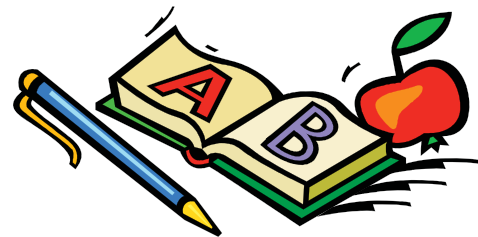




# Happenings

a publication for students and parents of  
Horace Mann Elementary

September 2011



## Horace Mann Hot Topics

By Principal Jeff Strasnick

Welcome back! We are looking forward to another great year here at Horace Mann Elementary School.

- ❖ This year we will be saying goodbye and good luck to our wonderful secretary, Mrs. Jeffrey. She will be retiring in December after many years of dedicated service to the students and families of the Horace Mann Community.
- ❖ As with many of the other schools, we have new staff to welcome. Please welcome Giuseppe Delisi (1<sup>st</sup> grade), Felice Kachinsky (5<sup>th</sup> grade), Kim Dello Russo (art teacher), Angela Arnold (after school site director), and Meredyth McGrath (multi-grade paraprofessional).
- ❖ We also have staff assignment changes to announce. Ms. Giordano (general education) and Ms. Shanahan (special education) have moved from second grade into fourth grade, Ms. Sarasin has moved from fourth grade into second grade, and Ms. Lydon, our former after school site director, is now one of our second grade teachers. Paraprofessional Gail Williams has moved from fourth grade into fifth grade with Ms. Kachinsky, and Paraprofessional Alex Gabriel has moved from kindergarten into first grade with Mrs. Loiselle (Pellegrini) and Mrs. Kent (Meyers).
- ❖ We are in the process of hiring an additional paraprofessional and after school site director. Those positions will be filled soon.
- ❖ This coming school year, I'll be looking for more parent volunteers to help out with academics in the classroom, primarily with our Lexia and Symphony Math computerized programs. More information is to follow. Please let our new volunteer director, Beth Federico, know if you are interested. Training will be provided.
- ❖ There will be a change to our Open House format this year. In order for parents of students in multiple grades to visit both teachers, teachers in grades K-5 will present their classroom information from 6:10-6:30pm and then again from 6:40-7:00pm. We hope this allows parents to get a chance to hear what's happening in other grades if they have multiple children. Please remember that this is a time to hear what's going on in your child's classroom for the year and not a time to discuss individual students with teachers.



## Horace Mann Hot Topics, continued

- ❖ Our PTO format will also change this year. Each month a different grade level or group of teachers will be attending the PTO meetings. This will allow parents to hear what's happening at each grade level every month at the PTO meetings. We hope this format is successful, and we encourage parents to attend when they can.
- ❖ You will also notice that technology is more prevalent in classrooms this year. Along with SMART Boards, teachers have begun using other forms of digital media to help motivate and prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. You will see more of this during the fall and spring open houses and at some PTO meetings.



## Important Dates in September



- September 8<sup>th</sup> -- Open House
- September 11<sup>th</sup> – Victorian Fair
- September 15<sup>th</sup> – Family Cookout
- September 19<sup>th</sup> – Innisbrook Gift Wrap fundraiser kickoff
- September 29<sup>th</sup> – Rosh Hashanah (no activities)

## The Pumpkin Festival is Coming!



The annual **HORACE MANN PUMPKIN FESTIVAL** will be held on Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>. We'll have lots of fun games and crafts, a bounce house, pony rides, our famous Haunted House, and much more. Please plan to join us for this great family fun event! We are looking for a few volunteers to join the planning committee, and there are lots of event day volunteer opportunities. Please contact Debbie Brooks at [debbie.brooks1@verizon.net](mailto:debbie.brooks1@verizon.net) if you'd like to get involved.

## Raffle Items Needed

We are seeking donations for our Pumpkin Festival Raffles. Here are some suggestions:

- Do you, or someone you know, hold season tickets for the Celtics, Red Sox, Bruins, or Patriots? Consider donating a pair.
- Do you have unused (but not expired) restaurant or store gift cards? Consider donating them.
- Do you make hand-crafted goods? Considering making and donating something.
- Consider donating new toys, games or movies, or together with some friends, larger items like bikes.



Your donations are tax deductible. If you, or your place of work, can offer an item or service which could be used as a raffle prize, please contact Debbie Brooks at [debbie.brooks1@verizon.net](mailto:debbie.brooks1@verizon.net). Thanks for your support!

# Annual Horace Mann Community Cookout

Please join us for the Horace Mann Family Cookout on Thursday, September 15<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 7:00pm (rain date Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>). Traditional cookout fare will be for sale. Pack your picnic blanket (and bug spray!) and enjoy an evening of great food and an opportunity to meet other Horace Mann family members and see old friends. Watch your favorite teachers cook and serve the food! Look for the volunteer form coming home with your notices and sign up to help! We need set-up and clean up crews, cashiers, and donations of coolers to use!

Hope to see you there!

Questions – please contact Monique Kenney at 781-665-9719 or [kenneys1@comcast.net](mailto:kenneys1@comcast.net)



## Notes from the Newsletter Staff



With the start of another school year, we are gearing up to provide you with as much news and information as we can about Horace Mann! Kelly Paulson and Nancy Murphy will be working each month to make the Happenings one of your go-to sources of information. In order to do this most effectively, **we need your input!** Each month, we will have a deadline for submissions to the next edition. We will be firm with this deadline in order to reliably distribute the Happenings during the first week of each month. Remember: *This is your newsletter!*

**The deadline for submissions to the October edition will be Monday, September 26<sup>th</sup>.** If you would like to include an article in October's issue, please forward your text to Nancy at [jn95murphy@verizon.net](mailto:jn95murphy@verizon.net) by this deadline.

We also welcome and encourage any feedback you may have, good or bad. Please feel free to contact Kelly at [kjacob17@yahoo.com](mailto:kjacob17@yahoo.com), or Nancy at [jn95murphy@verizon.net](mailto:jn95murphy@verizon.net) with any comments, questions, or suggestions.

In an effort to save resources, we generally do not make hard copies of the Happenings for everyone. However, if you do not have the ability to print your own copy or to view it online, please let us know, and we will be sure to provide a hard copy in your child's backpack.

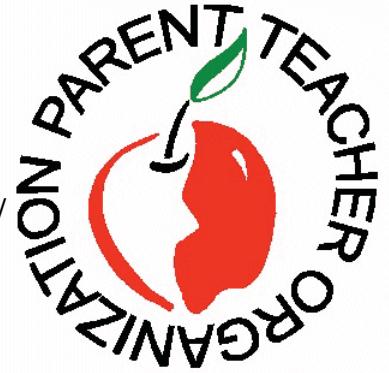


## Visit us at the Melrose Victorian Fair

Horace Mann PTO will have a booth at the Victorian Fair in downtown Melrose on Sunday, September 11th. Please stop by and say hello!

## HM PTO Welcomes You!

The PTO has many great activities planned for the school year. Our primary goal is to support and organize programs that will enrich the educational experience of our children and help to foster communication between school and home. We do this through many school spirit activities, as well as by raising funds to provide financial support for various needs at the school. Thriving on parent involvement, the Horace Mann PTO offers diverse opportunities to contribute your time and talents. Whether behind the scenes or leading a fundraiser, there's something for everyone!



All parents are invited to attend our monthly PTO meetings. The first PTO meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 19th, 7:00pm in the All Purpose Room. Meetings provide a great way to contribute ideas, have a voice in decisions, and meet other members of the Horace Mann School community. You don't have to be an active volunteer to attend meetings, nor do you need to attend meetings to be an active volunteer! If you would like to attend but don't have a sitter for your children, we will once again be offering sitting services free of charge this year.

Our meetings will be held on Monday evenings. All meetings take place at 7:00pm in the All Purpose Room. Mark your calendars for the following PTO meetings... (these dates will also be posted on the website):

Monday, September 19  
Monday, October 17

Monday, November 21  
Monday, December 19

We encourage you to get involved! Please feel free reach any of the PTO Board Members directly, or by contacting our group email at [hmpto@yahoo.com](mailto:hmpto@yahoo.com).

### HM PTO Board 2011-2012

Debbie Brooks, Co-President    Jackie Skane, Co-Vice President    Colleen Levesque, Treasurer  
Jen Waden, Co-President    Jen Ward, Co-Vice President    Rachael Svenson, Secretary

## PTO Annual Family Contribution

For the 2011-2012 school year, we are asking each family to make a tax deductible contribution of \$25. While we will continue to hold fundraisers this year, we will focus on incorporating more fun school spirit and community events. These activities, in addition to your contributions, will help to support many initiatives for our children, including further technology enhancements in the school, new guided reading materials, and mini-grants for teachers to augment their classroom supplies. Your contribution is tax deductible and can be paid at the PTO table at Open House on September 8<sup>th</sup>, via PayPal on our website (in the PTO section), or by returning the form below. We greatly appreciate your support!

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*Please make check payable to Horace Mann PTO, noting "donation" in the memo, and return to the attention of the PTO Treasurer.*

Student  
Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ Other amount/additional donation \_\_\_\_\_  
Parents name \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## Visit the HM Website!



Don't forget to regularly visit the Horace Mann Website. There you will find lots of great information about our school and upcoming events and activities. Find us at <http://www.melroseschools.com/horacemann>. You may email any comments and/or suggestions to our fabulous webmaster, Jackie Bishop, at [jbishopdesign@gmail.com](mailto:jbishopdesign@gmail.com).

## Innisbrook Gift Wrap

Our Innisbrook Gift Wrap Fundraiser will run from September 19th through October 3rd, 2011. This is one of our most important fundraisers of the year, as the school receives 50% of all of our sales! A simple online ordering process makes it easy for out-of-town friends and family to participate. Kids can earn prizes for selling, and you'll have your gift wrap in time for the holiday season. Watch for your information packet in your child's backpack.



## Help Wanted!



Seeking parents, caregivers, grandparents, and any other persons with a Horace Mann connection interested in a volunteer position. Time requirements vary depending upon the activity selected, however, there are many ways to volunteer that require very little of your time. There is a broad selection of activities. Some may be completed at home or with smaller child(ren) in tow! Absolutely no previous experience required! Our school depends on volunteers to enrich the lives of the children at the Horace Mann.

**Volunteers must register and sign a confidentiality statement yearly. CORI checks are repeated every three years. For parents who are re-registering, there is a simple online form to complete:** <https://71.174.244.61/registrations/bridge/reregistration/>

**Representatives from the Bridge will be available at the Horace Mann Open House to assist volunteers with filling out paperwork. They will also have CORI forms and lists of re-registering volunteers who are due to fill out CORI forms.**

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Beth Federico

781.665.0737 or [bfederico104@comcast.net](mailto:bfederico104@comcast.net)

## Guided Reading Program Needs Your Help

We are looking for a few volunteers to help reshelv books. This easy task can be completed in 20 minutes or less. If you are able to contribute on a one-time or regular basis, please contact Dana Russell at [danaruss@yahoo.com](mailto:danaruss@yahoo.com) or 617-331-9799.



## Garden Report

The Horace Mann Community Garden saw its second year come into full swing as summer vacation ended. Children returned to school and were greeted by a thriving living laboratory.

Last spring, the second and third graders were the first to plant and experience the garden. The first crops were romaine lettuce and radishes, and the second graders celebrated the harvest with a salad party. The party was a surprising hit, with children and adults alike saying, "I didn't even think I liked radishes," "That was delicious," and "Can I have some more?" It was a reminder that food tastes best freshly picked and prepared by you.

It is inspiring to see how the seeds and seedlings carefully tended by the students became beautiful flowers, vegetables, fruits and herbs. The beds are thriving with tomatoes, mint, sunflowers, cucumbers, bottle gourd, nasturtiums, marigolds, acorn squash, green beans and corn.

The Garden/Beautification Committee was busy over the summer looking after the garden and harvesting its crops. Volunteers planted and tended a pretty new perennial bed in front of the tot lot. Plus, thanks to friend and HM neighbor Cindy Chabot, a drip irrigation system was installed throughout the garden.

Harvesting began in mid July. Over 20 quarts of orange cherry tomatoes, 15 to 20 lbs of plum tomatoes, bundles of acorn squash, corn and green beans have been picked, delivered, and gratefully received by A Servants Heart Food Pantry.



There are many exciting things to look forward to this school year in the garden. In addition to continuing the great learning experiences from last year, we look forward to exciting new lessons. There will be opportunities to gather sunflower seeds, pick vegetables and herbs, study the changing life cycle, and inspire students' creativity. Plus, the fourth graders plan to build a barrel mini-ecosystem for their unit on frogs.

Great examples of companion planting can be found in last year's second grade bed. The "Three Sisters Garden" is comprised of corn, beans, and squash planted from seed. Students learned that the three vegetables, when planted together using this Native American planting technique, illustrate symbiotic relationships. The first sister, corn, supports vines. Beans provide nutrients for the corn, and squash provides a "prickly" barrier for both. They also compliment each other nutritionally. We look forward to carrying over the lesson as the second graders turned third graders start their big study unit on Wampanoag Indians.

## Garden Report, continued

The most exciting part of the garden has been the enthusiasm and support shown by students, parents, and community who have all left signs of their appreciation. There are personalized touches throughout the garden, such as painted rocks, donated flags, wind chimes, and a bird house.

We are continually looking for ways to keep the garden vibrant and a true reflection of the Horace Mann community. Any and all interested in participating and volunteering their time and talents are welcome. Please contact the Garden/Beautification Committee by sending an email to: [jengukelberger@hotmail.com](mailto:jengukelberger@hotmail.com) or by visiting the Horace Mann School website: <http://www.melroseschools.com/horacemann/garden.cfm>



Looking forward to seeing you in the garden!  
Jennifer Gukelberger Garden Committee Co-Chair

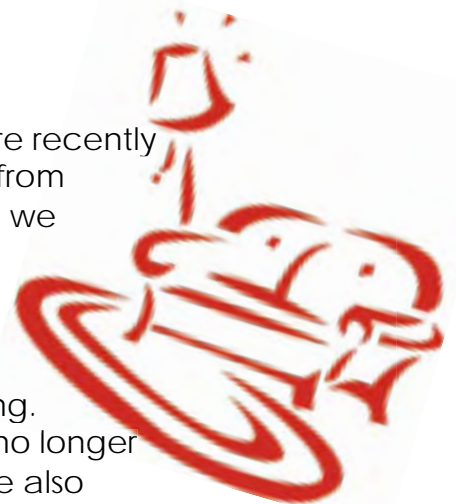
## Notes from the Nurse Submitted by Marsha Gibbons



- To all parents/guardians: Please fill out the Confidential Student Health and Emergency Form and send in to school nurse. This form may be found at the Melrose School website and must be filled out every school year.
- To all Kindergarten parents: A copy of a current doctor's physical and required immunizations with a lead screening test are now due on ALL KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS. Please forward to the school nurse, if you have not already done so.
- To all Grade 3 parents/guardians: A copy of a doctor's physical is recommended for your child's health record (due 12/30/11).

## School Building Update:

Per order of the Captain from Fire Prevention, all Melrose schools were recently informed that any upholstered or stuffed furniture must be removed from school buildings, as it presents a possible fire hazard. This means that we can no longer use the couches in the library, teachers lounge and in some of the classrooms. These items will soon be removed, and to take the place of this furniture, we are in need of some gently used wooden chairs and area rugs to create cozy sitting areas for our students while participating in group activities or independent reading. If you have a 5'x 8' or 8'x10' rug, or a wooden rocking chair that you no longer need and would like to donate, please contact Mr. Strasnick. We are also looking to donate three couches/sectionals (pictured on the website) to anyone who might need it. Please let Mr. Strasnick know ASAP. Thanks for your support.





Horace Mann Elementary School  
School Site Council  
Parent Candidate Form  
SY 2011-2012

**Candidate #1**

Name: **Andrea Hill**

Why I would like to be on the school site council:

Having a first grader at Horace Mann and a younger child in Pre-K, our family plans to be part of the Horace Mann community for several more years. I would like to be involved in making Horace Mann a better place for all of its students, staff, and parents. Being the director of Finance and Administration for a small Biotech Company, I have perspective on how to extend limited budget dollars and I know how important it is to have adequate facilities.

**Candidate #2**

Name: **Thomas D'Amario**

Why I would like to be on the school site council:

My five-year-old daughter Olivia is entering Horace Mann's kindergarten class this fall, and both my wife and I are anxious to take an active interest in the school and its mandate of providing an outstanding environment and curriculum for all of its students. To this end, I think it is imperative that all parents who are able should assist the school's administration in this effort. As a legislative aide to a Massachusetts state Representative, I have a solid working knowledge of school financing and program development, and think that I could make a valuable contribution to the Horace Mann School's site council.



Horace Mann Elementary School  
School Site Council  
Parent Candidate Voting Form  
SY 2011-2012

Please mark your selection and return a printed copy of this voting form to Mr. Strasnick by Friday September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011.  
(choose only one)

Andrea Hill

Thomas D'Amario

Note: Parents voted onto the school site council will be a parent representative for a 3 year term

# Horace Mann Organizational Chart

