



Patriot Press

HARVEST PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL

National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence / California Distinguished School

Sponsored by the Parent Teacher Association

From the Principal's Desk

By Jim Hansen, Principal [jimhansen@pleasanton.k12.ca.us]

December
2009
January
2010

Holiday Season of Giving

As we roll into the holiday season, it really doesn't seem to matter what particular traditions our students follow. What really matters is the spirit of giving that pervades the campus at this time of year. The canned food drive is a hallmark of student compassion and this year's was no different with our students and their families being as generous as they have in the past despite the economic downturn.

At Thanksgiving, our students, in conjunction with the PTA, delivered 17 baskets of food and gift cards to families who are experiencing some economic difficulties during this time of year. Compassion is a character trait that is so evident at Harvest Park throughout the year, but especially now. It is amazing to watch our students get so excited about helping others. Harvest Park is a great place to be anytime, but especially at this time of year!

HP Basketball Players Demonstrate Good Character

The 2009 basketball season has come to a close and by all accounts it was a very successful season for all involved. Our eighth grade team played hard throughout the season. Every game was hard fought, but whether they won or lost they always held their heads up high. Even though injured, Clint Stewart and Michael White attended all practices and games to support their teammates which demonstrated great sportsmanship and dedication. In the final games of the season, both boys got their re-

spective casts off and had an opportunity to play. I know Coach Robeck was very proud of his boys, as were the rest of the staff and students. Our eighth grade players are listed below:

Jack Maroney, Glenn Leininger, Andrew Bland, Austin Piscotty, Max Molz, Zac Lander, Michael White, Willie Stafford, Seth Siddharth, Kory Melton, Clint Stewart, Sean Thomas, Zane Manaa

Our seventh grade boys basketball likewise had a successful season and demonstrated the character traits of the Patriot Path. Congratulations to Coaches Jeremy Cabajal and Tim Luque and their players for a job well done. Our seventh grade team members were: Brooks Bain, Brett Barker, Zach Cavros, Stokley Chaffee, Jamaun Charles, Karl Fernando, Will Guilfoile, Chase Henley, Harrison Mayo, Collin Miller, Andreas Papageorge, Keaton Riordan, Trent Snyder, Isaiah Sykes, Richard Yuh.

Our youngest Patriots showed much heart during their season, and we are all very proud of them. Congratulations to coaches Matt Mendenhall, Chris Duarte, and Bob Kaufman and the sixth grade ball players. Our sixth grade players are: Sidharth Bommakanti, James Cowick, Jacob Duarte, Rahul Gupta, Maxwell Husbands, Bobby Kaufman, Stephen Klessel, Scott Knell, Scott Lee, Joshua Llanos, Simon Macapagal, Sam Molz, Jacob Newman, Christian Pricer, Jordan Reese, Tyler Robinson, Abhisek Sahoo,

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Mark Your Calendars:

Coffee with the Principal

Friday, Dec. 4th at 8:30am
Harvest Park Library
Topic: Elective Program



This is also a great opportunity to find out what other parents are talking about.

Coffee and pastries will be served.

PTA President's Corner

Dear President's Corner,

How come we have so many fundraisers right at the beginning of school? Where does the money go? Why so many at one time?

*Signed,
Frustrated from Fundraising*

Dear Frustrated from Fundraising

I hear you and completely understand your frustration. As you may or may not know, the PTA is a large source of funding to our children's schools. The funds we spend in the classrooms come from our fundraising efforts. The reason you are feeling overwhelmed is that most, if not all fundraising is done early so that we know what we can give back through out the year.

Our Mini-Grant committee meets twice a year and makes recommendations, to the PTA and its members, on what our teachers need and how we should give the funds we have raised. So far this year we have been able to support our teachers and staff with \$15,000 in grant funds. The PTA also funds events like Will & Company, extra library hours, and technology upgrades. These are funds that our students will benefit from throughout the school year.

If our fundraising were held late in the school year, our kids would not have the privilege of seeing most of these benefits. As a non-profit organization, the PTA is not designed to carry money from one year to the next, leaving us to do our fundraising early in the school year. As a solution, some parents find it easier to make a one time donation at walk-through registration and skip the fundraising process.

The Harvest Park PTA understands the frustrations of fundraising, so we have done our best to limit them. At this time, the PTA is only doing two fundraisers, Cookie Dough and March Madness. As I stated, these efforts are made to help our students. Without them, our children would not receive these needed benefits. I hope I have been able to bring some understanding to the needs and timing of fundraising. Thank you for your interest and understanding.

From the Presidents Corner

Harvest Park PTA 2009-2010

Executive Board

President—Jodie Fialho	msmommyfialho@netscape.net
Secretary—Andrea Klein	andreamklein@yahoo.com
Treasurer—Sheila McGurin	sheila.mcg@comcast.net
Financial Secretary—Jodie Vashistha	jodie@vashistha.com
VP Fundraising—Rob Borghese	
VP Membership—Sandra Thomas Michele Barta	sandrathomas4@comcast.net mibatahiti@yahoo.com
Auditor—Michelle Cole	michshawn2@aol.com
Parliamentarian—Bob Taylor	btaylor@jgpc.com
Historian—Kristen Dean	kristen@cadeans.com
Faculty Representative—Jill Black	jblack@pleasanton.k12.ca.us
Principal—Jim Hansen	jimhansen@pleasanton.k12.ca.us

Welcome to New PTA Board Member

I would like to welcome Rob Borghese to the PTA Executive Board. He will be taking on the position of 1st Vice President and Committee Chair of Fundraising. Rob is the father of one of our sixth graders, June Borghese. He is a great asset to our team, and we look forward to his insight and commitment.

Reflections Winners

The theme for this year's PTA Reflections Program was "Beauty is..!" The entries that were judged best at Harvest Park and will advance to the Council level of judging are:

Visual Arts: Anuja Joshi

Photography: Piyush Patil

Literature: Joy Hunag

Music: Karthik Suresh

Upcoming School Social Events



Orchestra/Chorus Concert, Dec. 16, 7pm

Band Holiday Concert, Dec. 17, 7pm

7th/8th Grade Dance, Dec. 17, 6-8pm

Harvest Park PTA News

Holiday Giving at Harvest Park

Harvest Park Patriots have the opportunity make a difference this holiday season. This year, we would like to provide gifts for 21 Harvest Park families in need. Donations of gift cards to Wal-Mart, Target, Toys R Us, Kohls, and local grocery stores would be greatly appreciated to help purchase gifts for these families. If you would like to purchase toys or clothing for these families, please contact Linda Wadsworth at:

lbwadsworth1@yahoo.com

Please have your children bring gift cards by December 11 to their first period class.

A big thank you to Ms. Heston's service class for organizing another successful food drive to benefit Harvest Park families and the Tri-Valley Haven food pantry. The Harvest Park PTA put together Thanksgiving dinners for 20 Harvest Park families in need. Thank you to Wendy Cavanaugh, Diana Jackson, Kristen Dean, Sherdah Moca, and Tricia Gonsman for all their help. Thanks to the FISH club for making Thanksgiving cards and to Safeway and Raley's for donating reusable grocery bags towards this effort.

Fall Book Fair a Success!



The Harvest Park PTA hosted another successful book fair this fall. We sold approximately \$6,100 worth of books and merchandise which allowed the PTA to purchase approximately 267 books for the school library as well as classroom libraries. A big thanks to the par-

ents who generously donated books to the classrooms and library as well.

Congratulations to the five students who won \$10 gift certificates to the book fair on the HPTV drawing and to the 22 students who won free posters in the poster drawing.

A giant thank you to all of the volunteers who allowed the book fair to be such a success. We couldn't do it without you! This also includes all the students in the media department and leadership who helped get the fair going.

Keep an eye out for the spring book fair scheduled for the week of Open House.

*Susan Marceno, Eileen Armstrong and Lisa Grozier
– Book Fair Co-Chairpersons*

Box Tops for Education

Welcome to another great year at Harvest Park Middle School! My name is Cindy Johnson-Eckersley, and I'm the volunteer coordinator for Box Tops for Education.

Box Tops offers three easy ways to earn cash for our school through everyday activities such as buying groceries, shopping online, and purchasing books.

Clip — Clip Box Top coupons from hundreds of participating products and send them to school. Box Tops coupons are worth 10¢ each when our school redeems them from Box Tops for Education.

Shop online — Shop at your favorite online stores through the Box Tops Marketplace (btfe.com/marketplace). Up to 8% of each qualifying purchase is automatically donated to our school. There is no additional cost to your purchase, and you can find many exclusive deals and discounts.

Buy Books — Purchase books online at Barnes & Noble through the Box Tops Reading Room. Our school will receive 6% of your new book purchases and 3% of all other online purchases.

One of the easiest ways you can help is to sign up to support our school at **btfe.com**. You will learn about new and easy ways to help our school earn the extra cash it needs.

Exclusive web benefits:

- ◆ See how much our school is earning with Box Tops
- ◆ Enter online promotions for chances to win Bonus Box Tops
- ◆ Print money-saving coupons for your favorite Box Tops brands
- ◆ Make mealtime easier with family-pleasing recipes

Plus, you can sign up for email newsletters to receive new product updates, and Box Tops members-only deals and

discounts at Box Top Marketplace retail stores. To learn more, visit



the difference
I can make.

btfe.com—and thanks for choosing to make a difference for our school with Box Tops!

*Cindy Johnson-Eckersley
Harvest Park Middle School Box Tops Coordinator*

Around Harvest Park

“The Eagle Eye” Student Newspaper

Watch and listen for announcements about the upcoming December issue of “The Eagle Eye,” a newspaper created for and by the students of Harvest Park. Jamie Altman is the Editor-in-Chief and welcomes submissions. To submit an item for consideration, please contact Jamie at:

jm.altman@yahoo.com

If you haven't had a chance to read the first issue of *The Eagle Eye*, go to the Harvest Park web site, display the **School Info** menu, and choose **Student Newspaper: The Eagle Eye** (or [click here](#)).

Breakfast with an Expert

Presenter: Jill Buck, Founder of the Go Green Initiative

Date: Wednesday, December 9

Time: 8:00 – 9:15am

Place: Harvest Park Multipurpose Room



A healthy breakfast of fruit, juice, muffins, bagels, and cream cheese will be served.

RSVP by Friday, December 4 at 5pm to Lynn Gatehouse at:

lgatehouse@pleasanton.k12.ca.us

Mrs. Buck is proof that one person can make a difference. She started the Go Green Initiative as a grass-roots effort here in Pleasanton. Due to her perseverance and dedication to saving our planet Earth for future generations, the Go Green Initiative has spread worldwide.

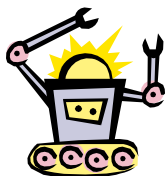
Robotics Club Registration Information Meeting for Sixth Graders

Date: Tuesday, January 26, 2010

Time: 3:15 – 4:00pm

Place: Room D-33

Bring \$15 registration fee (checks made payable to Harvest Park Middle School) and completed Registration Form and Code of Conduct form. You can download and print the forms from the Harvest Park Robotics Club web site. Go to Mrs. Gatehouse's Home Page and click on **Robotics Club**.



Harvest Park Robotics Club Polo Shirts Available!

Get your Harvest Park Robotics Club polo shirt, embroidered with the club logo, for only \$22 each. Order forms are available on the Harvest Park Robotics Club web site. Please make checks payable to “Purely Patterns.” Return checks and completed order forms to Mrs. Gatehouse at the registration meeting on 1/26.

Volunteer Tutors Needed for Barton Reading Program

Barton helps students who:

- ◆ read slowly
- ◆ forget what they read
- ◆ read in a choppy manner
- ◆ substitute words
- ◆ leave off word endings
- ◆ reverse letters and numbers
- ◆ forget their spelling words after the Friday test
- ◆ have difficulty memorizing math facts



Tutor Training begins in January

- ◆ No experience needed.
- ◆ We will train you.
- ◆ All materials provided.
- ◆ Ongoing support.

For more information, contact:

Christina Clark

925-596-0292

Christina.clark2@comcast.net

Cookie Dough Pickup

Wednesday, December 9th

Please pick up cookie dough between 2:30 and 5:30 in front of the gym. PTA thanks all of you who participated in this fundraiser.



GATE News

GATE Nominations Due December 10

Students may be nominated by parents to take the Cognitive Abilities Test for possible GATE (gifted and talented education) identification. Nominated students will take the CogAT at Harvest Park in February.

Please download, complete and return the Parent Nomination Form from the PUSD GATE web page to Rhonda Hempy at the Pleasanton Unified School District Office Special Projects Department no later than December 10. DO NOT return nomination forms to Harvest Park.

http://www.pleasanton.k12.ca.us/EducationalServices/GATE/documents/GATEParentNominationForm09_10_000.pdf

Transition to Amador Valley High School Meeting for Eighth Graders and Parents

Date: Tuesday, February 23
Time: 7 – 8pm
Place: Harvest Park Middle School
Multipurpose Room

Who should attend: GATE and high-achieving students and others who are interested in taking Honors and AP classes in high school.

Learn about challenges and choices for students from those who know best – a panel of students in the

Class of 2010 who have managed to balance academics with sports, marching band, clubs, and other extracurricular activities.

Rhea Brandon, the Vice Principal in charge of GATE at Amador Valley High School, Head Counselor, Sheryl Pacheco, and an AP teacher will present helpful scheduling information and answer questions.

Lynn Gatehouse
lgatehouse@pleasanton.k12.ca.us

Johns Hopkins Talent Search SAT for Seventh and Eighth Graders

Date: Saturday, January 23, 2010
Time: 7:45 – 12:30pm
Place: Harvest Park B-building classrooms

This test is for qualified students who pre-registered for the Johns Hopkins CTY Talent Search. Be sure to bring an approved calculator (listed in the SAT Registration Bulletin from College Board), bottled water and a snack.



Editor's Notes

Many thanks to those who contributed articles to this issue of Patriot Press. Send any comments or suggestions to Becky Altman: altmanrb@yahoo.com

Current issues of the Patriot Press are also available in electronic format on the PTA's website:
www.HarvestParkPTA.org

All dates and times mentioned in this newsletter are subject to change. For the most current information and other events not mentioned in this newsletter, please visit the PTA website.

Harvest Park Middle School is a Go Green Initiative middle school. Please recycle this newsletter when you are finished reading it.



Counseling Corner

As national Red Ribbon Week has come and gone in October, it reminds us of the importance of talking to our children about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Also, it is important to be good role models for our children in our own family social gatherings over the holidays. For young people, alcohol is the most used drug in our society. "In fact, teens use alcohol more frequently and heavily than all other illicit drugs combined. Although most children under age 14 have not yet begun to drink, early adolescence is a time of special risk for beginning to experiment with alcohol." (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism).

It is important to realize that alcohol can dramatically impact the mind and body of a teen, causing lack of judgment and coping skills especially during early adolescence. Studies show that you have more influence on your child's values and decisions about drinking *before* he or she begins to use alcohol.

If parents talk to their children about the dangers of alcohol and drugs, it can have a major impact on their children's decision not to drink or use drugs, especially during the preteen and early teen years. In fact, the number one reason teens give for not using alcohol, tobacco or other drugs is because they do not wish to disappoint their parents (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1998). A person who begins drinking as a young teen is four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than someone who waits until adulthood to use alcohol. Alcohol-related traffic accidents are a major cause of death among teens (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism).

Tips for Parents

According to the Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, here are some tips and an action check-list parents can take to ensure their child makes good choices:

- ◆ Establish a loving, trusting relationship with your child. Believe in your own power to help your child avoid alcohol use.
- ◆ Make it easy for your teen to talk honestly to you. Be a good listener and listen to your teen without interruption.
- ◆ Talk with your child about alcohol facts, reasons not to drink, and ways to avoid drinking in difficult situations. Give honest answers to your teen's questions. Set a good example by honestly answering your teen; this will help develop and build trust.

- ◆ Keep tabs on your young teen's activities, and join with other parents in making common policies about teen alcohol use.
- ◆ Set a good example regarding your own alcohol use and your response to teen drinking.
- ◆ Encourage your child to develop healthy friendships and fun alternatives to drinking.

Resources for Parents

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence
<http://www.ncadd.org>

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov>

PTA Drug & Alcohol Abuse Prevention Project
<http://www.pta.org>

Counseling Office Contact Information

(925) 426-4457

<http://206.110.20.121/teachers/counseling.html>

Harvest Park counselors are available to help parents and students with academic as well as non-academic concerns.

A-J Monica Wharton (M, W, alternating Fridays)
mwharton@pleasanton.k12.ca.us

Jennifer Campbell (T, Th, alternating Fridays)
jcampbell@pleasanton.k12.ca.us

K-Mb Karen Barberio-Kitts
kbarberio-kitts@pleasanton.k12.ca.us

Mc-Z Reine Anderson
randerson@pleasanton.k12.ca.us

Adult Education Update

Amador Valley Adult and Community Education class offerings include: Parent Education, Medical Assistant/Terminology/Coding, Conversational Foreign Languages, ESL, Health and Safety, GED, HS Diploma, and many other programs of interest. New classes begin each month.

Brochures are available at all school sites, the Pleasanton Public Library, Chamber of Commerce, and at the Adult Education Office located at 215 Abbie Street. All course information is also online. To preview courses and register online, go to:

www.pleasanton.k12.ca.us/adulted

Please call 426-4280 with questions or to request a brochure.

Gift Card Donations for Families in Need

This year, Harvest Park has 21 families who need extra support during the holidays. If you are in a position to help, we are looking for gift card donations to the following stores:

- ◆ WalMart
- ◆ Target
- ◆ Toys R Us
- ◆ Kohls
- ◆ Local grocery stores



Please have your children bring gift cards by December 11 to their first period class. For more information, please contact Linda Wadsworth at:

lbwadsworth1@yahoo.com

Technology Plan Prompts PTA Fundraising

By Jim Hansen

The PTA has been very generous in funding the Harvest Park Technology Plan. This year the PTA has already contributed \$29,000 to fulfilling the plan. One of the first elements of the plan is that every teacher should have a laptop computer to be used in the classroom. In addition, every classroom should have a LCD projector and a document camera. The final element of the plan is to mount the LCD projectors in the ceiling of each classroom.

Currently, every teacher has a laptop computer, and all classrooms have LCD projectors. Only block classrooms have document cameras. So far, most of the D building has completed the mounting of the LCD projectors; the other buildings haven't yet started.

To fulfill the complete plan for each classroom, the price tag would be over \$5,000 per classroom. Eight classrooms are complete; 33 classrooms are not.

The bulk of the funding from current PTA donation will be used to maintain current equipment and to upgrade those elements of the program, such as hardware, that are obsolete or no longer meet necessary qualifications. Every parent donation to the HP technology plan is always greatly appreciated and put to wonderful use!

(Continued from page 1)

Ayush Sangari, Jordan Techel, Anthony Trucco, Michael Wan, Derek Yan.

Cheerleaders Go to Nationals

On November 8 the Harvest Park cheerleaders were successful in a tournament they attended at Washington High School in Fremont. As a result of their excellent performance, they will move on to Nationals which will take place in Anaheim in February. Congratulations to Coach Linda

Montoya and all of her cheerleaders. They are: Claire Brannon, Brianna Camacho, Julia Cilk, Hunter Clayton, Carlee Devries, Meredith Glynn, Olivia Gonsman, Claire Holt, Kate Kline, Tory Kusich, Nicole Lupo, Lilly Medeiros, Megan Sensiba, Courtney Merrigan, Sydney Nethery, Nikki Waldear, Kathy Phan, Millie Sansom, Kaitlyn Schroeder, Lacey Smith, Gabby Taube, Haley Taylor, Jaimie Thomas, Kristina Vativa, Annie Wayne, Sara Williams.

