



Hunters Horn



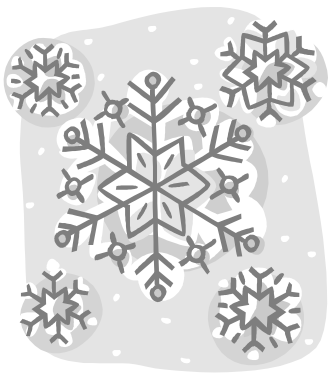
PTA Newsletter • Volume 44, Issue 4 • December 2011

PTA President's Message

Happy Holidays & Happy New Year to all our Hunters Woods families!

As I write this, the weather forecasters are calling for snow, and it seems as if the season is about to turn to winter! Winter break is only a couple weeks away, but we have lots of fun to look forward to in the meantime.

I hope you enjoyed the Book Fair and were able to stock up on presents for everyone in the family. Thank you to our Book Fair Committee for all their hard work...I already can't wait for the Spring Fair!



December 2nd, we kicked off the holiday season with our Winter Dance! It was a wonderful time to see friends and dance the night away. Special thanks to our

chairs--Debbie Anguizola and Megan Maslouhi--and the many volunteers who helped make this event a huge success!

The next events on the holiday calendar are class parties and the annual PTA Sweet Shop for teachers and staff. ***If you have questions or need help with your class party - contact Bonnie Silas at roomparents@hwpta.org!*** As for the Sweet Shop, bake a few extra batches for our hardworking staff and teachers to brighten their holiday season. Contact Jeri Thomas at sweetshop@hwpta.org for more information.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, I'm only a click away by email at president@hwpta.org. I wish each of you a restful and family-filled break! May you come back renewed and ready to hit the books in 2012!

All the best,

Jennifer Arakelian, PTA President

DATES TO REMEMBER

December 13 (Tue)	Winter Chorus Concert, 7pm
December 14 (Wed)	Winter Band Concert, 7pm
December 15 (Thu)	Winter Strings Concert, 7pm
December 16 (Fri)	PTA Sweet Shoppe
December 22 (Thu)	Class Parties
December 23 (Fri)	Winter Break Begins
January 3 (Tue)	Return from Winter Break
January 25 (Wed)	PTA Meeting (7pm) and Parent Education Speaker about Nutrition (6pm)

For complete calendar info, see www.hwpta.org. View as a list or calendar, print, and even add the PTA Google calendar to your Google calendar.

Tree of Warmth

We will continue to collect warm winter gear for local families in need. The Tree of Warmth has been placed outside the office until December 16th. Please bring in any items you wish to donate, including: hats, scarves, mittens, gloves, socks. New items only please!

Lost & Found Last Call

A DECEMBER RIDDLE FOR YOU:

Question: What's overflowing, not labeled, and misses its owners?

Answer: HWES Lost & Found items!

Please come claim what's yours:

December 13 - 15

Lobby by Cafeteria - items available all day and during the evening concerts

December 21 -22

2nd grade pod - items available all day

Please Note: All unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity during Winter Break.

PTA Legislation Update

VA State PTA Proposed Legislation Program for 2012: The PTA is the largest child advocacy association in the country, and Virginia PTA is the leading child advocacy association in our state. VA PTA members decide which positions to support or oppose by casting their vote on our PLP (Proposed Legislation Program). The items voted on by the VA PTA are either:

1. Legislative Action Items - requests for the introduction, passage or defeat of specific legislation by the General Assembly and/or regulations by the Board of Education or other appropriate agencies.
2. Policy Statements - statements of the Virginia PTA/PTSA on general issues and may be used as the basis for addressing issues before the General Assembly, Virginia Board of Education or other appropriate agencies.

This year's PLP contained a legislative item to address a vote by VA lawmakers that would require public schools to provide 150 minutes a week of physical activity, starting in 2014. (The current PE requirement in Fairfax County is 60 minutes).

Governor McDonnell vetoed the legislation, describing it as an unfunded mandate, but several lawmakers have vowed to reintroduce the legislation. **The VA State PTA supports additional state funding for the implementation of any increased PE requirements in grades K-8 so that there is no compromise of art, music, technology or foreign language programs currently in place.**

We thank all the HWES PTA members who spoke out and voted in October. We had 151 votes, with responses summarized below.

We will continue to update you on actions steps related to the PLP.

Comments or questions? Please contact presidentelect@hwpta.org.

LEGISLATION ACTION ITEM #1:

VA PTA supports additional state funding for the implementation of any increased PE requirements in grades K-8 so that there is no compromise of art, music, technology or foreign language programs currently in place.

145 Yes, 5 No, 1 Abstain

LEGISLATIVE ACTION ITEM #2:

VA PTA reaffirms our position in support of legislation granting a local option in setting school calendars and school year start dates.

139 Yes, 6 No, 6 Abstain

POSITION STATEMENT #1:

The Virginia PTA supports virtual and online schools designed to provide alternative learning opportunities for students in surrounding school districts insofar as those virtual schools do not divert funds or resources from localities. Virtual and online schools should comply with Virginia's Standards of Accreditation.

129 Yes, 9 No, 13 Abstain

Spring After-School Activities

The Spring After-School Activities catalog will be coming out January 3, 2012, and registrations will be accepted until January 18th.

The Spring line-up will have fewer class selections because of volunteer changes on the PTA After School Program Committee.

Please take the time to register early for your favorite classes - Beginner or Advanced Film Club, French and Spanish Language, Basketball, Dance, Chess and Art.

The new catalog will also be posted to the PTA website on Jan. 3rd. Any questions concerning the After-School Activities should be sent to afterschool@hwpta.org.

You Shop - We Earn!

Did you know that you can shop at over one thousand of your favorite online merchants right from our PTA website... and up to 16% of the proceeds from your purchase will be donated to the Hunters Woods Elementary School PTA?

There is now an eScrip Online Mall link on the Hunters Woods PTA webpage at <http://www.hwpta.org/>. Click on the Online Mall link to access the websites of your favorite, regular, online stores, like Amazon, Nordstrom, Barnes & Noble, Toys R Us, Lego, Best Buy, Home Depot, Apple Store, and hundreds of others. Then if you make an online purchase during your visit to that store's website, Hunters Woods will automatically receive a percentage of the sale proceeds!

You do not need to have an eScrip account to earn contributions for our school. The link on our PTA webpage is pre-coded with our school's eScrip Group ID, so anyone who clicks the eScrip Online Mall link through the HWES PTA webpage can support Hunters Woods.

If you plan to do any shopping online, whether for the holidays or year-round, please take advantage of this quick, convenient, and easy way to support our school! It's free to you, and valuable to us!

Parent Education Series Update

The second Parent Education Series Speaker will be on January 25 at 6pm. The topic is Fitness and Nutrition. Our guest speaker is Laura Calderera.

Laura is a Registered Clinical Exercise Physiologist, specializing in pediatric cardiology. She holds a Master's Degree in Exercise Science from George Washington University and has worked at Child Cardiology Associates where she coordinates wellness education for patients (and their families) with cardiovascular risk factors. Mark your calendars for this informative presentation. Children are welcome to attend this educational lecture.

Many thanks to everyone who attended our first parent seminar on October 26,

Ann Dolin's Homework Made Simple: Solutions for Stress-Free Homework.

Parents had a wonderful time and learned many new strategies to support their children's academic growth and avoid the many stressors that homework time can cause. Here are 4 great tips Ann shared.

- **Organize Time and Place** – As much as possible, make sure your child begins homework at the same time each day and has a designated location. Consistency will help create a routine so that it's not a struggle to get homework started. Also consider a portable organization system, like a shower caddy, for commonly used school items.
- **Prioritize Daily Assignments** – Help your child number his or her assignments (1, 2, 3) in the order they need to be done and record in an agenda book or on a white board.
- **Two Ways to Use Timers** – Set a timer after school for break time, usually not more than a half hour. The timer becomes responsible for alerting the child that it's time to get started. Timers take the emotion out of your requests. Use a timer to break down assignments into smaller increments; research shows that students are more productive when large tasks are broken down into shorter time allotments.
- **Plan Long-Term Assignments** – Use a monthly calendar for anything that's not due the next day. Teach students to create incremental due dates so as to avoid procrastination. These "assignments" are now part of daily work that your child prioritizes.

Also, be sure to communicate with your child's teachers. Maybe many children in the class are struggling, but the teacher doesn't know because homework comes in perfect due to parental participation and stress.

For more information about Homework Help, please contact Ann at 703-934-8282 or ann@ectutoring.com.

For more information about upcoming PTA Parent Education Speakers, please contact community@hwpta.org.

HW Odyssey of the Mind Teams Pressing Full Steam Ahead

The Odyssey of the Mind program at Hunters Woods has gotten off to a great start. We are fielding a whopping 11 teams, most led by new coaches!!

One of our newest coaches is a college-bound senior who is co-coaching her sister's team. She says "I started doing OM in the fourth grade, and it taught me a great deal about working with other people. It teaches you to not only be creative and realize your own potential, but to learn to recognize other people's talents and what they can bring to the proverbial table. OM is a unique, individual experience that teaches important life skills...it is a life-changing experience."

Her mother adds "Although we never considered the impact of OM when my daughter first joined and then kept participating, it is apparent now in her college search that colleges are very interested in it. Many of her interviewers with the schools have spent a long time talking about OM and what she has learned from it. She is also very active in theater and has started directing and has noted how much her OM experience has helped her. It's such a wonderful opportunity for the kids!"

More information on the program is available at odysseyofthemind.com. You can see and cheer on the HWES teams at the NoVA North Regional Tournament on March 31, 2012, at McLean High School. Or even better, you can get an insider's view by volunteering to be a judge on tournament day (judges' training on March 17, 2012). Please contact odyssey@hwpta.org if you are interested in volunteering or have questions.

We Have a W-I-N-N-E-R!

Over 50 students from across the school entered the Spelling Bee T-shirt art contest whose theme this year was "Believe in Yourself". Congratulations go out to our winner: 6th Grader, Sarah Slate from Ms. Standiford's class!

Everyone can see Sarah's winning design when the T-shirts are proudly worn by the nearly 60 Spelling Bee contestants during the 4th Annual HWES Spelling Bee on February 2nd.

Hunters Woods Students Excel in the First Lego League VA/DC Championship Tournament

The First Lego League's VA/DC Championship was held on the James Madison University campus on the first weekend in December with representation from several HWES students. Fifth grader Srinidhi Nagireddy was part of team "What's NXT?" that took the 1st place programming award for Division 1. The team also achieved the tournament's third highest table score with an impressive score of 175 points!! With their research project also short-listed for award consideration, they were recognized as one of top teams across all categories at the tournament.

Fifth graders Vinay Mummareddy, Kavya Parekh, Champa Narayana, Joyce Li, David Wang, Neil Kothari, Vikrant Mahajan, and Shivam Gandhi participated at the championship as part of team "NxtGenRobo." Going to the state level championship tournament as rookie team was a huge accomplishment and a well-deserved recognition for the team!!

The JMU student paper's coverage of this year's tournament is available online at http://www.breezejmu.org/life/article_92537f14-1eee-11e1-b8ce-001a4bcf6878.html.

More information on the FLL program can be found at the organization's website: <http://usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/fl>.

