

Hunters Horn

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President's Message

The budget situation in Fairfax County is pretty grim for next year; the school system will face a 176 million dollar budget cut with current predictions. Fairfax County and the School Board have been engaging in a series of community dialogues about the budget situation for the last couple of months. If you didn't get a chance to attend in person, the presentations are available online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/>; you can file your comments online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/survey/fy11suggestions.htm>.

In those presentations you will see that Fairfax County Public Schools are efficient, spending less per pupil than Arlington, Alexandria, Falls Church and Montgomery County Public Schools. 100% of FCPS schools are fully accredited; SOL scores have improved in every subgroup; FCPS students outpace state and national average scores on SATs and more than 91% of FCPS graduates go on to postsecondary education.

Unless our Board of Supervisors increases revenue AND applies that increased revenue to the school system, Fairfax County Public Schools will look very different in the future. Even if school spending is kept flat next year, expenses and the student population will rise and there will be cuts that will impact every student. These cuts will not only increase class sizes and eliminate teacher's raises and cost of living increases for the third year in a row, they would eliminate full day kindergarten and all elementary band and strings. The list of potential cuts is online: <http://www.fcps.edu/news/fy2011/possiblecuts1119.pdf>.

Two PTA members have started a committee at Hunters Woods to figure out how to fight for our school funding. To join their efforts, email Budget@HWPTA.org. They have arranged for School Board Member Stuart Gibson to come and discuss the budget issues at Hunters Woods on December 15 at 7pm. Don't miss this chance to learn more and share your input!

The School Board can't raise money, though; only the Board of Supervisors can do that. As a citizen (and voter) you can have a big impact by writing a letter to your Board of Supervisors member. Learn who your supervisor is, and his or her contact information at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/board/.

Sorry to be the bearer of grim tidings. Whatever the final budget situation, I know that Hunters Woods will continue to offer our children a creative and stimulating educational experience. The administration, teachers and families who make up the Hunters Woods family will keep our school vital and vibrant. Wishing you a holiday season and new year filled with light and love.

Susan Sather, PTA President
President@hwpta.org

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DATES TO REMEMBER

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| Friday, December 11 | Makeup Picture Day; last day for FISH for Food donations |
| Tuesday, December 15 | Budget discussion with Stuart Gibson, 7pm |
| Thursday, December 17 | Club Pictures; PTA Meeting, 10 am |
| Friday, December 18 | PTA Sweet Shoppe |
| Tuesday, December 22 | Class Winter Parties |
| Wed., December 23 | 2 Hour Early Release |
| Thurs., December 24- Friday, January 1 | No School, Winter Break |
| Monday, January 18 | No School, MLK Jr. Day |
| Thursday, January 21 | PTA Meeting, 7 pm |
| Friday, January 22 | International Festival |
| Thursday, January 28 | Last Day of 2 nd Quarter |
| Friday, January 29 | No School, Teacher Work Day |
| Monday, February 1 | No School, Teacher Work Day |
| Thursday, February 4 | 2 nd Annual Spelling Bee |

FISH for Food Drive

Please help everyone in our community enjoy a fabulous feast this holiday season by donating to FISH for Food. Bring in non-perishable foods (e.g., dry cereals, rice, pasta, canned foods, peanut butter, jelly, juices) by Friday, December 11 to fill Holiday Food Boxes. Put all donations in collection boxes in the front of the school or in the pod areas. Look for FISH for Food signs!

Thank you from Herndon-Reston FISH (Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help). For more info, contact Lisa Groves at lisajgroves@yahoo.com or visit www.herndonrestonfish.org.

Holiday Sweet Shoppe

Love to bake? Grateful for our HW teachers and staff? It's time for our annual Holiday Sweet Shoppe! You provide the baked goods or dried fruit and nut treats, and we'll provide containers for the staff to bring their goodies home.

On December 18th from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm, we'd like to thank our teachers and staff for all of the work they do. We'd also love to display hand-made cards from the kids to the teachers and staff. Please send in your goodies on the morning of the 18th, or contact sweetshop@hwpta.org with questions or to see how you can volunteer for the event. Kiss and Ride will have collection tables in the morning on the 18th.

Holiday Gift Ideas

Running out of gift wrap? Need to find a quick holiday gift for a neighbor or family friend? Check out the Sally Foster website at www.SallyFoster.com. You can still order gift wrap, accessories and gifts all year long; and if you use our school code, 0142037, HWES will receive 50% from the proceeds of your online purchase.

HWES goes Web 2.0!

Follow HWES PTA events, fundraisers, school happenings and just fun community events, reminders and updates on Twitter (HWESPTA) and Facebook.

WordMasters Challenge Begins

The WordMasters challenge started last week! Word Masters is a low key academic team that plays with words and analogies and then competes within HWES and nationally as well. Fifth and Sixth graders started meeting Wednesday, December 2; Third and Fourth Graders first met Friday, December 4.

If your third through sixth grader would like to participate in WordMasters this year, please email wordmaster@hwpta.org as soon as possible to register your child. The annual fee for WordMasters is \$18, made out to HWPTA. 🍷

Sally Foster Wrap Up

Many thanks to all who participated in our recent Sally Foster fundraiser! The Sally Foster sale raised about \$9,500 for the school during the official selling period. 🍷

Book Fair Review

The PTA Book Fair was a wonderful success! Thank you to the volunteers who contributed over 225 hours of their time, parents who purchased more than 160 books for their children's classrooms, and students, teachers and staff who enthusiastically supported the Book Fair. Our students went home with hundreds of treasured selections, and our teachers and staff received well-deserved discounts on their books. We look forward to the Spring Book Fair which will be held April 26 - 30.

Volunteer Opportunities

We have some volunteer position vacancies and are searching for a few good men and women to fill them!

- **Lost and Found - Coordinator.** We need someone to help organize the many items left behind at the school, set up a display of lost items, and coordinate the donation of unclaimed items to charity.
- **Silent Auction - Donation Coordinator.** We could use your help with donations for the silent auction, to be held this year on Saturday, March 13. Please email auction@hwpta.org if you can help fill this role.
- **International Festival - Co-Chair.** We are looking for someone to co-chair the International Festival, which is being held this year on Friday, January 22. Please email international@hwpta.org if you can assist.

If you would like to find out more about these or any other volunteer opportunities, please email volunteer@hwpta.org! 🍷

The Buzz About the Spelling Bee

The Spelling Bee Committee would like congratulate the winners of the classroom spelling tests who will be the participants in the Second Annual Hunters Woods Spelling Bee. There are fifty-four students who will be studying and practicing to prepare for this exciting event, to be held on February 4!

Thanks to the Hunters Woods Teachers and especially Mrs. Stewart for working with the students to select our school's top spellers. 🍷

Lost and Found

The holidays are busy, hectic times for the whole family, and kids are more likely to forget items at this time. These lost items are rapidly filling up the school's storage space. Please stop by the school to check the Lost and Found closet when you notice that something is missing. Your students are allowed to look for items as well. Any items remaining unclaimed as of December 23 may be donated to charity. 🍷

Don't Miss It!

Come learn about all the fun and exciting things that are going on at Hunters Woods! Our next PTA meeting will be on Thursday, December 17. Usually our PTA meetings are evening events, but we are hoping that some parents who are not normally able to attend meetings in the evening will be able to come to our December meeting, which will be held this month during the day at 10:00 a.m. in the school library.

We will have reports about school activities, trips and special goings on, family fun event reviews and planning, and discussion about teacher mini-grant requests and current budget issues. We welcome your participation, comments and suggestions. Please join us; we look forward to seeing you there! 🍷

Sixth Graders Perform at RCC

On November 20, 2009 at the CenterStage in the Reston Community Center, sixteen sixth graders performed a piece of choreography on stage with "Carla and Company", a professional modern dance company. The company presented several works that evening and Hunters Woods' students performed with the professional dancers in one of the pieces titled, "Community Dance". The sixth graders performing were Annie Abraham, Sesaly Barden, Justin Bartee, Veda Bhatia, Alec Brown, Camryn Easley, Tracey Escobar, Shynetra Foxworth, Maya Glenn, Anya Karaman, Mikki Kumbi, Constantine Kit, Maya Kotto, Louis Rigo, Alex Sargent and Andrew Uhrig.

Hunters Woods is very grateful to Damian Sinclair, the CenterStage Arts and Events Director, and Cheri Danaher, Arts Education Director for all their effort in arranging this project with Carla Perlo, artistic director of "Carla and Company". Ms. Perlo's apprentice dancer, Sidney Leggitt, also deserves a special thank you for the eight rehearsal sessions she conducted with the Hunters Woods students. 🍷

Looking Forward

- **International Festival** - Our annual HWES International Festival will be held on Friday, January 22, 2010. We need lots of help pulling this family fun event together; please email international@hwpta.org if you can assist. 🍷
- **Bingo Night** - This year's Bingo Night will be held on Friday, February 12, 2010; but we need help organizing this annual family fun event. If you can help out, please email bingo@hwpta.org.
- **HWES Silent Auction** - This year's silent auction is scheduled for Saturday, March 13, 2010. Please email auction@hwpta.org to volunteer. 🍷