a fun thing for boys and girls to do. If your kid is in 4th or 5th grade then sign him or her up for the next 2 sessions, starting in January.

METCO Family Friends

Lauren Goldinger & Anjali Shah, Fifth Graders

METCO family friends is a program when kids from Boston can spend 2 hours and a half having a play date with a friend from Lexington. This happens once a month on a Thursday. The bus to Boston then departs at 3:00, as Thursdays are half days.

Families bring home the Boston student that they volunteer to bring home for the school year. Sometimes the METCO program has parties where the Boston and Lexington students get together for a pizza party or a fun activity. When not doing this, kids will play together at the house with their family friend.

We did some interviews of a Boston student, a Lexington family-friend, and an adult who just heard about the METCO family friend program.

First we interviewed Naya, a Boston student. She said that she was lucky to have a family friend and that she feels bad for kids who don't have one. They just sit in the office for 2 & a half hours, she complains!

Next, we interviewed Aleia, a student who has had experience as a family friend. She said that it is so awesome for students from Boston to be a part of the Lexington community. She said that she also felt bad for people that don't have a family friend. They just stay in the office while other kids just play with their friends.

Katy, a babysitter, just learned about the METCO family friends. She thinks it's a great opportunity for Boston kids to have a play date with friends from school since they live far away. She also thinks that kids without hosts should have friends from their grade take them home in turn. What do you think about METCO family friends? Remember there is always someone in need of another friend! So take someone home and have fun!

School Cafeteria Food

Aleia Gisolfi-McCready, Fifth Grader

My job was to report on how the cafeteria food tastes. I interviewed three fifth grade students and the woman who makes the food. I asked from a scale of 1-10 how the food tasted and whether they thought the food was healthy.

The student in Mrs. Moussa's class said, "6 ½, not very healthy. My favorite food is breakfast for lunch. My favorite dessert is strawberries with whipped cream. I have noticed expired milk once."

The student in Mrs. Hall's class said, "7, healthy. My favorite food is pepperoni pizza, my favorite dessert is ice cream, which we had last year."

Mrs. Class's student said, "Pretty disgusting! Not very healthy at all. My favorite food is pasta, my favorite dessert is chocolate chip cookies. I recommend better food. The styrofoam plates are not very good or useful."

The woman who makes the food said, "10, because I make the food. 8 for health because some of it is processed. My favorite dish is pasta with meat sauce because I do well with meat sauce. My favorite dessert is apple crisp (yum!) with whipped cream. Very crunchy. I think I give the food a good price; if I go any higher I will not agree. I think the switch to the new company was good. Both companies were good. It was a pleasure to work with all of them. I want good food for all. Hot, plenty of food, delicious."

Personally, I bring lunch from home and have not tasted the food very much so I don't have a favorite food. In my opinion, the cafeteria food is about a 3 or 4 for being healthy. One reason why I think the food is not healthy is because it is not organic. Children should not have pesticides in their bodies.

So what do you think of the Harrington school food? What's your opinion?

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>.