

LITTLE GREEN FINGERS CARING FOR HASTINGS SCHOOL GROUNDS

Text and photographs by Miranda Clarke, Beautification Committee Chair

This year, as part of the Beautification Program, we've started a new initiative to get every child outside for 15 minutes during recess, twice a year, to help take care of our grounds. So far we've run two sessions, which have been an incredible success and kept all the parent volunteers very busy! There are more sessions planned for December and the Spring, so there's still time to get involved.

If you could harness kindergarten energy, we'd have free energy for life! In 15 minutes, they managed to pick up every empty water bottle that had been collecting in the corner of the basketball court.

Grade 1 has been working on the area of shrubs between the school and the playground, which is in desperate need of some TLC. A little like Charlie Brown's kite tree, we've discovered a number of balls, Frisbees, and recess toys that the bushes had eaten up. We'll continue working hard to turn this overgrown wilderness into a sanctuary for birds.

Grade 2 children have been working in front of the gymnasium—collecting trash and raking leaves. Next year, we'll plant a few colorful and fragrant perennials to turn this area into a butterfly garden; we already have plenty of milkweed for the Monarchs.

Grade 3 has been working on what used to be known as the "long grass area" near the raised beds. In addition to collecting trash, they have pulled out a huge pile of branches from the woods. Next, we may plant the second raised beds with more herbs and medicinal plants to complement the Grade 3 colonial curriculum.

Grade 4 children have been using their incredible energy to clean up the area between the main and Kindergarten entrances. They discovered a secret stash of plastic bottles under the bushes in the first week and then started to weed the flowerbed during the second week. It's a huge task and will take us a few more weeks to complete, but it is looking better already.

(Continued on page 2)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Fall Cleanup	2
Welcome New Staff	3
Go Green Recycling	4
Map Night	5
Halloween Party	6
Facts about the PTA	7
Walking Wednesday	8
RETELL ESL Initiative	9
Big Backyard	10
ACT	11
4th Annual Harvest Run	12



LITTLE GREEN FINGERS CARING FOR HASTINGS SCHOOL GROUNDS

(Continued from page 1)

The wooded border at the edge of the playground and the boardwalk are being looked after by Grade 5. The children have collected an amazing amount of trash and recycling, and they keep discovering lost soccer balls and other sports equipment.

In October, we've had a great bunch of very helpful volunteers, and none of this would be possible without a parent from each class to help chaperone children to/from where we are working

and to help move our tools from place to place. Thank you to all our volunteers! It has been great fun.

Special thanks to everyone who helped get this new program off the ground by donating their old tools and equipment: Nina Dodd and Beverly Aker (Lexington Field and Garden Club); Frances Gillespie (Lexington Gardening listserv); Sairey Luterman, Pat Costello and Bette Freddy

(Freecycle and LexingtonMaReUselt); and Bettina McGimsey, Jane Kalinski, Katie Herrick, and Bobbie Basta (Hastings community).



HASTINGS HEROES HELP WITH FALL CLEANUP

Text by Miranda Clarke, Beautification Committee Chair. Photographs by Robert Wilkinson & Liz Fray.

On the afternoon of Saturday, November 2nd, a new group of Hastings Heroes emerged from the playground for the Fall Clean Up. These mighty warriors and defenders of the environment came armed with rakes, shears, and, in one case, a portable generator and power tool. In less than 2 hours, this team had cleared all the trash from around the parking lot and righted the wrongs of many seasons of neglect inflicted on the bushes in front of the Grade 1 classrooms. Hastings Heroes: we salute you!

Heroic thanks go to a mysterious man and his two young children (apologies for not catching your name!); Mike, Kris, Olivia and Logan Wise; Liz Fray and her daughters Sophie and Ariana Gaebe; Sam Longley; Becky Barrentine and her daughters Leah and Ava; Weshuai Liao and his daughter Dora (Yuyang); Lin



Jensen and her daughters Jade and Anna; Sally Suen and her children Grace and Max Zhou; Jennifer Nichols and her daughter Carolyn Gelfand; and lastly, Rob Wilkinson with Jasmine and Orianna Clarke-Wilkinson. Thanks also to people who turned up at 3pm when we'd run out of bags, including Katie Herrick and some other parents and children back from watching the Red Sox parade, including

Laurie Halsey and her daughter Laney who picked up trash in playground long after we had all left.

WELCOME TO THE NEW MEMEBERS OF THE HASTINGS EDUCATIONAL TEAM

Learn more about some of the new staff at Hastings this year.

JAMES ATHENS

Physical Education Teacher



Where were you last year?

I worked in Clarke Middle School's ILP program as an Instructional Assistant.

What is your background?

I attended Westfield State University. I graduated from the Movement Science Department with a Bachelors in Science and a concentration in Physical Education. I am currently pursuing a Masters at Regis College.

What is an interesting "out of school" fact about you?

In the summer, I enjoy going to Maine. I like to wakeboard, jet ski, fish, play yard games, and relax.

KARA THIBEAULT

Resource Teacher

Where were you last year?

Last year, I was finishing up my Masters in Elementary Education and Special Education at Northeastern University.

What is your background?

I worked in Belmont Public Schools in both their elementary and middle schools, as well as in Newton Public Schools at an elementary school.

What is an interesting "out of school" fact about you?

I enjoy anything outdoors and love to play and watch sports.

DANIEL ROSSON

Fourth Grade Teacher



Where were you last year?

I was a teacher at Highland Park Elementary in the Seattle Public Schools last year. I lived in Seattle for over 16 years before moving to Boston.

What is your background?

I had taught in Seattle Public Schools as a first and third grade teacher, math instructional coach, and a technology teacher. I graduated from Harding University in 1996 with a Masters in Education.

What is an interesting "out of school" fact about you?

My favorite thing to do is to travel. Every few years, I go on a month-long trip during the summer out of the country. Europe is my favorite place to visit, and I have been to several countries there. I have also traveled in 45 states. I like cooking, eating out, exercising, reading, going to concerts and plays, watching movies, and exploring where I live. I was born near Los Angeles California, but I was raised in Wyoming.

NEW TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Tricia Argentina, Christine Blake, Nicole Bowes, Victoria Crowley, Janice Griffin, Katie Powers, Elizabeth Thompson, Katelyn Tierney

SARAH GERTNER

Reading Specialist

Where were you last year?

Last year, I worked at Fiske Elementary School in Lexington. I split my time in half: in the mornings, I was one of the reading specialists, and in the afternoons, I was one of the 2nd grade teachers (I only taught literacy). It was a very busy job!

What is your background?

I completed my undergraduate degree at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY. There, I earned dual certification in childhood education and special education (grades 1-6). After college, I moved to New York City to attend the Teachers College of Columbia University. I earned my master's degree in their Reading Specialist program.

While finishing up grad school, I got my first teaching job as a 3rd grade writing teacher for the Ascend Learning Network (a charter school in Brooklyn, New York).

I decided to move back home to Massachusetts after finishing that school year, and I was fortunate enough to be offered a job here in Lexington. I have worked at a new school every year, so I am excited to get settled at Hastings and stick around for a while!

What is an interesting "out of school" fact about you?

I have a passion for dancing and was trained at a ballet studio from ages 9-18. I was a member of my college's dance club during my four years there.

NEW OFFICE STAFF

Christine Jones, Sheryl Rogato

WASTE REDUCED BY 2/3 – HASTINGS RECYCLES EVERY DAY AT LUNCHTIME!

By Kristen Parker and Lin Jensen, Go Green Committee Co-Chairs

After the summer vacation, Hastings resumed its lunchtime recycling program with a big bang on Friday October 11. In the morning, we had a presentation during the All School Meeting about the recycling process. The attentive audience had a hearty laugh watching the YouTube video about reduction in waste (http://youtu.be/5c5cnM_TdHw) or search Google for “loops scoops garbage”).

Last year, we were able to help the kids recycle on Wednesdays and Fridays when parent volunteers came to the cafeteria to help. This school year, we are recycling every day of the week that there is lunch. It takes a village – and it is only possible with the joint effort of our school custodians, lunchtime supervisors, dedicated parent volunteers, and our students who are eager and ready to save our planet, one meal at a time.

Below is our simple five-step recycling process:

1. Empty liquid: Pour any drink out of the container into the sink.
2. Recycle drink containers.
3. Dump and tap: Dump leftover food out of plastic containers and tap on the side of the trash bin to make the containers as empty as possible. Straws, plastic ware, Ziploc bags, and foil-type juice pouches like Capri Sun go to the trash.
4. Recycle all plastic containers.
5. Stack trays: They are not recyclable right now, but stacking them neatly greatly reduces the volume of waste and saves plastic bags.

With the supervision of lunchroom staff and the assistance of parent volunteers, Hastings students are doing a fantastic job at reducing waste, and the results speak for themselves. According to Head Custodian Chris Bouchard, “Prior to starting up the recycling program, each lunch would generally generate six (6) barrels of rubbish and sometimes up to eight (8). This is approximately 330-440 gallons by volume depending on the day. Since we have reinstated the recycling program, this number has decreased to two (2) barrels, or 110 gallons by volume daily. This is anywhere between an estimated 66

and 75 percent reduction in waste by volume.” And where did the rest go? Besides pouring out liquid down the drain, we used to have one 95 gallon recycling toter. Now we use four recycling toters and are ordering the fifth one.

We are extremely proud of our Hastings community and our environmentally conscious student body for making lunchtime recycling such a great success. And last but not least, heartfelt thanks are owed to our enthusiastic Go Green parent volunteers: Becky Barrentine, Audra Myerberg, Stacey Schmidt, Shaonan Snail, Nita Sturiale, Sally Suen, Dan Tam, Shuangmei Xu, Irene (Yayun) Yu, and Ling Zhang.

If you are interested in the Go Green recycling program or have any questions, please contact us at gogreen@hastingspta.org or visit us online at <http://hastingspta.org/go-green-recycling>

↓ STEP 1 : Empty liquid



↓ STEP 2 : Empty drink containers



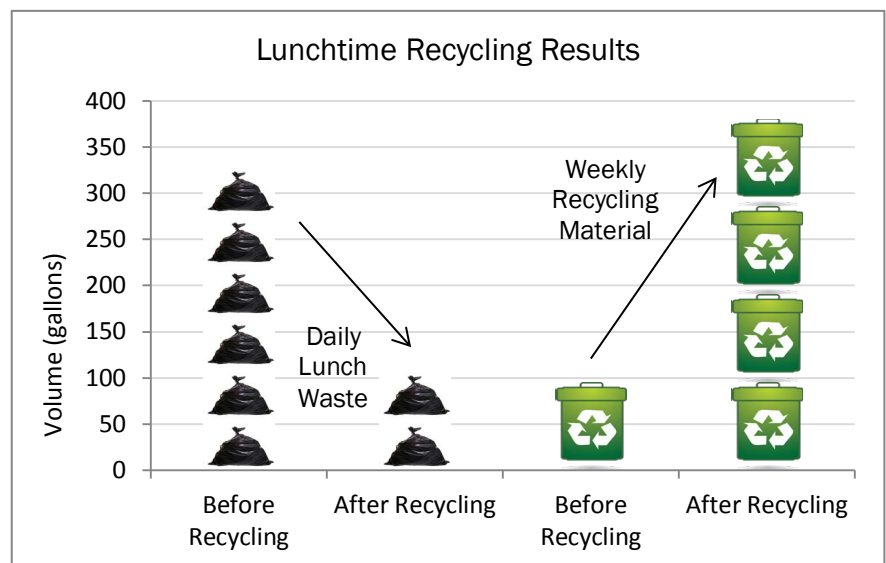
↑ STEP 3 : Dump & tap



← STEP 4
Recycle plastic containers



STEP 5 →
Stack trays



MAP NIGHT TO EUROPE

By Lin Jensen. Photographs by Helen Zhou, Anna Jensen, and Eric Jensen.

On the night of Thursday, October 3rd, over 60 families visited the National Geographic Society's Giant Map of Europe at Hastings. Parents and children did treasure hunt games with iPads on the Giant Map taped onto the gym floor. The curious families also visited the classrooms that were filled with games, quizzes, and displays from eight European countries representing the origins of various Hastings families. Austria, Armenia,

Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Russia, and the United Kingdom were all represented in the bustling crowd.

The Giant Map was sponsored by the Lexington Public Schools and led by K-5 Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator Jane Hundley, a former Hastings parent. Hastings students learned about the map during the school day. The map night demonstrated a link between enrichment programs and curriculum

experiences during the school day as well as evening family events.

Special thanks to the families that provided the displays (Cherepov, Clarke-Wilkinson, Jensen, Keremian, Kontos, Maimonis, Selitsky, Shaw, Taibi) and volunteers who made this event a wonderful experience (Michaela Barnes, Stacie Bracken, Anna & Eric Jensen, Bettina McGimsey, Ranjit Rajamani, Ilya Sortor, Qingli Wang, Yajuan Zhao & Helen Zhu).



FIRST AND FOURTH GRADE BODY MASS INDEX (BMI) SCREENING

By Nancy Salitsky, RN, Hastings Nurse (781-860-5800 x1)

Every fall, along with our vision and hearing screen of Hastings students, we screen our first and fourth graders for Body Mass Index (BMI) per the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations. The BMI is a calculation based on height and weight. The Center for Disease Control provides a guideline based on height, weight, and BMI. The interpretation of the BMI depends on a child's age and gender. As a child grows, their body fat changes.

The BMI is a screening tool, not a diagnostic tool. The number is meant to provide you with information about your child's growth pattern and to help increase awareness of the importance of healthy eating and active living. The BMI does not tell the whole story about a child's health. Other factors such as family histories and sports

participation can influence your child's growth. For example, athletes and dancers may have a higher than expected BMI due to their increased muscle mass.

There have been recent changes by the Massachusetts State legislature to the regulation regarding physical exam screenings (105 CMR 200.000). In the past, we would notify parents of their child's result, but now parents can contact the school nurse to request their child's BMI score. Their child's BMI score will be maintained in their school health record and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health will receive aggregate data – total numbers of students by grade, gender, and BMI category.

Whether it is at your well-child visit with your pediatrician or with the school screen, your child's BMI

percentile will be calculated. If the BMI percentile is >85% or <5%, your pediatrician should be consulted to help think of intervention strategies that may help prevent health consequences. Some possible health risks include: cardiovascular disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, type 2 diabetes, eating disorders, poor nutritional status, depression, and self-esteem concerns.

As adults, many of us learned our eating and physical activity habits while we were young. We are hoping that by using the BMI, we will begin discussions with families about supporting the healthy growth of their child.

Some helpful websites for more information:

www.mass.gov/massinmotion
www.kidshealth.org

HASTINGS HALLOWEEN PARTY WELCOMES A RECORD 600 ATTENDEES

By Becky Barrentine and Jenn Marcin, Fifth Grade Activities Co-Chairs

Where can you see minions, secret agents, and ghosts all at the same time? Why the Hastings Halloween Party run by fifth graders, of course! This year's party hosted a record 600 attendees. Children had their fortunes told, little ones listened to stories in the library, and all kids, big and small, had a fabulous time visiting the ever popular Frankenstein's Laboratory and the Haunted Maze.

A new addition to this year's party was a prize redemption table. Instead of receiving a piece of candy after each game, children collected tickets all night long, and then redeemed those tickets for prizes and trinkets. Kids were thrilled with this addition to the evening.

In addition to all the fifth graders working at the Halloween Party, this year's event saw more than 90% of fifth grade parents helping out: volunteering at events, supplying baked goods, and ensuring games and events were in working order and running smoothly.

Each year, fifth graders provide several community services in the fall including hosting this Halloween Party, offering babysitting services during parent teacher conferences, and running a used book sale. Performing these services allows fifth graders to learn firsthand the lessons they have been receiving for years: responsibility, accountability, and independent problem solving, to name a few. The proceeds from these services are then used to fund several spring-time fifth grade celebrations and events.

Next time you see a fifth grade student or parent, thank them for providing these valuable services for our community.



A FEW FACTS ABOUT YOU - THE HASTINGS PTA

By Bettina McGimsey and Lin Jensen, PTA Co-Presidents

You are the Hastings PTA

Nearly 90% of Hastings families and over 50% of the staff have joined the Hastings PTA this year. Thank you for your support! You are a large part of what makes Hastings the amazing school and community it is.

Exciting stuff is happening at Hastings this year!

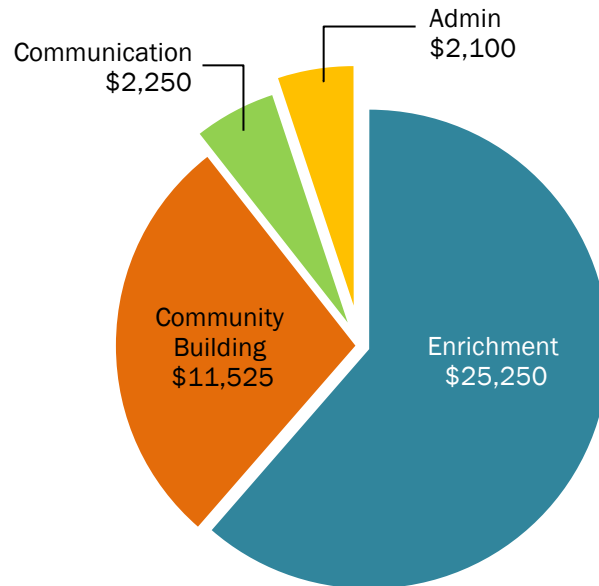
Thanks to your support and with your help, the PTA is able to:

- Provide critical enrichment activities for our children (\$25,250) – From Big Backyard walks to Family Math Night, from mini-grants for staff to Safe Routes pedestrian training for second graders, from library books to recess and PE equipment, your PTA funds a wide variety of enrichment activities for all of our children both during and beyond the school day.

As our largest enrichment activity, Arts Created Together (ACT) has changed its format this year, bringing whole-school performances to every student at Hastings. In addition, ACT will continue its ArtsFest which brings students from area art colleges (this year MassArt and Berklee College of Music) to work with our children. A celebration of what the children will accomplish will be held in April.

- Bring the Hastings community together (\$11,525) – Community-building events include our Welcome Picnic and coffees, the Hastings Harvest 5K Run/Walk (itself a fundraiser but probably our largest community event), the Talent Show, and our beloved Multicultural Potluck. We also support a variety of Family Friends events and staff luncheons. Scholarships so that all children at Hastings can participate in all activities are also funded through this line item as well.

2013-14 PTA Budgeted Expenses



- Get the word out (\$2,250) – We use a variety of tools to communicate with the Hastings community, including our brand new website (hastingspta.org), the Hastings Bulletin, the School directory, mailings, and flyers throughout the year.
- PTA administration expenses (\$2,100) – Preparation of annual tax returns, insurance, hospitality costs, and printing paper for backpack flyers are included in this amount.

Here's how we raise the money

To support these activities, our primary fundraisers include:

- Direct donation campaign – Thanks to your generosity, we were able to raise over \$10,000 - 1/4 of the fundraising we need to do for the year.
- Adult Social – We will throw a party and silent auction at the deCordova Museum on March 8th. We hear that the auction items are quite exciting – we look forward to

bidding ourselves. This will be the event of the season – be sure to be there!

- Harvest 5K Run/Walk – Always an amazing community event, this 5K Run also brings in much needed income.

We've joined the 21st century!

To help you find out what's going on with PTA, we have launched a new website hastingspta.org – your site to find out everything you need to know about YOUR PTA. In conjunction with the start up of our new site, we are also working to move our membership and directory signup online as well.

We need YOU!

To enable all of these activities to happen, we need all of you to step up and participate in the PTA. All levels of volunteer support are needed: you can volunteer for a half hour once a year or take the lead on several projects – we welcome all the help we can get!

Remember, YOU are the Hastings PTA. Thank you for the amazing support you give our children and community!

LET'S GET MOVING ON OUR WAY TO SCHOOL!

By Jennifer Yaar, Safe Routes to School Committee Chair

Hastings joined schools from around the world to celebrate International Walk to School Day on Wednesday, October 9, 2013.

The event was held on the basketball court before school, and gave students and parents the opportunity to mark a spot on the world map of special significance to their family. Students also got reflective zipper pulls to emphasize the importance of visibility for walking activities at night (perfect for Halloween!) and bookmarks that described how walking or biking to school can help build physical activity into child's daily routine.

Walk to School Day began in 1997 as a simple idea – children and

parents, school and local officials walking to school together on a designated day. In 2000, Canada and Great Britain joined with the United States to create International Walk to School Day, and now over 35 countries around the world participate. It is an energizing event, reminding everyone of the simple joy of walking to school, the health benefits of regular daily activity, and the need for safe places to walk and bike. Schools focus on health, safety, physical activity, and concern for the environment.

Upcoming Hastings Walking Wednesdays are scheduled for December, March, April and May. Keep an eye on the Hastings Bulletin and flyers in student folders for

Walking Wednesday activities and themes!

For additional information about Hastings Safe Routes to School and Walking Wednesday activities, please contact Jennifer Yaar at saferoutes@hastingspta.org. For additional information, please visit these websites:

Walk to School Day in the USA

www.walkbiketoschool.org

National Center for Safe Routes to School

www.saferoutesinfo.org

International Walk to School Day

www.iwalktoschool.org



TEACHING CHILDREN WHOSE FIRST LANGUAGE IS NOT ENGLISH: NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS

By Louise Lipsitz, Hastings Elementary School Principal

One of the new initiatives that Lexington teachers are engaged in this year focuses on teaching students whose first language is not English. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website states:

“Strengthening teaching and learning for English language learners (ELL) is central to closing the proficiency gap. Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL) is a state-wide initiative to improve and support the academic achievement of English language learners in our Commonwealth.

RETELL brings a systemic approach that combines professional development for Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) teachers designed to enable them to make rigorous content accessible to their English learners. This ambitious undertaking will involve tens of thousands of educators at various stages in their careers as well as the organizations that prepare, support, and employ them.”

Source: www.doe.mass.edu/retell

The lead-up to this initiative began several years ago. In 2011, DESE initiated a review of teacher training to serve the needs of ELL students in

order to revise the training based on new research, new technologies, and feedback from the field. Across the state there was an increasing number and percentage of ELL students in the schools.

During this same period of time, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) informed DESE that Massachusetts had failed to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers experienced by ELL students by not defining and mandating the preparation and training that teachers and other educators must have to provide effective Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) instruction. The Department of Justice’s involvement accelerated the pace of the Massachusetts Department’s work.

Additionally, as the state’s overall performance continued to rise and Massachusetts students emerged as the highest performing students in the U.S., the performance of ELL students in Massachusetts schools lagged. In September 2011 the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education directed DESE to develop a comprehensive plan to address these issues and close the proficiency gap for ELL students. The Department subsequently launched RETELL:

Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners.

“Core academic teachers” who teach English Language Learners (ELLs) are required to obtain a Sheltered English Immersion Teacher Endorsement under the state’s (RETELL) initiative. The addition of the SEI Teacher Endorsement and the SEI Administrator Endorsement are part of the Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL) initiative.

(<http://masteacher.org/advocating/toolkits/retell.aspx>)

RETELL courses are being offered across the state, and our ELL Department Head Robyn Dowling-Grant is a certified trainer, providing courses in Lexington. Many Hastings teachers are involved in courses here in Lexington or in other locations in order to complete the requirements and obtain their SEI certification this year. The courses are intensive 45-hour classes with both in-person and web-based learning. Hastings teachers are working together to complete assigned tasks and practice what they are learning in the courses with ELL students in their classrooms.

ANNOUNCING THE NEW HASTINGS PTA WEBSITE

By Kim-Anh Nguyen, Website Committee Chair

Hastings families are invited to check out the new Hastings PTA website at www.hastingspta.org! This online resource offers a number of helpful resources, including information about the PTA and its many committees, volunteering information and current opportunities, room parent resources such as downloadable templates and ideas for crafts/gifts, and a PTA calendar of activities.

The site was built over the past four months with guidance from our PTA co-presidents, Bettina and Lin, along with contributions from the PTA executive

committee and various committee co-chairs. Many thanks to the team of dedicated parents who helped to build the site: Rajeshwari Godbole, Vaidehi Kasarekar, Kim-Anh Nguyen, and Chi-Heng Wang.

Over the coming year, we will continue to keep the site up-to-date and add many new features. Feedback and suggestions are welcome; please send them to website@hastingspta.org

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Maria Hastings PTA website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, ABOUT THE PTA, JOIN & SUPPORT THE PTA, VOLUNTEER INFO, NEWS & CALENDAR, and CONTACT US. Below the navigation bar, there is a main content area with a header that says "Welcome from the Hastings PTA". To the left of the main content, there is a sidebar with "Important Dates" listing events like "Flatbread Pizza" and "Professional Development". To the right of the main content, there is a "Quick links" section with links for "Join & Support the PTA", "Get Involved", "Join the mailing list", "Hastings Lunch Menu", "Arrival & Dismissal Guidelines", "PTA Committees & Annual Events", "PTA Forms", "Room Parent Resources", "Hastings School Videos", and "Extended Day Program". The main content area also features a "Walking Wednesday" announcement and a "Picture Retake Day" announcement.

A PRIMER ON AUTUMN BIG BACKYARD WALKS

By Carolyn Conte, Big Backyard Committee Chair

If your son or daughter is in kindergarten, first, second or third grade, then sometime this fall they have explored the schoolyard during a Hastings Big Backyard fall walk. Have they shared any of that experience with you?

Your Kindergartener might share that they saw the beautiful fall colors of a big tree (it's a sugar maple near the loading dock on the right side of the school), a meeting point for their walk exploring the signs of fall. They may have even collected some of the colorful leaves. What other signs of fall do they remember finding?

Your first grader may share that they went on the path through the woods behind the playground, where they looked to see how animals in the autumn schoolyard find the five things they need to survive (food, water, shelter, warmth, and air). What signs

of animals can you find in your backyard? Why do those animals choose to make your yard their home?

Your second grader might share that they visited the Hastings three sisters garden and learned how Native Americans planted corn, beans, and squash (the "three sisters") together because they help each other grow and are healthy to eat together too. Or about using branches to build a home - if you need to bend the branch to create a structure, is it better to use a branch that has broken off and has been sitting on the ground, or one freshly cut from a tree?

Your third grader may share that they took a walk down Mass Ave and across the 128 overpass to Fiske Hill, the site of a home built in the 1600s by Ebenezer Fiske. They were given the role of cook, builder, clothing maker, or healer, and had to identify four plants

that a person with that role would need. The role play helped the children to think about what it was like to live at a time and in a place where people had to (and had the knowledge to) find much of what they needed in nature. They thought about questions like "Why was the white pine used to build masts for ships?" "If I was going to the "New World", what would I need to bring?" "Why would I need to know the difference between a red oak and a sugar maple?" If you knew which tree is a sugar maple, you could successfully tap it to make maple syrup; the red oak leaves could be soaked with animal skins to soften them for making clothing (the tannin in the leaves does it). And ask them about the "Lamb's Ear"!

Look ahead to the winter Big Backyard walks for grades K-4 and enjoy the outdoors!



Hastings FUNdraiser

EVERYBODY HAVE FUN TONIGHT

SAVE THE DATE – SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2014.

The Maria Hastings Elementary PTA biannual FUNdraiser will be held at the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum on the evening of March 8, 2014. The event is a great opportunity to join friends and fellow parents for a fun evening while raising money for a terrific cause. Save the date! Tickets will go on sale soon.

This year's event will not only feature an unforgettable location, but also catered hors d'oeuvres, a craft beer and fine wine tasting, music, fun, and a great silent auction. Exciting auction prizes include: a week in a luxury home on Stratton Mountain sleeping 14, a signed Homeland script and other CIA-type stuff, and a 3-day guided trip to NYC, including hotel, seeing Woody Allen play with his jazz band, and dinner at Babbo.

The FUNdraiser committee is still looking for more volunteers to help organize the event. So if you are a social media whiz, have silent auction ideas, or want to help out in another way, please e-mail adultsocial@hastingspta.org

BRINGING THE ARTS TO HASTINGS

By Jayshree Rajamani, ACT Committee Co-Chair

ACT – Arts Created Together – is a committee of the PTA and is responsible for bringing all aspects of the Arts to the children of Hastings School! Last year in addition to the grade specific presentations, which included Poetry, Cartoon Design, History through Music, and a Marionette Performance, ACT also hosted Master Percussionist Jerry Leake as an Artist in Residence and Hastings’ first ever ArtsFest! Children learned the art of Origami, Sound Art, Book Art and making sculptures out of masking tape!

The idea is to expose our children to as much diverse art as possible. This year ACT is trying something new by holding special All School Meeting presentations for the entire student body, Faculty and Staff. The goal is to provide a communal experience and

have all members of the school community share and learn together.

The first presentation was held on September 27th wherein the Tanglewood Marionettes presented The Dragon King! It was a hugely successful performance and the proof of that were some wonderful letters and drawings by students of the school thanking both the ACT/PTA and the Marionettes!

The year ahead will be sprinkled with performances for our students to enjoy. We will also hold the Second Annual ArtsFest, once again featuring a two-week infusion of different disciplines of Art for our young artists to learn about, explore and create!

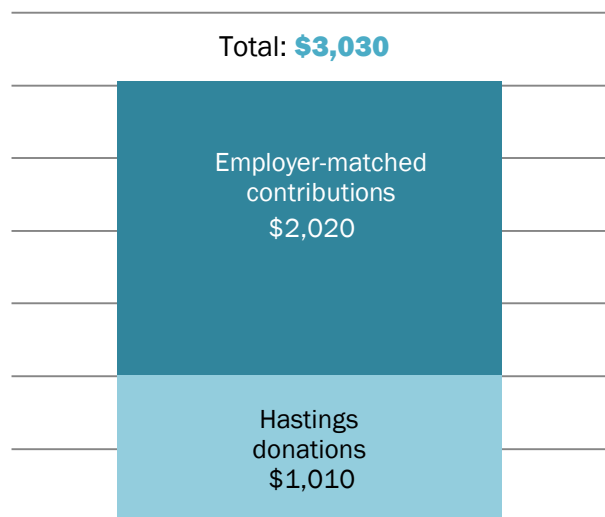
If you have some feedback or ideas and are interested in becoming involved in ACT, please contact co-chairs Kristine Wise and Jayshree Bala Rajamani at act@hastingspta.org.



HASTINGS COMMUNITY DONATES \$3,030 TO TYPHOON HAIYAN RELIEF FUND

By Louise Lipsitz, Hastings Elementary School Principal

Typhoon Haiyan Donation



Our community’s commitment to one another is evident in many ways. Beyond support for our school, we are most fortunate to have families who recognize that we can each help others in some small way. Simply consider the messages that our impromptu fundraiser for relief in the Philippines conveyed.

First, children felt empowered to help others across the world – people they are not likely to meet in person. Beyond that, they demonstrated a sense of gratitude for all that they have: health, food, shelter, and education.

In one day, our school community raised \$1,010 which was tripled in value by a parent whose employer offered 2:1 matches for donations to help after Typhoon Haiyan.

We donated a total of \$3,030 to the International Rescue Committee (IRC) – a critical global network of first responders, humanitarian relief workers, healthcare providers, educators, community leaders, activists, and volunteers. The IRC is on the ground in the Philippines, providing emergency relief, relocating refugees, and rebuilding lives in the wake of disaster.

STAR NEWSLETTER – FALL 2013 EDITION

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Original graphic design: Kim-Anh Nguyen

For suggestions, questions, submissions, or to join the Star Committee, please email star@hastingspta.org
An electronic version of this newsletter is available on the Hastings PTA Website at www.hastingspta.org/star

HASTINGS HARVEST RUN - A PARTY LIKE NO OTHER!

By Ayla Kavanagh, Harvest Run Committee Co-Chair. Photographs by Brianna Nadelberg.

On a rainy Sunday in October, runners, walkers, and dedicated volunteers gathered at Lower Hayden field to participate in the 4th Annual Hastings Harvest Run. Over 400 participants registered for this year's event. This community event has become a favorite at Hastings. It is a time when families (runners and non-runners) gather together to "get moving" and cheer one another on.

This year we had representation from all of the Lexington Schools. Over 160 Hastings students registered for the race. The Harvest Run is not limited to Lexington; we had runners from 16 neighboring communities. Lauren Luzzo, one of our Special Education teachers, won the overall Female 5K run.

However, this event is not necessarily about winning. Both children and adults challenge themselves to better their times from previous years or to accomplish something they have never done before.

All Hastings students and alumni were given t-shirts to represent the grade that they are in. It was so exciting to watch clusters of children running across the finish line, in their various colored t-shirts. Some of them even crossed the finish line holding hands.

Despite the rain, there were smiles on everyone's faces. After completing the 5K or 1.5 mile walk – everyone gathered at the post race party. The Harvest's Run post-race party is unlike

any other! There was a live band (local Dad Jay Burkholder), a bouncy house, and an abundance of food donated by local restaurants. The Shotcakes cupcakes filled with ice cream were a definite highlight for the kids.

The Hastings Harvest Run is one of the PTA's fundraising events and brought in over \$6,000 for the PTA. This money helps to fund various programs and events throughout the year.

If it were not for our strong Hastings Community, this event would not be possible. It is the combined effort and devotion to Hastings from sponsors, volunteers, and participants that make the Hastings Harvest Run an event we look forward to from year to year.

