

# Hastings Middle School Parent Newsletter

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## From the Desk of the Principal

I'm sure you would all agree watching the news or reading the newspaper can more often than not be an unpleasant experience. Stories about a depressed economy, random acts of violence, children being abandoned, school budgets being slashed, and the faces of people needing assistance during this holiday season bombard our senses, resulting in the most optimistic among us to feel saddened by the state of our world. We can't help but feel hopeless at times. During the cold, dark months of winter we find ourselves more in need of reasons to feel hopeful and thankful for the blessings that do exist in our lives. With that thought, I felt it would be appropriate to remind us of the true essence of the holiday season and what it means to be a member of a caring community. My wish for you is that you come to believe in the unseeable, the untouchable; the magic of Santa Claus and what it means to embrace all that is created from the power of love, compassion, generosity, and faith.

It began in 1897, when an 8-year-old girl was told by her father that if it was in the New York Sun, it must be true. Virginia

O'Hanlon wrote a letter pleading with the Sun's editorial staff, "Please tell me the truth. Is there a Santa Claus?" The response is as pertinent today as it was back then. "Yes Virginia, there is a Santa Claus."

"Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the world of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies. You might get your papa to hire men to watch

in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if you did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world, which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived could tear apart. Only faith, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernatural beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! He lives and lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay 10 times 10,000 years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."

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May your holiday season  
be filled with the gifts of  
Santa Claus!



## Honor Roll



The “A” Honor Roll requires that you have “A’s” in all your subjects. The “B” Honor Roll requires that you have “A’s & B’s” or all “B’s” in all your subjects.



## Progress Reports/Report Cards

It is always important for you to know when to expect progress reports and report cards. Our schedule for this school year is listed below.

	<b>Progress Reports</b>	<b>Report Cards</b>
Term 1	Oct. 2, 2009	Nov. 6, 2009
Term 2	Dec. 11, 2009	Jan. 29, 2010
Term 3	March 5, 2010	April 9, 2010
Term 4	May 21, 2010	Will Be Mailed

## Promotion / Retention Guidelines



All *Hastings Middle School* students must meet the following guidelines to be promoted to the next grade:

- All students will pass three of four core academic subjects.
- Enrichments classes are considered in promotion as follows:
  1. Students who fail two enrichment courses in addition to one academic course, will not be considered for promotion.

- Students who fail the same core academic subject for two consecutive years will not be considered for promotion.
- In certain circumstances, a Promotion Review Committee may recommend approval of alternative learning experiences when deemed in the best interest of the student. The committee will submit its recommendations to the Principal who may at his/her discretion, approve or disapprove.

## Early Release Schedule



Students will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m. No lunches will be served on the dates listed below: **November 25, December 18, January 21, March 18, and Last Day of School**

## Student of the Month



Each month teachers nominate students for *Student of the Month* recognition. The students are placed on a ballot and teachers vote for one student from each team. Students are nominated for demonstrating the core values of our school. Those core values are *Politeness, Responsibility, Involvement, Discipline, and Excellence.*

Congratulations to the winners for November They are: *Christopher DaLuz, Krista-Lyn Doucette, Caitlyn Connor, Jonathan Leblanc Unger, Taylor Canastra, Ross Perry, Noah Arbec, Noah Aurelio, Katelynn Couto, Danielle Pinto, Monique Desnoyers, Kyle Miller*

## Pride Cards

Pride cards are issued to a student who has done some type of school service for a student or a staff member. At the end of each month, one pride card is chosen from each grade from the boxes in the Guidance Office. These lucky students receive a prize.

<b>Grade 6</b>	Christopher Smith
<b>Grade 7</b>	Aaron Power
<b>Grade 8</b>	Zachary Mendonca



## School Nurse Notes

Nurse—Barbara Webster Tel: 508 979-4064  
Email Address: bwebster@fairhavenps.org

The H1N1 vaccination clinic offered at Wood School was a great success. If you were not able to have your child vaccinated at this clinic, the Fairhaven Recreation Center will be hosting a clinic later in the month. Watch the website for details.

Postural Screening for scoliosis is mandated by the Department of Public Health for all teens in the middle school. The nurse will be conducting this screening after Christmas vacation. If you should have any questions please feel free to call the nurse's office.

Please remember to submit a copy of your child's physical exam to the nurse. To remain in compliance with the Department of Education, a student's health record requires a completed physical exam current within two years.

Thank you for your consideration in these matters.

"You cannot educate an unhealthy child and you cannot keep an uneducated child healthy..."

Dr. M. Jocelyn Elders, Former Secretary of Health

## Spirit Wear By Dr. Gifford

During our October 22 PTO meeting, the Spirit Wear committee presented information on our school uniform initiative. Community members were provided with research about the positive effects of school uniforms as well as anecdotal statements from schools that are requiring uniforms. Research indicates that the implementation of a school uniform policy as a component of a school wide initiative for excellence results in improved student achievement. We are undertaking this initiative as part of our efforts to take our school and students from "Good to Great".

During the presentation, parents asked questions, discussed pros and cons, and viewed uniform samples modeled by our students. The committee will be meeting soon to develop a survey that will be sent home with students. This questionnaire will ask for parent input relative to implementation of the spirit wear dress code. Stay tuned and be on the lookout for your survey!



## Comments from the Assistant Principal

Some friendly reminders as we continue through the school year:

1. As winter approaches, traffic in the morning becomes more of a challenge. Try to drop off your child before 7:30 A.M. as there is very little traffic at that time. The line starts to back up after 7:30 A.M. **Please be patient!** Everyone has somewhere to be. Please stay in a single line of traffic. I have noticed some parents detouring from the line to drop their child off in another section of the parking lot or at the end of the rotary. This can result in an unsafe situation for your child as now your child is crossing that single line of traffic with no supervision. Cars stopping at the end of the rotary are blocking the path walkers use to get to the school. It also means that the parents who have waited patiently in the line are now

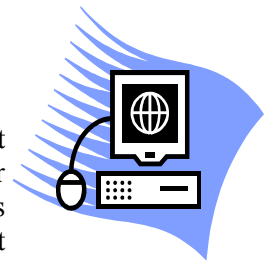
cut off as you make your way into the line ahead of them.

In order to keep the line moving, students need to be ready to make a speedy exit from your automobile. Say your goodbyes and make all final plans as you wait in the line. When the first car in the line stops, students in the next 3 or 4 cars should also disembark. This will make it possible for the line to move more quickly and efficiently.

2. Please make arrangements with your child ahead of time as to when to pick him/her up if he/she stays after school. Most activities run until 3:15 P.M. Teachers are here until at least 2:50 P.M. We understand that sometimes things come up

and a student has to stay after without previous notification, but teachers do give 24-hour notice for after sessions. The secretary in the main office leaves at 3:30 PM.

3. Make sure to get a note from the doctor or dentist anytime your child has an appointment during school time. This will allow absences, tardies, and dismissals to be documented. Again this is important for eighth graders applying to other high schools.



**Have a wonderful holiday!**

## National Junior Honor Society By Mrs. Tracey



Beginning 11/30 and ending December 10, the National Junior Honor Society held a toy drive for the nationally recognized **Toys For Tots program**. Holidays are a time for giving and we considered this a very worthy cause. At this time, the program is in dire need for toys suitable for boys and girls ages 8 to 13. New, unwrapped toys were dropped off in the cafeteria before the start of school during that week. We want to thank everyone who was able to contribute to this worth cause.

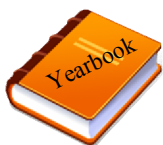
The Junior Honor Society students have also elected to continue with financial contributions to sponsor a needy child in the Philippines, through Children International. Members work throughout the year on various school and community service projects as well as fund raising so they can continue this sponsorship.

## Air Force visits grade 6 History Classes By Miss Bendiksen



Fairhaven native, Sergeant Christian Fernandes, spent the day visiting Miss Bendiksen and Mrs. Haines' history classes to discuss his experiences in the U.S. Air Force. The classes asked many questions about the different branches of the military and participated in marching drills. This was an informative visit that generated spirited discussions and increased student understanding and appreciation for our servicemen and women.

Sergeant Fernandes is currently stationed at Kirtland AFB in New Mexico.



## Yearbook By Mrs. Duarte

### Orders are being accepted for the 2010 yearbook!

To ensure that you receive a book in June, fill out the order form below and return it with payment in an envelope to your homeroom teacher.

Payment may be made in cash or by check, made payable to: *Hastings Middle School*.



### 2010 Hastings Middle School Yearbook Order Form

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

2010 Yearbook (Indicate quantity) \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ 25.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Millicent Library Event

Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 3-5 p.m. **TAG Meeting**. Teen Advisory Group's monthly meeting. Grade 6 and up. Downstairs Auditorium.



Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 3-5 p.m. **Tween and Teen Game Day**. Grade 4 and up. Bring your Wii Guitar Hero controllers. We'll also play Twister, Board and Card Games. Downstairs.

Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 3-5 p.m. **Tween and Teen Fiber Craft Fun!** Bring your knitting or other fiber crafts! We'll also plan our library banner. Grade 4 and up. Drop in. Downstairs.

## Physical Education Student of the Month

Mr. Galvam and Mrs. Nunes would like to recognize the following students for their sportsmanship, skill, and effort in Physical Education for the month of November.

<b>Grade 6:</b> Kaci Berche	Corey Bergeron
<b>Grade 7:</b> Hannah Abrantes	James Rossi
<b>Grade 8:</b> Courtney Carroll	Chace Correia

## **Shop & Shop A+ Program By Mrs. Fernandes**

Starting October 9, 2009 through March 25, 2010, **Hastings Middle School** will have the opportunity to earn cash through *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

After you register your card, each shopping trip at Stop & Shop using your Stop & Shop Card earns CASH for our school! Each month, the amount of CASH awarded will be updated on the Stop & Shop website. You can track the amount of points you earn for our school by checking your grocery receipt and online when you create an account at stopandshop.com. Our school will receive a check at the end of the program. The money can be used for any of our school's educational needs.

Please be sure to register your card to benefit **Hastings Middle School** using ID #06737.

**Encourage your friends and relatives to do the same. It could mean the world to our children.**

## **Going Green By Dr. Gifford**



Part of going green means cutting down on paper consumption. To help in this area, we are planning on implementing a Green Progress Report program. Parents will be able to view and document that they have seen the progress report in the parent portal. Stay tuned for more information.

## **Support Our Troops By Mrs. Haines**

Once again, Hastings Middle School has adopted a platoon serving in Afghanistan. These soldiers are in need of some kind words, pictures, and supplies. Each month a different team is responsible for putting together a care package that will be shipped to our platoon. Show your gratitude to our deserving heroes! Please do your part by writing letters/cards, drawing pictures, buying supplies and entertainment items, or donating funds for our platoon. Monetary donations are needed to cover the costs of shipping and handling. Please look for notices coming home during your child's assigned month that will provide you with more information.



**Months are assigned as follows:**

**December: 6W**

**January: 6B**

**February: 7W**

**March: 7B**

**April: 8W**

**May: 8B**

**Thank-you for your anticipated support!**

For more information please contact Mrs. Haines at [jhaines@fairhavenps.org](mailto:jhaines@fairhavenps.org) and go online to [www.adoptaplatoon.org](http://www.adoptaplatoon.org)

## **2009-2010 HMS Girls' Basketball By Mrs. Pegg**

Coach Pegg and Coach Gardner are pleased to announce this year's HMS girls basketball team:

1. Hannah Abrantes
2. Kayla Abrantes
3. Kiyana Alfaiate
4. Taylor Canastra
5. Courtney Carroll
6. Alexandra Charette
7. Delaney Corcoran
8. Courtney Girouard
9. Mary Grace McCann
10. Madeline McLaughlin
11. Hayley Napier
12. Shae Riley

**\*Alternate: Kristy Walton**



Thank you to all girls who tried out. The effort displayed was tremendous. Stay tuned for further articles about the girls season.

# PTO News

What a busy month we have!



**December 4: The HMS Holiday Dance** from 6:30-9:00pm. Free and fun for the entire school! Bringing a canned was entrance fee into the dance. The canned goods were for the Shepherd's Pantry to help others this

holiday season.

**December 4: HMS Apparel orders and money are due.** All orders will be in just in time for the holidays!

**December 9: Cookie Dough orders arrive.** All orders were picked up at 2:20-5:30pm in the cafeteria.

**December 9, 10, and 11: Scholastic Book Fair** Students were able to visit the fair and choose from a wide variety of books during school hours.

**December 10 and 11: The HMS Drama Club's production of High School Musical, Jr.** The show was a great success and the students and staff did a wonderful job. Thank you to Mr. Brechja & Mrs. Duarte for all their hard work.

As always, everyone is invited to attend our PTO meetings. Our next meeting will be held **December 17 at 6:30 pm** in the cafeteria. **IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO GET INVOLVED.**



## Green Team News By Ms. Richards

The Hastings Middle School Green Team is having a year long online fundraiser. Just use this link <http://www.greenraising.com/?AFID=1719> The Green Team receives 25% of all the sales.



## National Spanish Examinations Mrs. Duarte

The competitors for the 2010 National Spanish Competition have been selected and they are listed below. Please join Mrs. Duarte and Mr. Beaulieu in congratulating these candidates, and in wishing them good luck in the contest. In the months leading up to the March 2010 competition, our students will be hard at work, studying and preparing to take home the ORO (gold) for Hastings Middle School.

**8th grade:** Monique Desnoyers, Deanna Dang, Allison Roderiques, Marissa Garcia, Jared Machado, Emma Robideaux, Sara daCosta, Brienne Bindas, Samantha Stoddard, Victor Miller, Sarah Dupont, Autumn Cyr and Olivia Lopes.

**7th grade:** Madeline McLaughlin, Jacob Costa, Morgan Smith, Alison Kuechler, Rebecca Cabral, Dylan Cromwell, Cole McGarty, Evan Grodzki,



# Student Voices

## Why the Atmosphere is Important to Living Things by Abigail Pires

The atmosphere helps living things survive on Earth. One way it does this is by trapping heat in the stratosphere. The ozone layer in the stratosphere traps heat so that water can exist as a liquid. If the heat escaped to quickly the heat would not be able to defrost frozen water. Another way it helps us survive is that it protects us from harmful rays from the sun called ultraviolet rays. These rays can cause sun burns, skin cancer, and a thin film that develops over your eyes called glaucoma. In the upper stratosphere those harmful rays are stopped from coming through to the troposphere. Only about 3% of ultraviolet rays come through to the troposphere. Finally, the atmosphere prevents meteorites from damaging Earth's surface. In the mesosphere all the objects from space rub up against each other causing friction. Friction burns all of the objects down to the size of your fingernail. None of the meteorites that come through to us cause extreme damage.