



# Happenings

a publication for students and parents of  
Horace Mann Elementary

October 2011

## Horace Mann Hot Topics By Principal Jeff Strasnick



⌘ Please remember that students begin lining up in the morning at 8:05am. We do not have a staff member on duty before 8:05am. We are noticing that there are many students arriving at school well before 8:05am without any adult supervision. We have the early bird program for parents who need to bring their students to school before 8:05am. Information for this program is on our website.

⌘ There are two early release days this month. On **October 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>**, students will be dismissed at 12:30pm. Lunch will be served. Students who are signed up for the early release day enrichment program will be dismissed at 2:20pm from the all-purpose room. There are registration sheets for these programs at the end of this issue of Happenings and on our website.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Students in the Education Stations program need to either sign up for the early release enrichment program or find alternative child care for the hours of 12:30-2:20pm on early release days. Students in Education Stations are not automatically registered for the early release day program.

⌘ Last month I launched a new blog called the *Horace Mann Messenger*. I will update the blog regularly with school news and other interesting and useful information for parents and families. There is a link on our school's website, and it can also be found at <http://horacemannmessenger.blogspot.com/>.

## Important Dates in October

October 3<sup>rd</sup> – 1:30pm Monday Monthly Meeting; Gr. 4 presentation  
October 10<sup>th</sup> – Columbus Day, No School  
October 15<sup>th</sup> – **Pumpkin Festival**  
October 17<sup>th</sup> – PTO Meeting, 7:00pm  
October 18<sup>th</sup> – Dine Around at Dockside Restaurant, 5-8pm  
October 20<sup>th</sup> – School Photo Day  
October 24<sup>th</sup> – Enrichment Program: Mad About Math  
October 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> – Early Release Day, 12:30pm dismissal



## HM Website: Updates



Thanks to Frank Sorrenti, the HM Website can now be translated in **Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese, and Spanish**. The "Translate this site" links are in the left margin on each page (scroll down to the brown section). Check it out! Also, the PayPal link for the PTO Annual Contribution is in the process of being fixed. There were some issues with the account that caused the link to be defunct. It should be up and running again soon. One last note: If you have an announcement(s) to include in the Thursday e-notices, please send to Mrs. Jeffrey as PDFs, if possible. Please contact me any time with comments or suggestions at [jbishop.design@gmail.com](mailto:jbishop.design@gmail.com).

## Annual Horace Mann Community Cookout

With the sun shining brightly, the Horace Mann community once again enjoyed the annual Back to School Family Barbeque. We are very grateful to all of the teachers, Mr. Strasnick, and Dad helpers who cooked and served up great cookout fare for our families to enjoy.

We could never have pulled off such an event without the help and support of the volunteers who gave their time, muscles and supplies to make this event a success. From shopping--thanks for your help, Lynne Boulanger-- to set up, donations of grills and cooks, to serving and clean up, it is wonderful to see this school community in action. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. The kids truly enjoy this night, and it would not happen if not for the combined effort of many parents and the school's wonderful faculty.

Monique Kenney [kenneys1@comcast.net](mailto:kenneys1@comcast.net)



## 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!

## Innisbrook Gift Wrap

Only one week left to place your orders. Orders can be placed either online or by returning the completed order form to your child's classroom. Be sure to include your check payable to Horace Mann PTO. A display has been set up outside the main office for you to view sample products and quality. Please feel free to contact Colleen Levesque at 781-662-7272 or [nuthouse5@comcast.net](mailto:nuthouse5@comcast.net) with questions or if you need help ordering online. Thank you to all who have already placed orders. We appreciate your support!





## 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 November edition will be Tuesday, October 25<sup>th</sup>.** If you would like to include an article in November'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.

## Horace Mann Community Food Drive

Our Second Annual Thanksgiving Food Drive will be taking place in November. During the month of October, if you are able to purchase an extra box of pasta, a can of soup, or a bag of stuffing during your weekly trip to the supermarket, please do so and hold it aside. Further information will be sent home in November about when you can start sending in your donations. Last year, Horace Mann families contributed over 16 boxes of non-perishable food items to Pantry of Hope in Melrose to assist those in need.



## Walk With Team Horace Mann!

Please join Horace Mann School in participating in **The Melrose Alliance Against Violence 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Walk and Candlelight Vigil** on Sunday October 23<sup>rd</sup>.



All walkers are welcome – strollers, wagons, and dogs, too!

What: Horace Mann's team of walkers is participating to promote awareness of domestic violence, bullying, and healthy relationships in the Melrose Community.

When: Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> @ 4:00pm

Where: Melrose Middle School

Walk: 2 miles from the Middle School around Ell Pond and back.

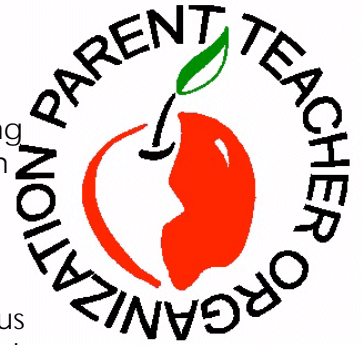
After: Raffles, refreshments, music, and celebration to follow.

For more information contact: [mooney@maav.org](mailto:mooney@maav.org) or 781-662-2010.

If you are interested in joining Horace Mann's team of walkers, please contact Jen Ward: [jenward7@hotmail.com](mailto:jenward7@hotmail.com).

If you would like to make a donation to The Melrose Alliance Against Violence, please make your check out to MAAV and kindly forward to R. Mooney, Executive Director, 235 West Foster Street, Melrose, MA 02176.

# PTO Meeting Notes—September 19, 2011



Our first PTO meeting of the year was attended by about 30 members, including parents and staff. We kicked off our new format, in which we'll be joined each month by teachers from a particular grade level, who will tell us about what's going on in their grade.

✧ Staff members Wendy Florino, Kathy Tarpey, and Nicole Wells joined us to share what their students are doing in Kindergarten. They highlighted their focus areas of letter sounds, reading, health (focus on safety), sorting & counting, and learning about their school environment. They will also begin meeting with 3rd grade "reading buddies" and 5th grade "lap top buddies" soon. The two classes do get together for some group activities and while schedules may differ, the same material is covered in both Kindergarten classes.

✧ Mr. Strasnick announced the results of the School Site Council election and introduced Andrea Hill as the newest member of the Site Council.

✧ Mr. Strasnick reminded parents of the drop off and pick up procedures.

✧ Mr. Strasnick introduced his new blog, which can be found at [horacemannmessenger.blogspot.com](http://horacemannmessenger.blogspot.com). He hopes this will help enhance communications at the school.

✧ Mr. Strasnick provided an update on the use of the new SmartBoards, which are now in all the classrooms. The teachers are using the SmartBoards regularly and the kids are all enthusiastic about this new technology.

✧ The PTO Board provided an update on several upcoming events:

- The Innisbrook fundraiser sale is starting this week until October 3rd, and orders will be delivered before Thanksgiving.
- Pumpkin Festival planning is in the works. The event is scheduled for October 15th and we will need lots of volunteers. More information to come.

✧ Horace Mann will have a team participating in The Melrose Alliance Against Violence (MAAV) annual walk on October 23rd. More information to come on how you can join and/or support the team.

✧ The 2011-2012 HM PTO budget is still being finalized and will be presented for approval at the October meeting.

✧ The Enrichment Committee gave a quick preview of the upcoming October activity called Mad About Math. This event will be tailored for both younger and older students and is sure to be a fun and energetic learning experience for all students.

✧ Mr. Strasnick provided an overview of Monday Monthly Meeting for new parents and reminded parents that the schedule of which grade is hosting the meeting, as well as monthly themes, is posted on our website. Parents are encouraged to attend when their child's grade is hosting.

Thank you to all who attended the meeting, and a special thanks to Maeve Murphy and Hannah Mulcahy for providing childcare services during our meeting. Our next meeting will be held on Monday, October 17th at 7:00pm in the All Purpose Room, when our 5th Grade teachers will be our special guests. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.



## O.T. Happenings

The Response to Intervention (R.T.I.) whole class lessons for Kindergarten and first grade are under way! In Kindergarten we have learned the correct way to hold/use the pencil, as well as some "ready writing" warm ups so that our bodies are ready to write.

We also learned about directionality (right side vs. left sides of the body) by making some hand placemats to use in school and by playing some directionality games/songs (i.e. "The Hokey Pokey" ... "cause that's what it's all about"). In first grade, we have reviewed the Handwriting Without Tears lowercase letter groups (Magic C's, Diver letters and Descending Letters). The Handwriting Without Tears website [www.hwtears.com](http://www.hwtears.com) is a great resource for our handwriting program for all grade levels. We are also in the midst of learning about sensory strategies to help us to be ready to learn and attend in school. We are using the Alert Program's "How Does Your Engine Run" terminology to help students regulate their level of alertness more independently. Visit the Alert Program's website at [www.AlertProgram.com](http://www.AlertProgram.com) for more information.



Feel free to contact Mrs. Papisodoro (aka Mrs. P.) with any OT related questions at: [jpapasodoro@melrose.mec.edu](mailto:jpapasodoro@melrose.mec.edu).

## Volunteers Still Needed!

Here are a few of the ways you could make a difference this year. Please contact Beth Federico at [bfederico104@comcast.net](mailto:bfederico104@comcast.net) or 781-665-0737 if you need more information or have any questions!

Pumpkin Festival – We will need a chair next year. Right now, Debbie Brooks would love someone to shadow her as she runs her last Festival! Additionally, many volunteers are needed to run this fun community event. Help with games, food, crafts, or pumpkin sales.

Golf Tournament – This annual spring fundraiser includes raffles, dinner, and a day of golf at Mount Hood. It is in jeopardy of being cancelled due to lack of chair(s) to run this very profitable event.

Lost and Found – One person is needed to periodically advertise that the Lost and Found is overflowing and twice yearly take collected items to Good Will.

Head Room Parent – Help get all the room parents on the same page and answer questions regarding their duties.

Victorian Fair (September 2012) – Represent Horace Mann in our downtown booth.

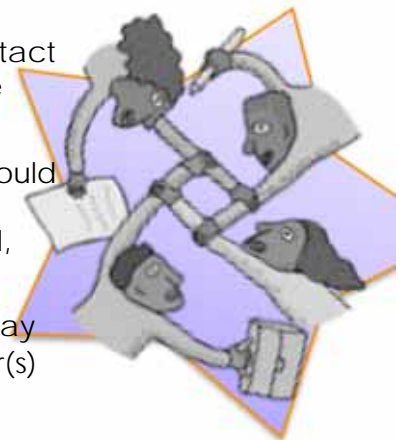
Box Tops – Contact chair Marie Bonneau for more information on how to **redeem box tops to General Mills for money for HM.**

Guided Reading – Volunteers shelve books on a one-time or ongoing basis which can be completed in short intervals of approximately ½ hour. Volunteers may be accompanied by small children.

Lexia Reading and Symphony Math Assistants – Volunteers monitor students who are using the program to assist with any login issues, keep track of how much time students are using the programs, possibly bring groups of students to use the library computers, or get them set up on the laptops. One volunteer needed per class. See Mr. Strasnick for more information.

Memorial Day Parade – We need a chair and a committee. Help represent Horace Mann at the parade.

Traffic Flow Assistants – Keep kids safe while exiting their cars. This person(s) would help keep cars moving and following drop-off procedures.



## Silent Fundraisers

Did you know that there are numerous organizations who will donate a percentage of our purchases back to our school? This is a great way to raise funds for Horace Mann just by shopping where we normally shop. But it only works if you've signed up and designated Horace Mann to receive these donations. Below are a few examples of these great programs:



### Target: Take Charge of Education Program

If you shop at Target, please consider participating in Target's Take Charge of Education Program. Target will donate up to 1% of our REDcard purchases to our school.

**Apply for a REDcard now** (Target Visa, Target Credit Card, or Target Check Card).

Once a REDcard account is opened and approved, enroll in the Take Charge of Education program and designate Horace Mann (school ID # 59609). Then, every time you use the card, Target gives money back to Horace Mann. To date, we have received over \$3,300 from this program!

### Stop&Shop A+ Bonus Bucks

Starting October 7, 2011 through March 29, 2012, Horace Mann Elementary School will have the opportunity to earn cash through the Stop&Shop A+ Bonus Bucks Program. All you have to do is **Log on to [www.stopandshop.com/aplus](http://www.stopandshop.com/aplus) to register online, OR dial 1-877-275-2758 to register your card over the phone.** Please be sure to register your card to benefit the Horace Mann Elementary School using ID # 07965.

After you register your card, each shopping trip at Stop & Shop using your Stop&Shop Card earns CASH for our school! Remember, even if you registered your card last year, you must re-register this year for our school to receive credit. Attending to this simple process makes a HUGE difference to our school. We need your support.

### Hannaford - Hannaford Helps Schools Program

Now through December 3, 2011, purchase participating products in the **Hannaford Helps Schools** program, and Horace Mann will earn school dollars which can be used to purchase a variety of equipment and supplies for the school. Deposit school dollars into collection towers at Hannaford (Saugus) or submit them at school.

We are always looking to find new ways to help raise money for Horace Mann, and we will add more of these "silent fundraisers" as information becomes available. Please check the fundraising section on our HM website for the latest updates.

## Box Tops For Education



Please remember to send your Box Tops by the October 21<sup>st</sup> deadline. They can be found on many products and are an easy way to collect money for our school. The classroom that has accumulated the most Box Tops at the end of the school year will have an ice cream party!





## Garden Notes

Our first annual appearance at the Back to School Family Barbeque was a success! Many people enjoyed the grilled pizza made with HM Garden tomato sauce and homemade dough (thanks to Jennifer Gukelburger and Cindy Chabot). Many more visited our table with great feedback and interest. While we quickly sold out of Jennifer's pickles, we do have a few jars of mint jelly if anyone is interested (just \$2 each!).

Look for more garden fun at the upcoming Pumpkin Festival! Please feel free to take a stroll through the garden any time. We welcome your questions, comments, and ideas.

We are always looking for new volunteers to join our crew. Whether your schedule allows a few minutes or a few days a week, we have a spot for you! No green thumb required! ☺

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>

## Introducing...The HM Community Garden Mystery Photo Game!

Inquiring kids of all ages! Can you guess what's in this picture? Each month, we will post a new photo of something in the HM Community Garden. It could be any kind of plant or other interesting object. Your job is to find out "where and what" the object is. Describe it the best you can. For example, "I think this photo shows a sunflower growing in the second bed from the gate nearest the school on the long side of the fence." If you don't know what the object is, use your best detective skills to find out. Use your senses of touch and smell, or ask someone else to help!

Put your name, grade, and teacher's name on a slip of paper with your guess, and put it in the entry box located in front of the main office. All correct entries will have their names printed in next month's Happenings! Happy sleuthing, everyone!

