

The Conant Crier



Volume 1, Issue 4

December 2008

December Calendar

12/10 **Principal's Coffee**
9:30

12/18 Pajama Day

12/23 Full Day of School Before Vacation

12/24 **Winter Vacation**
(Through Jan 5th 2009)

Direct Appeal: We Need Your Help

In early December you will receive a letter asking for your financial help. The Craft Fair, the Auction, and this direct appeal are our three primary fundraisers for the PTO to raise funds for our school. Why do we raise funds and where does the money go?



Every dollar the PTO receives goes directly to Conant school. There are some things that Dr. Price feels are of utmost importance and are not covered by the Acton Public school budget. The PTO chooses to provide these requested funds for the benefit of our students. The Conant School PTO budget for 2008-2009 is \$75,805.00. 72.1 % of that total, or \$54,690.00, is spent for teaching assistants. The PTO funds Reading Assistants, Math Assistants, a Recess Monitor and a Media Assistant (Library.) The rest of the PTO budget, \$21,115 (27.9 %), covers assemblies, the author's program, scholarships for field trips, nature walk supplies, paper/copying (we are now spending less with e-delivery), receptions, back to school picnic and other PTO events.

In these difficult economic times giving can be difficult. Please know how much we appreciate all that our parents do for the school. Giving of your time and/or your talents means a great deal to the children and to our community. If you find you can give monetarily, please consider giving for this direct appeal effort. Please check and see if your company has a matching gift program as this will double your contribution.

Thanks for your consideration,

Pam, Mary, and Kim

Exciting news from the Food Service Department

We are piloting a "paper free menu" with the Conant School! Effective January 1, 2009 the Food Service Department will not send home copies of the monthly lunch menu. Here is the link to the Food Service Department website to view the menu each month:

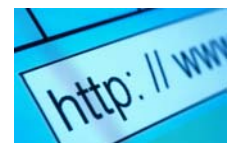
<http://ab.mec.edu/departments/food/foodmenus.shtml>

If you do not have computer access or would prefer to receive a copy of the menu they will be available in the main office at Conant school. Please stop by the office to pick one up each month.

If you have any comments or concerns, please feel free to contact the Food Service Department by phone: 978-264-4700 x 3221 or by e-mail: knelson@mail.ab.mec.edu

Thank you,

Kirsten Nelson, Food Service Director



Advice for President-Elect Obama

Subtitle: Out of the Mouths of Babes

The following sage bits of advice came from the first graders in Mary Tsacoyeanes' Grade 1 class:

- Don't litter because it is your job to keep the White House clean. Lots of people come to see the White House, you know!
- Don't talk with your mouth full.
- Make sure you tell your kids not to mess up the Oval Office. Smile at other people because it is nice.
- Don't kick because somebody might get hurt. And stop that war we are in.
- Be kind to your people because they are all very special.
- Stop the dog races because the dogs could get hurt.
- Pray to God because God will take care of you. Don't play ball inside the White House. You might hit something that you need.
- Don't draw on walls because it might be a Sharpie marker. Those things stay on forever.
- Smile at other people because it is nice.
- Pray to God. You want to know why? Because he can make our country better. And you need to listen to other people, too. And don't walk in dirty shoes inside the White House.
- No running inside the White House or you might fall.
- Keep your room clean because it should be easier for you. Be polite or other people will just leave.
- Give poor people free clothes and food.
- Stop global warming.
- Don't smoke because it causes global warming. Don't kick in the White House. Use your words instead.
- Do not throw footballs in the White House. You might break a big window.
- Do not take snow inside. And do not smoke!
- If you get sick eat good food like chicken and carrot soup.



BOOKS DONATED TO THE CONANT LIBRARY

Thank you to all the students who donated money to purchase new books for the Conant School Library. A variety of books have been donated to the library in the name of each child who sent in a contribution. The list of donors and the books that were donated in their name are listed below. We appreciate your generous contributions that have allowed us to increase the library book collection!

Book donations can be made at any time during the school year. If you are interested in donating a book to the library as a gift this holiday season, please visit the Conant School Website under Library News and click on "Book Donor Information" or click on the "School Forms" link for more details.



We wish you a happy and safe holiday season!

Sincerely,

Judy Bell, Conant School Librarian

Andrea Cohen, Conant School Librarian

Jean Potter, Summer Reading Program Parent Coordinator

Carlson Wu	The Vegetables We Eat
Hannah Ortuno	Gerbils
Kevin Kuang	The Largest Planet Jupiter
Scott Graziano	Davy Crockett
Ben Barton	Biofuels
Jake McOsker	Horrible Harry Cracks the Code
Erin McOsker	Brittany Spaniels
Barbara Pires	Labrador Retrievers
Fiona and Lucy Stevenson	Paddington Here and Now
Anne Fu	The Adventures of Taxi Dog
Morgan Dennison	My Chincoteague Pony
Dylan Gambone	Cam Jansen and The Mystery Writer Mystery
Elizabeth Hardy	Christmas Trolls
Nikhil Khandekar	Cam Jansen and the Secret Service Mystery
Chris Potter	Manny Ramirez and The Boston Red Sox
Carter Gambone	Raccoons
Mark Potter	A to Z Mysteries: Tonight on the Titanic
Ananya Pani	Julie and the Eagles
Alice Ying	Top 10 Dogs
Colin Grip	A Cricket in Times Square
Meghan Kulkarni	The Warriors Series: Outcast
Alicia Lee	The Talented Clementine
Ben Murphy	Raccoons
William Bainbridge	The Sight (Power of Three Warriors Series) and Knock, Knock
Simin Li	Dark Day in the Deep Sea
Mariellen Hardy	No Talking
Sam Haufler	The Story of the Boston Red Sox
Julianne Higgins	The Salamander Spell
Olivia Higgins	The Frog Princess
Jessie Ying	The Secret of the Three Treasures
Kate Potter	The Runaway Princess
Caroline Grip	To Steal a Dog
Joelle Perron	M is for Magic
Conant PTO In Memory of MaryLou Didriksen	Gingerbread Friends Gingerbread Baby A Turn for Lucas

Community Service News!!!!!!

We had the most successful Coat Drive ever this year! We were able to collect 45 full large moving boxes of new and gently used coats. All of the coats were donated to three agencies in MA: the Acton Community Supper, an agency in Lowell helping homeless people and another charity in Boston. On behalf of the Community Service Learning Committee, we want to thank you for your generosity. Good job everyone!

From **Dec. 15 – 19**, Conant School will join many other MA schools in hosting a **Pajama Drive** for children in need through the Boston based charity of **Cradles to Crayons**. Not only is this an amazing community service learning activity for our school but it is also a contest with an amazing Bruins prize! **The MA classroom that collects the most pajamas during that week will win a visit by the Boston Bruins Mascot "Blades" and the Bruins star, left-wing player P.J. Axelsson.** So while you are purchasing your holiday gifts, please think about purchasing some new pajamas for some needy children. Boxes will be placed in each classroom during the week of Dec. 15th. This service project will include a fun Conant School Pajama Day on Dec. 18th sponsored by the Conant Student Council!!!

Thank you again,

Conant Community Service Learning Committee



DECEMBER PTO HIGHLIGHTS

As 2008 comes to an end, we would like to thank our students, families and teachers for making our school such a special place. This fall, we had record attendance at our first Muffins with Mom/Donuts with Dad, a very successful Craft Fair, and a very positive turnout for our Book Fair. Thank you also to all who volunteered at Conant this fall. We are grateful to all of you who have given your time in any way.

The PTO's biggest event in December will be our direct appeal fundraising. You will soon receive a letter in the mail asking you to join us with your financial support of Conant. Please ask to see if your employer has a qualifying matching gift plan which could double your gift. The PTO is grateful for your support.

There will be no PTO meeting in December. Our next PTO meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 28th @ 9:30 AM in the cafeteria. Please make plans to attend.

Dr. Price will hold her "Principal's Coffee" on Wednesday, December 10th at 9:30 AM. This is a chance to speak with Dr. Price in an informal setting.

We extend wishes for a safe and happy holiday season, no matter what holidays you celebrate. Enjoy your winter vacation and we look forward to a wonderful 2009 at Conant.

Best wishes,

Mary, Pam & Kim

Thank you to Volunteers!

As you may know, state law requires that all students in Massachusetts public schools participate annually in vision, hearing, height and weight screenings, which are a time-consuming endeavor! We want to extend a big thank you to the following parents for helping out with screenings this year: Nicole Rosen, Elaine Molaskey, Jamie Clare, Denise Krucker, Shree Rayasa, Geeeta Pani, Karen Kearney, Jean Potter, and Joyce Zhu. Your efforts are much appreciated!

Jenny M. Gormley, RN,
MSN

Heather Makris, RN, BSN



The Health Office is looking for new packaged spare underwear to fit K thru 2nd grade. We are also in need of socks for the same age group. They can be used or new.

Outdoor Recess in Winter

Although we have enjoyed a relatively warm fall, soon we will be facing months of colder weather.

During these months, parents and teachers may question when recess should be held inside. School administrators need to weigh the risks of injury with the benefits of unstructured, undirected activity, which is limited during indoor recess. In a review of pertinent research on recess conducted during the last twenty years, Waite-Stupiansky and Findlay conclude that, ". . . daily outdoor recess is the single venue that provides students with the irreplaceable and unparalleled opportunity to refresh their brains, exercise their hearts and muscles, choose their own activities, make friends, work out problems and have fun. Recess is the fourth "R" because it helps children learn the other three."¹ Although indoor recess can provide some opportunity for free choice, students are more limited in their physical movements, interactions, and noise level compared to outdoor recess.



During outdoor recess in winter, students can potentially be injured by falling on ice or playing outside with skin exposed to very cold temperatures or wind. With these risks in mind, Conant staff members make the decision to hold recess indoors if the playground is too icy or if weather conditions would put students and recess monitors at risk for frostbite or hypothermia. **We urge parents and guardians to make sure that their children come to school with the proper attire to go outside in the cold: hat or hood (since most body heat is lost from the head), mittens, jacket, and boots. Snow pants are required for grades K-3. They are also required for grades 4-6 if the older students want to play in the snow.** Individual exceptions to outdoor recess when the weather is cold may also include students with asthma or other medical conditions; parents/guardians with questions about this should consult with their child's pediatrician.

1. Waite-Stupiansky, S and Gindlay, M The Fourth R: Recess and Its Link to Learning, The Educational Forum, vol. 66, Fall 2001.

Food Service Recipe of the Month.....

Gingered Cranberry-Raspberry Relish

Unlike cranberry sauce, a relish involves no cooking. Here, plump raspberries add a juicy freshness, while crystallized ginger provides sweetness and warmth. It is best served cold. Hold the mayo on your post-holiday sandwiches—use this relish instead for a real treat.

Makes about 4 cups

ACTIVE TIME: 10 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 3 hours 10 minutes (including chilling time)

EASE OF PREPARATION: Easy

1 12-ounce package fresh cranberries (washed)
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup minced crystallized ginger (choose soft nuggets over disks, if possible)
3 cups raspberries (2 pints), fresh or frozen (not thawed)

Pulse cranberries in a food processor until coarsely chopped. Transfer to a medium bowl. Stir in sugar and crystallized ginger. Gently stir in raspberries—it's fine to crush some of them. Cover and refrigerate for at least 3 hours to let the flavors combine.

NUTRITION INFORMATION: Per 1/4-cup serving: 58 calories; 0 g fat (0 g sat, 0 g mono); 0 mg cholesterol; 15 g carbohydrate; 0 g protein; 2 g fiber; 2 mg sodium; 53 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: Vitamin C (15% daily value).

1 Carbohydrate Servings

Exchanges: 1 other carbohydrate

MAKE AHEAD TIP: Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 week.



**This Month's Recipe was taken from
Eating Well.com**

Would you like to make something fun with your child/children?

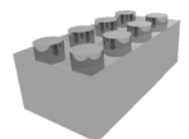
This recipe is simple to make and only takes approximately 10 minutes.

NEEDED:

- Building toys such as Legoes, K'NEX, wooden Lincoln logs, etc. for my students to use building this year. If anyone has any of these toys that they no longer use I would appreciate your donation to my classroom.
- Cylinder cardboard containers (oatmeal containers are perfect) for a third grade project done in March.

Thanks for your help!

Ms. Ann Burbank
Third Grade Teacher
Room 9





Principal's Corner

Caring and Community

One of the unique qualities of the Conant community is the range of connections its members have, in the town, the region, the state, and the world. This sense of connectedness is a vital resource for our children, because they not only see themselves as active, responsible citizens of the school and the town, but also of their country and the world.

Children at Conant expand their connection and awareness through the many community service projects they do. In the last month, children have participated in the Turkey Trot and have collected warm coats for those in need; in the coming month they will have the opportunity to collect pajamas for children in shelters, and in the new year they will be participating in our food drive, making Valentine cards for our armed servicemen and women, and raising Pennies for Pediatrics. Each of these initiatives is an opportunity for children to recognize the needs of others and feel empowered to make a difference in the lives of people who may be less fortunate.

As we move forward in the 21st century, it's that kind of global awareness that will enable this generation to solve difficult societal challenges and to make the world a better place through caring, connection, and community.

Wishing you and your family a season of peace and joy,

Dr. Christine Price, Principal

Please Read the Conant Crier!

The *Conant Crier* is the newsletter of the Conant School and is published every month during the academic year. Many notices concerning school events will be published in it — there may not be separate fliers sent home regarding these events, so please read the *Crier* carefully!

The best way to submit an item for the *Crier* is to send it via email either as an attachment, or as part of the email message text to the editor in charge of the next publication.

We will be happy to confirm receipt of the item. Submissions are always welcome from anyone in the Conant community. The *Crier* staff also has a mailbox in the main office. Please feel free to leave articles/information that may be of interest to the school community and we will consider it for publication.



In order to publish the *Crier* on time, please follow these guidelines for submitting articles:

Issue: January **Date:** Jan 9th

Article Deadline: Dec 24th

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Courier: Keerthi Kamath

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HAPPY
HOLIDAYS



Didn't see it in the *Crier*? Log on to ab.mec.edu for additional information on Acton schools..