



HAPPENINGS

Middleton Parent-Teacher Organization Newsletter

WINTER PROGRAMS

The students at both Fuller Meadow and Howe-Manning have enjoyed several programs since the beginning of the year.

In January, the kindergarten students learned about the **Reasons for Seasons** in a program presented by Natural Discoveries. The first graders learned about what it was like to live back in pioneer days through a hands-on and fun program entitled **Pioneer Living**. And the third grade classes enjoyed a fascinating presentation given by the Museum of Science Traveling Programs called **Cryogenics – States of Matter**. In February, kindergarten and second grade students learned about animals and how they live and survive, in another program by the Museum of Science entitled **Animal Habitats**. To kick off March, "nutrition month", all of the Fuller Meadow students enjoyed the engaging and upbeat **FoodPlay** performance on how to eat healthy and stay active, brought to them by FoodPlay Productions. At Howe-Manning the fourth grade classes enjoyed the **Teamwork: A Way of Life** program brought to them by Northern Exposure Outfitters to tie in with their classroom unit on Alaska. In February, the fifth graders engaged in an impressive program called **Wingmasters, Birds of Prey** in which they observed some amazing owls and hawks up close. **Banbury Cross Children's Bookshop** also visited in February, providing book talks with the sixth graders and a two-day book fair for the entire school.

All programs are made possible by your generous contributions to the Treasure Chest and to the various fundraisers throughout the year. There are many programs to come! Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

A school community of HERO's

The children of Fuller Meadow and Howe-Manning are enjoying taking part in all the wonderful activities the HERO program has to offer.

In the months of December and January many of our students submitted artwork for the HERO art exhibit. The task was to draw something that was an example of being a HERO, or to create a HERO cape or uniform. Thank you to all the students that participated. The artwork at Fuller Meadow is on display at the beginning of the hallway leading to third grade, outside the Nurse's office at Howe-Manning, and a few entries are shown here.

Also in January the Kindness Link program kicked off. Multi-colored links of paper with notes of ways the children can be HERO's were given to the teachers and staff. Examples include "I was helpful", "I was kind", "I included a classmate" and many others. When a child exhibits one of the behaviors listed, their name is put on a link and it is added to the Chain of Kindness. The program has been so successful that a second batch of links has been created (12,000 more) and distributed to the schools. The links are starting to be combined from class to class, and at the end of this program we plan to link the entire school together to show how far a little act of kindness can go.

We are also thrilled to announce that the Kid 2 Kid program will be returning to Middleton after many years on hiatus. As part of the program, the 6th graders will create skits about various bullying situations and perform them in front of the Fuller Meadow School community, as well as the 4th and 5th graders at Howe Manning. The goal of the program is to empower and educate children about what bullying behavior is, and what we can do to prevent or stop it. The performance is tentatively scheduled for April 12th.

We look forward to a few more activities before the year ends with a celebration of our students and the "HEROism" they all displayed over the past year.



New Howe-Manning Update

Things are moving along quite nicely at the new Howe-Manning and the project continued to remain on budget and on time for a September 2011 opening.

Workers are busy every day moving along on interior and exterior work. Right now the roof is 95% complete, and windows and exterior masonry are both 98% complete.



Systems rough work is all 99% complete include the mechanical, plumbing and electrical rough. Finish work is now beginning. Inside, the kitchen area has seen the freezers installed and other work to start there soon, and the bathroom fixtures throughout the building are being installed as well. Drywall installation is at 90% complete. Painting has begun on all floors and is expected to be complete in the next few weeks.

The brick program will go ahead as planned. Those of you who purchased a commemorative brick will see it in a great location as you walk on the courtyard at the front entrance of the school.

Be sure to click on the school website at www.tritownschoolunion.com/msbc-header.php to get to the School Building Committee page. If you scroll down there are links to the Project Managers monthly reports with updated photos on the progress inside and out.

Q&A with **Mary Saunders**, the HM Librarian

Q: Where did you grow up? Do you have any siblings?

A: I was born in raised in New Hampshire. I grew up in Hollis, a small farming town located in the southern part or the state. I still live in NH, but now I am in the seacoast area. I have two younger brothers. I like to call them my little brothers even though they are both much taller than me.

Q: Where did you decide to go to college? Degree(s) earned?

A: I received my Bachelor of Arts in Humanities from the University of New Hampshire. Go Wildcats! One of the reasons why I chose to major in humanities is because of all the research opportunities. I think that it is my love of research that led me to become a librarian. Just last year I received my Master of Library and Information Studies from the University of Rhode Island. At that time I also became certified as a School Library Media Specialist.

Q: Why did you choose this particular field within Education?

A: In addition to my love of research, I love to read. Historical fiction is currently my favorite genre. I also spent 8 years working in the high tech industry before switching careers and I feel as though my background is very well suited to the roles and responsibilities of a 21st century librarian.

Q: Tell us one thing about yourself that students might be surprised to find out?

A: I play the guitar. I've been in a variety of bands over the years and have played shows all over the place, including Boston, New York, and London.

Q: What experiences here at Howe-Manning make it an enjoyable place to work?

A: The students and staff are wonderful!

WINTER DISTRICT 15 CHALLENGER BASEBALL

Challenger Baseball is for boys/girls ages 5-18 that have physical, developmental, and intellectual disabilities which may prevent them from participating in mainstream little league programs. This program provides these special children with the opportunity to enjoy the full benefits of little league participation at a level structured to their abilities. It also allows the kids to be part of a team, develop social skills and build self-esteem. There is a "buddy" system in which players from other teams in the league assist players in the challenger program by helping run bases, catching, throwing and pushing wheelchairs around bases. All players receive uniforms and trophies. This program is free of charge and is maintained through sponsors and volunteers. All games are played on Sundays at Tapley Park in Danvers.

To register go to www.danversnats.com and click on the registration link. Click on the Challenger Division and the tab LOGIN/REGISTER. All questions should be directed to Karen Devaney kdev4215@aol.com.



Joshua Rigali

My Name is Shannon Rigali and my son Joshua wanted to play t-ball and I did not know how I was going to pull this off knowing the difficulty he had with just your average day to day tasks. I was introduced to the Challenger Program and it has been such a wonderful experience for me and my son. I also worried because Josh was unable to hit the ball independently, I was told "don't worry Josh can hit off the tee if he needs to or we can physically assist him." Josh made such a connection to his "buddy" that he would ask about him all week long leading up to the game. Not all kids have "buddies" but the kids that need that little extra attention whether it be just to maintain their attention to the game or if they need physical assistance with moving base to base, these "buddies" are in tuned to the needs of these kids. It is truly an amazing program. If I can help answer any questions please feel free to call me or e-mail me. cell_978-882-3194 or snl2002@gmail.com

Suspension Bridge Project

In November, over fifty Howe-Manning 6th graders participated in the "Annual Howe-Manning Suspension Bridge" Competition. This is an extra-credit assignment to learn about the Engineering Design Process.

The children had three weeks to design and build their bridges. The strict requirements included that they receive no help from parents or siblings. Building materials included regular popsicle sticks, any type of glue, cotton string, and a base board made of wood. They could use clay to anchor the piers to the board. The span of the bridge had to be exactly 50cm in length between each pillar.



Ethan Blais

The 5 winning bridges held over 90 pounds of weight. The winners were: Caroline Simmons, Candra Pepper, Nick Smith, Ariana Afshar, and Ethan Blais.



Caroline Simmons, Candra Pepper, Nick Smith, Ariana Afshar, and Ethan Blais were the five winners of the 6th grade suspension bridge competition.

WICKED LOCAL PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH COUGHLIN

SOCIAL STUDIES

The 6th grade students have been working on a World Cultures project in conjunction with their specials in art, music and library. They have created African masks, are learning African dances and have been reading folk tales in preparation for their "World Cultures Day" which takes place at Howe-Manning in the spring. In addition to this project, the students have been assigned a country to learn about, and a pen pal from either Topsfield or Boxford. The 6th graders from the tri-towns have been exchanging postcards about the countries they are researching, and will hopefully have a chance to meet their pen pals when the project wraps up in the spring. By then they will not only be "experts" on their shared country, but will also know a bit about a future classmate as well!



"EDUCATION IS NOT THE FILLING OF A PAIL, BUT THE LIGHTING OF A FIRE."

~WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Dancing the Day Away

The Middleton PTO held the annual Pre-School Valentine's Party on Friday, February 11th at Dance, Etc. Miss. Jody shared her talents on the dance floor with the pre-school children, dancing to the Hokey Pokey, the Chicken Dance, Head, Shoulders, Knees & Toes, and Following the Leader. The children worked up an appetite and sat down for pizza, goodies and a craft provided by the MPTO.

The MPTO also held a Dance-A-Thon fundraiser the first two weeks in February. This event was created to get the students involved with raising money for their own school, and to teach them the importance of exercise through dance! Students at Fuller Meadow danced the Macarena, Bunny Hop, Chicken Dance and Square Danced during gym class under the direction of Mrs. Montani. Howe-Manning Students showed off some of their own moves to Zumba instructor Leslie Bilosz, who donated her time to this great event! Please check out www.baystatezumba.com for her class schedule.

Thank you to all the volunteers who donated water and helped motivate the students. This year's event raised \$3,184, with 100% going directly back to the students to sponsor activities and field trips. We thank all of those who so generously contributed to the event.

The Middleton PTO would like to extend a very special and heartfelt THANK YOU to Mrs. Montani for her energy, her knowledge and her fantastic ability to motivate each and every student to Dance the Day Away! *Learn more about your children's physical education teacher...*

Mrs. Montani has been in the Middleton school system for 32 years – working as the physical education teacher at both Fuller Meadow and Howe-Manning. A Boston State College graduate who has always loved dancing and gymnastics and is in fact a State Champion Gymnast herself! She is married to a physical education teacher in the Revere school system and has three adult children. Another fact about Mrs. Montani is that she teaches aerobics after school to the Middleton elementary staff! She has great appreciation for her fellow educators expressing... "Everyone shares the same **goal** and **dedication** – success of the children," and "it's easy to come to work because of the spirit of cooperation and all the smiling faces – children like Gym Class!" All grade K-3 students receive physical education once weekly. She begins each class with strength conditioning and stretching, then running through songs – working up to two songs, then moves on to an activity, most recently DANCE!

Wingmasters: North American Birds of Prey

On February 3, 2011, the Howe Manning 5th grade experienced an exciting enrichment program called *Wingmasters* which focused on North American Birds of Prey. The program featured four live birds native to Massachusetts, including a hawk, falcon, and owls. The program provided overviews of these different bird categories, explained the birds' places in the "food web", described their different animal adaptations, and covered endangered raptors and why these species may face an uncertain future. The presenter (& birds) from *Wingmasters* captured the students attention for an entire hour, teaching fifth graders science through this captivating enrichment program.



3rd Grade Biographies

If you currently have or have had a 3rd Grader in the past, than you know the work that goes into the required Biography that the students are asked to do. Each year, the Biography project, assigned in January, asks the students to choose from a given list of people who are from Massachusetts or have been influential within the state, as required by the 3rd Grade curriculum and state frameworks. This list included such names as Emily Dickinson, Norman Rockwell, Louisa May Alcott and Theodore Giesel (Dr. Suess) to just name a few. They were asked to create a timeline for their chosen person and present it in a creative way (i.e. scrapbook, dressing up as their subject, treasure chest of symbolic items representing the person, etc.)

The project is important for the students because it exposes them to long-term assignments that have more than one component. It asks them to use their researching skills, with various resources, and to be able to decipher the important information from the non-essential. It also helps the students learn time management skills and teaches them the responsibility of doing a lot of the work at home, independently, and using outside resources. They are introduced to the idea of giving oral presentations, using eye contact, as well as, being able to engage the audience. The ability for the students to read non-fiction and gather information are important skills that will eventually help them as they move on in school.

Although they are given guidelines for *who* and *what* to include in the project, a good portion of it allows them the personal freedom in expressing the *how* of the project. *Congrats to all the 3rd Graders for a job well done!*

Hooray for Pennies

This year's Penny Drive is in full force. The drive ends on March 11th. The theme this year is from Despicable Me and has a new play on words for "Incredible You!" The kids have been hard at work, in both schools, to collect the most pennies! Due to a decrease in funds this year, there is only ONE winner PER school, so it makes it that much more important to really bring in the money! Each child in each winning class will receive a pass for a free game of mini-golf, thanks to the generous donation by Paradise Family Golf! The passes will be distributed mid-April, so hopefully the snow will have melted enough by then for them to be used!

Fuller Meadow is raising money for the "World of Rope Jumping" program to return to the school and Howe-Manning students are anticipating the Everett Dance Theatre's Breaking Down Science program.

We'd like to thank Karen Nalesnik and Michelle O'Grady for their endless hours of dedication to, not only the signage for this event, but the weeks of weighing pennies at both schools! In addition, we'd like to extend a heartfelt note of gratitude to all the local businesses from the Middleton Board of Trade who have continued to help support this Drive each year! *Keep a lookout for the announcement of the winners soon!*

Disability Awareness Starts Here (D.A.S.H.)

The D.A.S.H. program joins the forces of parents and teachers to provide the students with awareness and insight to the challenges of people with disabilities. It is a program about friendship, about differences as well as similarities, and about the value of those differences.

In 2nd grade, are introduced to **visual impairments**. The unit focuses discussion of disabilities and the challenges of people who are visually impaired or blind. The students learn how the eyes work, why some of us see differently, and how alternative strategies can help accomplish daily activities when visually impaired. The children experience several activities which simulate visual impairments, such as "eating out" in a classroom restaurant scene and taking a walk, all while blindfolded and with assistance from a partner who can see. They also experiment with aids and appliances that allow visually challenged people to walk, write, and even read independently. We started with this program last year and the kids truly enjoyed it!

The 3rd grade program is about **deafness and hearing impairments**. The students learn how people hear, why some people hear differently than others, and how to communicate with people who can't hear at all. The activities focus on giving the students a better understanding of what it is like to be hearing impaired. They also try to speech read and finger spell. Then the students experience different assistive devices, such as hearing aides and different methods of communication. The students then play a game using only sign language.

The 2nd grade classroom sessions are the weeks of March 28th, April 4th, and April 11th. The 3rd grade classroom sessions are the weeks of April 4th and April 11th.