

# GATES GAZETTE



Volume 24, Issue 4

December 2011

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### Monthly Happenings

**Dec 2:** Movie Night  
6:30pm in Gates Cafeteria

**Dec 7:** PTO Meeting  
7:30pm in the Gates  
Library

**Dec 23:** Gates Sing-a-long  
2pm in Gates Cafeteria

**Dec 24-Jan 2:** Winter Re-  
cess

**Jan 3:** School re-opens

To submit items to the *Gates Ga-  
zette*, please contact Salomé  
Juethner at  
[gates.gazette@yahoo.com](mailto:gates.gazette@yahoo.com)

## NEWMAN'S NOTES

Congratulations to our fifth grade teacher Mrs. Acheson! Mrs. Acheson and her husband celebrated the birth of their second son, Caden Robert on 11/11/11. Mrs. Acheson will be on maternity leave for the remainder of the school year. I am pleased to welcome long-term substitute, Mrs. Emily Deschenes to the Gates School. Mrs. Deschenes has her B.A. in Childhood Education from State University of New York College at Potsdam, in Potsdam, New York and is a certified elementary classroom teacher. She taught at the Estabrook Elementary School in Ypsilanti, Michigan for the last four years in grades 6, 5, and 3 as well as working with special education students. We are excited to have Mrs. Deschenes join the fifth grade team.

The cold weather is here! Please remember to dress your child/children for outdoor recess. Students go out to recess daily for fresh air and exercise and need to dress appropriately with hats, gloves/mittens. To play in the snow, children need to have boots and snow pants. I would also like to ask families to consider donating to the Gates

winter clothing drive. We are collecting gently worn winter coats, snow pants, boots, hats, and mittens to make sure that every child can play outside at recess and enjoy playing in the snow! Feel free to drop off your clothing donations to the office and we will share them as needed.

The lunch/recess assistants are looking for sand toys. The kids love to play outside with buckets, shovels, and other sand toys in the snow. If you have any sand toys that would be fun for winter outdoor recess please send them in!

I would like to remind families that in the spirit of holiday season that there are gift-giving guidelines to remember. " Public Employees are not allowed to accept gifts valued at \$50 or more. This includes group gifts from multiple parents. If it is a personal gift to a teacher or classroom assistant, it cannot be \$50 or more, no matter how many parents contributed to the gift. This is also consistent with School Committee policy. Parents may only give a group gift of \$50 or more to the classroom or school, but not to an employee for personal use. If a gift is given to the classroom or



school, employees should keep receipts to prove that the money went to the classroom/school, not to the employee. Any gifts to a school or to the district that exceeds \$500 must go to the School Committee to be accepted. " Thank you for following these guidelines.

The annual Sing-a-long is scheduled for December 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2:00. Additional parking for this event will be behind the school on the basketball court. If you are planning on attending, please consider carpooling. On behalf of the Gates Staff, I would like to wish everyone Happy Holidays! Our winter recess is from December 24 – January 2. School re-opens on January 3, 2012. Happy New Year!

**Lynne Newman**

**Principal**





Janice Martineau (right)  
Sr Co-Chair

Maureen Flynn (left)  
Jr Co-Chair

### Numbers to Know

**\$57,000** Amount of money the PTO needs to raise this year to continue to maintain current levels of teacher assistant hours and programs.

**485** Number of students at Gates School.

**\$118** The amount of money that the PTO currently spends *per student*.

**\$35,900** The amount of money raised at last year's auction

**80%** of PTO funds spent on staffing (Classroom Assistants, Library Staff, and Computer Lab)

## FROM THE CHAIRS

December already!! The days are shorter and seem to pass quickly as we approach the holidays and winter time. As usual, things are busy at Gates as we host our first Movie Night of the year, RIO on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, launched our first major direct appeal campaign and look forward to supporting local families during the holidays through our Giving Trees.

At our last PTO meeting we reviewed our MCAS results and were very pleased to see Gates' students ranking very high within both the school district and the state. Thank you to Mrs. Newman and Dr. Kotyk for explaining the growth percentiles and overall test results.

Additionally, the Acton School Committee Chairman, Mike Copollino, joined us to discuss Dr. Mills' proposal and efforts

for Para-Professional funding at the elementary schools to be shifted away from PTO fundraising to the Appropriated School Budget and from profits of the Extended Day Programs. This is an ongoing discussion within the town and the APS and we will keep you informed as new proposals and ideas are brought forward on this important issue.

Our next PTO meeting is Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> in the Library. Our discussion topic will be Bullying. Mrs. Newman will discuss our current policies on bullying and we will have an open discussion forum. Mrs. Knight and Mrs. Ward will also join us to discuss the Art and Music space at Gates. Please join us to participate in our

discussion topic, share your views and ideas, or just come and listen. We hope to see you there.

We would like to wish you all a Happy Holiday Season and Health and Happiness throughout the New Year!

**Janice Martineau,**  
Sr. Co-Chair

**Maureen Flynn**  
Jr Co-Chair

**Gates' MCAS results rank very high within both the school district and the state.**

## MEET THE PTO BOARD



Left to Right: **Philip Tsang** (Assistant Treasurer), **Raji Srinivasan** (Recording Secretary), **Dan Zou** (Treasurer), **Maureen Flynn** (Junior Co-Chair), **Janice Martineau** (Senior Co-Chair), **Michelle Baytarian** (Corresponding Secretary)

## NEWS FROM GATES HEALTH OFFICE

Diane Spring RN and Victoria Reiersen, RN



**A few quick notes** as we head into December...

We continue to see children with prolonged cold symptoms, some cases of flu- like symptoms, pneumonia, and “tummy bugs”. Our visitations for illness and injury are averaging about 35 per day with an average additional 10 medication/treatment visits per day. Please be detailed on your Safe Arrival call- in or call the nurse directly with your child’s symptoms so that we can monitor trends and if we can be of support to you.

We have had a small outbreak of cases of head lice across the grade levels. We are sending classroom alerts and performing head checks per policy, but we would encourage parents to check their own children’s hair preventatively at least weekly and immediately if there is a complaint of an itchy head. The nurse check is just a moment in time and an infestation can be evolving and caught more readily by one-on-one, ongoing monitoring. If you aren’t sure what you are looking for, call the health office and we can help.

**Reminders...**With the heating season upon us, please send your child to school with lip balm and a drinking water bottle daily. We see many children each day who visit us for Vaseline for their lips, skin cream for very dry skin and for fatigue quickly eased with hydration.

If your child’s doctor prescribes a medicine that your child will have to take at school, please have your doctor write us an order to administer that med at school and plan on delivering that medication to us yourself, not sending it in with your child. We know how busy you are, however, there are safety concerns with children transporting medications and legal implications for our administering it without a doctor’s order. The medication policy and our other health policies are available on the Districts’ health and nursing website under “popular pages”, “Health and Nursing Services”.

**Donations...**

Small bottles of water would be most appreciated for those children who have forgotten to bring their own and are having some dehydration symptoms. A few boxes of extra soft tissues for those little noses suffering the assaults of cold symptoms would save them from our standard issue rougher type. Otherwise, we are set at present. Thank you for your generosity of supplies AND spirit. :)

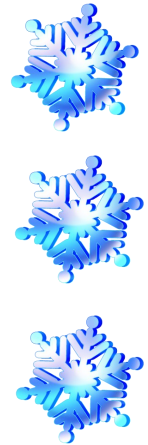
Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Knight would like to announce the upcoming...

## Gates Chorus Winter Concert and 5th Grade Sculpture Exhibition



Friday, December 9th  
6:00-7:00 pm Sculpture Exhibit Opening  
7:00 pm Chorus Concert

We hope to see you there!!



### WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE!

Mrs. Newman

It is that time of year when parents replace winter coats, snow pants, boots, mittens, and hats. It is amazing how quickly our children grow! Please consider donating your gently worn winter gear to Gates. We want to ensure that all children can go out in the winter months, stay warm, and have fun in the snow! Please bring your items to the office and we will be happy to share them as needed.

Many thanks!



## FOOD SERVICES NEWS



**Lunch Prices:** Acton Public \$2.35 (\$.10 increase)

**A la Carte Milk:** \$.50 (remains the same price)

**Acton-Boxborough:** \$2.10-\$3.00 (Tiered pricing based on menu offerings)

We are pleased to offer Gluten Free Lunches at all schools. Please see menu for details. We do require advance notice for these lunches.

Here is the link to our menus: Please note the daily alternates were not listed on your menu. The alternates are available...please click on the link for the menus below to see what is additionally offered each day in the cafeterias. <http://ab.mec.edu/departments/food/foodmenus.shtml>

Your family may qualify for free or reduced price lunch. The following link will bring you to the free and reduced lunch application: <http://ab.mec.edu/departments/food/foodmenus.shtml>



Thank you to all of the students, faculty and parents for your patience and support while we transitioned with the new Point of Sale System in all of the school cafeterias.

If you have an account set up in Parent on line please be sure to set a low balance reminder for your account.

The Food Service Department is sending out a call to all families that have \$5.00 or less in their account each Sunday afternoon.

If you receive a call and you have a balance due, please keep in mind the payment on line can take 24-48 hours to reflect on your child's account. We do accept cash or checks at the school in addition to on line payments.

As always, if you have any questions please feel free to contact either the Cafeteria Manager at the school or the Food Service Department Office.

It is our pleasure to serve your children every day!

We hope you have a wonderful holiday season.

Kirsten Nelson

## KINDERGARTEN UPDATE

The Kindergarten team has turned into Paleontologists. We love learning about dinosaurs and fossils. We are creating geometric dinosaurs and mobiles. We are sorting and graphing as well as digging up dinos! We are learning songs and reading both fiction and non-fiction stories about dinosaurs. This very active and fun thematic unit will culminate right before the winter break with a Dino-Dig!

**Mrs Lamonakis and Mrs Subsick**



## GRADE 2 UPDATE



Second graders are moving right along! We are studying about the Pilgrims and their voyage on the Mayflower with many activities and reading opportunities. We have found that *Scholastic.com* offers some great videos and ideas that might be interesting for home study.

Our next science unit will be “Balance and Motion.” This physics unit explores concepts using hands-on opportunities for exploration.

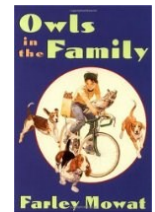
The second grade teachers are pleased to see the students’ progress with basic addition facts to 20.

**Mrs. Konde, Mrs. Cranna and Mrs Luongo**

## GRADE 4 UPDATE

Fourth grade students have been working hard on mastering their multiplication and division facts, which will help them greatly as we move onto more complex mathematical concepts like multi-digit multiplication and long division.

In reading, students are learning different roles, such as Vivid Visualizer and Creative Connector, to prepare them for our literature circle discussions. The roles are being introduced as we read a novel set in the prairies of Saskatchewan, Canada called *Owls in the Family* by Farley Mowat.



Students are now learning about weather in Science and will be learning about the seasons and shadows after that. In Social Studies, we are learning about many of the major explorers which will lead into our study of our first region of the United States--the Northeast. Students did an excellent job on their island projects which are now proudly displayed in the 4th grade pod.

**Mrs. Walsh, Mrs. Gottlieb and Ms. Ryder**

## GRADE 6 UPDATE

The sixth grade recently completed their first rotation of units. Students presented science projects which ranged from the design of one-minute timers, to the testing of a hypothesis, to the construction of bridge models.



In celebration of the completion of their studies of the people of ancient Mesopotamia, students made Mesopotamian cylinder seals and feasted on foods similar to those enjoyed by early neolithic farmers.

Students are now exploring microworlds with Mrs. Montepeluso, navigating through ancient Egypt with Mrs. Madrigal, and manipulating fractions with Mrs. Wilcox. In the coming weeks, they will be observing live organisms, mummifying chickens, and solving real-world math problems.

**Mrs. Madrigal, Mrs. Montepeluso, and Mrs. Wilcox**

# Gates Movie Night!

**Friday, December 2nd  
Gates Cafeteria at 6:30pm**

We hope you'll join us in sunny Brazil for a little Carnival celebration.  
It's going to be a big party — get ready to SAMBA!  
Bring your sleeping bag / pillow, & money for snacks!

please contact Michelle Baytarian ([mbaytarian@gmail.com](mailto:mbaytarian@gmail.com)) or Sasha Edmunds, ([astavsky@hotmail.com](mailto:astavsky@hotmail.com))  
if you are interested in helping out!



# GATES SCRIP PROGRAM

As you may have seen last month in the Gates Gazette , we had a page on the Scrip program and the order form.

The purpose of the program is to raise money for Gates while shopping or gift giving with participating vendors. This program is open to all families as well as teachers and staff at Gates.

You can see a list of participating vendors at [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com) website\*. Click on the blue "Shop" tab and sort by category for a listing.

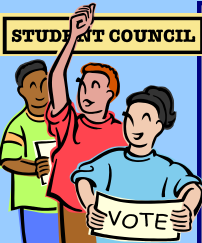
You can submit your order by completing the order form (located on the PTO website) and sending your check payable to **Gates School PTO** to the scrip coordinator via backpack express.

Orders for this Holiday Season are due no later than Wednesday, December 7, 2011. I am hoping for a delivery on Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup> via back pack express should you chose this option.

Thank you for considering to help Gates PTO earn money while doing your holiday shopping/gift giving.

\*There are 2 local vendors, Learning Express and Roche Brothers, which are not listed on the website that you would need to order via the paper form.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Cindy Richardson at [cindy\\_richardson@hotmail.com](mailto:cindy_richardson@hotmail.com)



## Hello and Welcome to Gates Student Council 2011!

I am Katherine Hoggard, the student council president. The vice presidents are Andrew Huang, Kylie Frank and Riona Chen. The Treasurer is Thomas Skripps and the secretary is Kavya Uddaraju.

We are excited to represent the student body. I think we are going to accomplish a lot this year. All students are welcome to come to our meetings we would love to have you there. The meetings are the first Thursday of every month at 8:45 am in the gym. **The next meeting is Thursday, December 1st.** We hope to see you at the meeting. Please keep an eye on the student council bulletin board next to the school store for information about student council.

Thank you,

Katherine Hoggard

## BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION

Please send in any Boxtops you've been saving over the summer. It's a terrific program, and easy to participate. **Each Boxtop is worth 10 cents for our school. Simply clip Boxtops from hundreds of your favorite products and send them to school with your child.** You may also drop them in the collection box in the lobby, next to the office.

Some products included in this promotion are: *Betty Crocker mixes, Nestle Juicy Juices, General Mills Cereals, Green Giant Frozen Vegetables, Pillsbury cookies, breads, and rolls, Land O Lakes butter, Welch's jellies, Avery labels and school supplies, Ziploc bags, Cottonelle, Hanes products, and more.* For the **complete list of participating products**, go to [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com).

Please ask grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends to clip them for you too – get everyone involved and **EARN CASH FOR GATES SCHOOL.** Last year, during the 2010-2011 school year, we earned \$560.00. Gates School has earned a total of \$8,047 since we started submitting Boxtops in 2002. Remember, we receive 10 cents for every Boxtop we submit to General Mills.

Also, go to [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com) to see opportunities to earn electronic Boxtops (called eBoxtops), with online purchases from many popular stores.

Please contact Susan Bartow at 978-264-2014 or [sbkajbartow@comcast.net](mailto:sbkajbartow@comcast.net) if you have any questions

# AB PIP STEM

Science . Technology . Engineering . Math

## AB PIP STEM Activities 2011-2012

- September to May. PIP STEM Meetings: Posted on [actonpip.org/calendar.htm](http://actonpip.org/calendar.htm). All welcome.
- November 10, 2011. Discover STEM Sci-Tech Fair: Grades 7-12 at ABRHS, 6:00-8:30pm.
- November 13, 2011. AB Teen Driver Training: Hands-on physics at [DriveInControl.com/AB](http://DriveInControl.com/AB).
- January 19, 2012. PIP Family Math Game Night: Dominoes, KenKen and more, 5-8pm. All ages.
- Winter 2012. New Lego Robotics Activities: Technology plus toys. Grades K-6.
- February 2, 2012. Book Club. Selection: *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Adults & teens.
- February 7, 2012. 5th Grade Market Math: Advanced "Super" Market Math event at Roche Bros.
- March 5, 2012. 4th Grade Star Party: Astronomy for 4th graders & parents, [actonstarparty.com](http://actonstarparty.com).
- March 11, 2012. Annual Community Ice Skating: Fundraiser: Nashoba Valley Rink #3. All ages.
- April 11, 2012. 3rd Grade Market Math: "Super" Market Math event at Roche Bros.
- Spring 2012. New 'Eco' Education Activities: Go green. Grades K-12.
- May/June 2012. SummerSkills PIP Fundraiser: K-12 Math summer review book sale.

*Acton Naturally, Guide to Local Species.* Sponsored by AB Schools, Town of Acton & AB PIP STEM. Guides are available for \$6 from AB PIP STEM or at EMS in Acton. Details at [actonpip.org](http://actonpip.org).



Market Math at Roche Bros.



DiscoverSTEM2011

Discover STEM 2011  
2011-2012 Platinum Sponsors: Claricent, Inc., IBM, SolidWorks

### PIP/STEM Activities

Visit our site at [actonpip.org](http://actonpip.org) for ongoing programs. Borrow a Galileoscope (contact [actonpip@gmail.com](mailto:actonpip@gmail.com)) for night sky viewing; take out math & science kits from the library; and print domino math games.

### Join AB PIP Now!

To join the AB PIP STEM team or to receive information about activities and events, send e-mail to [actonpip@gmail.com](mailto:actonpip@gmail.com). Student volunteers may qualify for Accept the Challenge Awards, School Service, PIP Scholarships or PIP Service Awards.

### PIP Web Resources

Visit the Acton-Boxborough PIP website for links to science and math games, museums, exhibits, and details about upcoming AB PIP STEM and community STEM events for grades K-12 at [actonpip.org](http://actonpip.org).

## Upcoming Events

### Curious about Gates PTO Meetings?

- ◆ A great opportunity to find out more about programs at Gates!
- ◆ Meet and connect with other Gates Parents!
- ◆ Discuss current and future events & activities and share your ideas!
- ◆ Get your questions answered!

There are lots of ways to get involved with activities and events at Gates. If you are interested in learning more about the Parent Teacher Organization or just want to connect with other families, everyone is welcome. Drop in for one meeting or attend regularly throughout the year... we'd love to see you!

Janice Martineau  
Maureen Flynn  
PTO Co-Chairs

#### December:

7th **PTO Meeting** 7:30pm, Gates Library

#### January:

10th **PTO Meeting** 7:30pm, Gates Library

#### February:

8th **PTO Meeting** 7:30pm, Gates Library  
TBD **Night at American Girl store**

#### March:

20th **Joint PTO Meeting & Speaker Series**  
**with Douglas** 7:00pm, Gates  
31st **Annual Auction and Social**, Devens Mar-riott

#### April:

24th **PTO Meeting** 7:30pm, Gates Library

#### May:

4th **Spring Family Social** 7:00pm  
14th – 18th **Staff Appreciation Week**  
23rd **PTO Meeting** 7:30pm, Gates Library

#### June:

8th **Activity Day** (rain date, June 12th)  
TBD **Spinners Game**

Questions? Contact your PTO Co-Chairs –  
Janice Martineau: [jjmartineau@verizon.net](mailto:jjmartineau@verizon.net)  
Maureen Flynn: [gatescochair@yahoo.com](mailto:gatescochair@yahoo.com)

### Gates Email Distribution List

Are you receiving Gates email notices?

The Gates email distribution list is used by Principal Newman and the PTO to update the Gates community about upcoming events, meetings, and other school related information. All PTO flyers and sign-up sheets – even the *Gazette* – go out via the Gates email list.

The Gates email list is moderated - only messages sent by the Principal or approved by the PTO chairpersons can be posted to the list. Only the List Administrators can add or remove members from the list. This is done for privacy and security reasons. This information is used solely for Gates School purposes and will not be shared with other organizations. Families may unsubscribe at any time.

**To subscribe or unsubscribe to the list, use the "Sign up for Email" section of the Gates PTO website ([www.gatesschoolpto.org](http://www.gatesschoolpto.org)).**

To update/change your email address, you need to unsubscribe the old email address and subscribe the new email address.

If you completed the School/PTO Permissions portion of the on-line emergency form, your email address has already been added to the Gates email distribution list. In this case, there is no need to re-submit your email address via the Gates PTO website.

Please contact one of the List Administrators with any questions: Lisa Benati at (978) 264-9145 or [mhenati@yahoo.com](mailto:mhenati@yahoo.com), or Kirstin Lynch at 978-263-0186 or [kirslynch@comcast.net](mailto:kirslynch@comcast.net)