

April 27, 2010

A newsletter

from the Lawrence School Parent-Teacher Organization

Calendar

- 26–30 **April (Mon–Fri)**
Cradles to Crayons
Clothing Drive
Main lobby
- 27 **April (Tuesday)**
School Council Meeting
8 am, 2nd floor conf room
- 29 **April (Thursday)**
PTO Poetry Night
7 pm library
- 1 **May (Saturday)**
Cradles to Crayons Family
Volunteer Day
9 am–1 pm
Chestnut Hill School
- 4 **May (Tuesday)**
School Council Meeting
8 am, 2nd floor conf room
- 6 **May (Thursday)**
 - Japanese Fun Fair
2:20 pm, main lobby
 - Supporting Boys and Learning Speaker
6:30 pm, auditorium
- 11 **May (Tuesday)**
PTO Meeting
7 pm library
- 19 **May (Wednesday)**
 - Staff Appreciation Luncheon
 - Grade 2–4 play
9 am and 6 pm, auditorium
- 26 **May (Wednesday)**
Gr 5–6 Track Meet
- 28 **May (Friday)**
Gr 7–8 Track Meet
- 31 **May (Monday)**
NO SCHOOL
Memorial Day



Lawrence to Launch School Garden

I am very pleased to announce that we will be moving forward with our plans to construct a school garden this spring. The proposed garden provides an outdoor classroom that will be closely linked to Brookline's science and other curriculum areas. The garden will support our students' learning about earth science, life science and the environment.

The garden will be located on the playground side of the school in the area between the two side entrances (currently marked off with a black chain fence). The design for the garden was developed by Mary Dewart, a landscape architect, who is a former Lawrence parent and member of the Friends of Lawrence Park.

Funding for the garden has been provided by very generous donations from both the Lawrence PTO and the Friends of Lawrence Park. The Brookline Parks Department will provide some materials. Proceeds from the Lawrence Green Team's reusable bag sales will be used to support the purchase of tools and seeds.

Brookline's K–8 Science Coordinator Janet MacNeil helped us identify possible connections to the science curriculum, including:

Grade 1

Life cycle of butterflies in a butterfly garden
Life cycle of plants (e.g. sunflowers, pumpkins)

Grade 2

Changes in the earth (soil decomposition)

Grade 3

Habitats: study how living things adapt to their environment (insects, birds, butterflies)

Grade 4

Plants: life cycle, parts, and pollination

Grade 5

Adaptations of living things (butterfly garden, biodiversity)

Grade 7

Ecosystems, biomes

This summer, grades 7/8 science teacher Ryan Keser will work with a group of Lawrence teachers to develop preliminary plans for utilizing the garden next year. Once we have the garden in place, other ideas will follow.

We also see an added benefit to the garden of rekindling Lawrence families' interest and involvement in our school grounds. Care of the garden during the school year will be the responsibility of the classrooms that are growing things. However, there will be a need for garden work during the summer months. We hope to develop a system of families taking responsibility on a rotating weekly basis during the summer. Kathleen Scanlon has agreed to coordinate volunteer efforts.

We are very appreciative of the support of the Lawrence PTO, the Friends of Lawrence Park, and the Parks Department. I would like to extend a special thank you to Mary Dewart, who has so generously donated her time and expertise to this project. Let the growing (and learning) begin!

—Rick Rogers

Green Team Corner

All parents are cordially invited to celebrate Earth Day 2010 with us on Friday, April 30. An Earth Day Fair will be waiting for the kids at recess, with lots of fun activities that will teach them about the environment and how they can help take care of it. Would you like to get involved? We are looking for volunteers who are free from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (or even just part of that time) to help set everything up, assist at the arts & crafts table, help Mr. Keser explain wind turbine concepts, host a trivia contest, explain carbon footprint calculations, play with solar toys, supervise various games, and/or help with clean-up. Maybe you even have your own idea for activity? If you want to join the fun, please email *Barbara Ludeke* (maluan10000@comcast.net) or let your class representative know. Thank you!



Family Volunteer Opportunity



Spring Greening Sorting Day

As part of Lawrence's Earth Day observance, we will be collecting clothing all this week to benefit Cradles to Crayons. C2C will distribute all of the donated items to disadvantaged children in Massachusetts, helping those in need and also keeping outgrown and under-used items out landfills.

Please drop new and gently used clothing (up to adult size L, but appropriate for children), coats, footwear and baby equipment in the collection box in the lobby. All equipment must be less than five years old, and we cannot accept cribs. Keep track of what you're putting

in, since each item donated earns one ThinkEARTHursday point! (Look for the April ThinkEARTHursday flyer to record and submit your points.)

This Saturday, May 1, families from all around Brookline will come together at the Chestnut Hill School to sort and box the donated items. We hope to see loads of Lawrence families pitching in. To sign up for a shift go to <http://tiny.cc/brooklineC2Cmay1>. Drop-ins are also welcome. For more information contact *Jessica Eber* (djeber@rcn.com) or *Jordan Shaugbnessy* (jordanshaugbnessy@verizon.net).

April PTO Meeting Notes

Tuesday April 6, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Amy Luster with 14 people in attendance

Upcoming events

- The Green Team's Used Clothing Drive for Cradles to Crayons will take place the last week in April. Reusable shopping bags will be sold at the spring picnic or through Kathleen Scanlon (kathleenmscanlon@gmail.com).
- The Japanese Fair will be Thursday, May 6, after school.
- School Council elections will be held May 11–21. There are three openings for two-year terms. Candidate statements are due May 7.
- Poetry Night will be Thursday, April 29.

Financials

- Update on year-to-date financials
Major sources of income: Movie day, PTO play, LSA donation

Major expenses: classroom supplies, field trips, performing arts
Budget is on target to break even for the year

- Funding for school garden project
 - PTO will contribute \$5000 to the project which is funded by multiple sources (e.g, Friends of Lawrence Park, Lawrence Green Team, Town of Brookline, private donations of time and materials)
 - Project will support curriculum-based projects for grades 1–5 & 7
 - PTO-funding proposal passed without opposition

School Committee budget meeting
– April 8 budget vote

Principal Update

- Thanks to Kathleen Scanlon for all her hard work leading the Green Team project this year
- School Council is updating goals.

Bullying will get increased attention that connects with the work being done at the district level. School Council has applied for a BEF grant to extend bullying program initiatives to grades 6–8. Principals have been given extended authority to address cyber-bullying.

- Shaina Martinez is going on maternity leave this month. Rick Rogers will be the point person for grades 5 & 6, and Monica Crowley for grades 7 & 8. Carol Macey will be adding time until the end of the school year.
- A new Kindergarten teacher has been hired to replace Nao Rosenberg, who will retire at the end of the year.
- Classroom placement process will be starting later this month.
- Staffing: 0.5 increase in Learning Center staff, proposed cut of ESL staff has been dropped.

LSA IS INTRODUCING A NEW CLASS

GLEE CLUB
For Grades 5-8
Led by Jonathan Weinberger (5W)



Join in for a five-week class that is sure to **Rock the House!** Sing your favorite song or anything you like from **Beatles** to **Black Eyed Peas!**

Students will have fun singing songs of their own choosing and also have the opportunity to learn harmonies and basic vocal training techniques. Emphasis will be on how to care for your voice while increasing and improving vocal capabilities of each student, culminating with a final performance before the Lawrence community.

If you are interested in this class, please complete a registration form (extras are available in the office) and leave a check for \$40, made payable to Lawrence Special Activities (LSA) in the LSA box in the office by **Friday, April 30**. Scholarships are available.



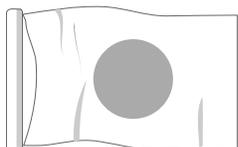
Volunteer Opportunity



Readers Get Ready: Book Fair and Used Book Sale Coming Soon!

The **Book Fair** is coming June 1-3. We need volunteers to help with various tasks including set up, take down, register, and helping kids (especially in the younger classes) and parents find books for summer reading or anytime. We had a great time last year with all our volunteers. If you have a few hours to give and would like to help, please contact *Carie Leung* (carieleung@aol.com or 617-232-3620). Hope you can join us!

Donations are now being accepted for the **Used Book Sale**, which will take place in June in conjunction with the Book Fair. It's time to peruse your bookshelves and donate anything gathering dust. Donations can be dropped off outside the main office. Please be selective in what you donate (no outdated technical books please!). Children's books are especially welcome. Please contact *K.C. Turnbull* with any questions (bergbull@yahoo.com).



Congratulations Ms. Alper!

Kirsten Alper, Educational Technology Specialist, has received the 2010 SET-J travel grant to visit Japan next November. The SET-J (Sending Educators to Japan) committee will be busy planning her trip from now through the summer, selecting schools for her to visit and planning her itinerary. She will visit schools in Tokyo, Kyoto and several other cities. Her experience will help her understand Japanese culture. In January 2011, Ms. Alper will give a presentation about her SET-J travel experience. For more information about the program, please contact setj_lawrence@yahoo.co.jp.

Thursday Is Poetry Night!

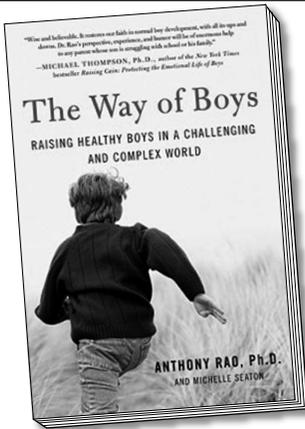
Come join us at Lawrence School Poetry Night! Read your own poems, poems of another poet, or just come and listen. We will be giving away one book of poetry for children and one for grown-ups in a random drawing. There will also be a demonstration of a poetry slam and light refreshments. Thursday, April 29, 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the Lawrence School library.



Cookies for a Cause



A few more volunteers are needed this year to help with Lawrence's Cookie Making Project for Ronald McDonald House. This is a fun way for your family (perhaps teaming up with another family?) to contribute to the community. If you could spare some time over the next few months to do some baking, please contact *K.C. Turnbull* (bergbull@yahoo.com).



"The Way of Boys" at Lawrence

On Thursday, May 6, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Dr. Anthony Rao, author of *The Way of Boys: Raising Healthy Boys in a Challenging and Complex World*, will explain how young boys have unique needs and talents, and move along a different path of development. He will discuss how to handle healthy aggressive play, shyness, struggles in social groups, and the importance of channeling high activity levels. Dr. Rao is a nationally recognized psychologist and a former Instructor at Harvard Medical School. With a mix of practical advice, up-to-date research, and humor, he will share his experience helping families to support boys to succeed at home and school.

This event is sponsored by the **Supporting Boys and Learning Parent Group** of the Lawrence School and is free and open to the public. For questions contact aakershan@hotmail.com.

Arts and Sports

Does your child want to be a Summer Star? Check out the Brookline SmartSummers Theater Arts Program! Students take classes in the arts and work on an original musical production. The program runs in one- and two-week sessions starting July 2, Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m. at the Lincoln School in Brookline. For more information contact theaterartscamp@aol.com or visit <http://sites.google.com/site/smartsummerstheaterarts/welcome>. To register, contact Brookline Adult & Community Education at 617-730-2700.

Dear Parents of the Lawrence School,

After 35 years with the Brookline Public Schools, 30 of those years at Lawrence, I am planning to retire in June. It has been most rewarding to teach reading, writing and spelling skills to grades 4–8, and more recently for grades 3–5. Through the years, I have also enjoyed the challenge of providing after school homework support, and before school MCAS prep sessions. Now, I look forward to exploring new opportunities and challenges.

I will surely miss working with your children. They are eager learners and hard-working students. I have learned so much about teaching by working with them. It has been wonderful to watch them grow as readers, writers and individuals.

Thank you for the pleasure and privilege of working together to meet your child's needs, and to ensure success in learning skills and strategies, and for being such supportive and appreciative parents. Another thank you to the Lawrence PTO for their valued support each year. I have been very fortunate to be part of the Lawrence School community.

With best wishes to you and your family
and heartfelt gratitude,
Jeanne Chin

Community Exchange

Host Family Wanted in July

An 18-year-old Italian student would like to visit Brookline for three or four weeks this July. He comes to us through the International Projects and Student Exchange Program at Liceo Scientifico "G.Ferrari," which has sent several students to Brookline in the last few years. Lorenzo is at the top of his class and is fluent in English. He would like

to baby-sit children and possibly teach them Italian in exchange for accommodation. According to his program coordinator, he is a very mature, good-mannered, responsible boy who often looks after his younger brother. Families interested in hosting Lorenzo should contact Paola Crevola at Liceo Scientifico "G.Ferrari" (mypa@tele2.it).