

September 5, 2008

THE PINK LINK

A Near-Weekly Publication of the Peirce F

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<http://www.k12.newton.ma.us/Peirce/>

Patience Equality Inclusion Responsibility Cooperation Effort

Calendar

September

4	First Day of School for Students & Group "A" Kindergarten
4	Parent Coffee for New & Kindergarten Families, 8:30AM – Library
5	First Day of School for Group "B" Kindergarten
5	Parent Coffee for New & Kindergarten Families, 8:30AM – Library
10	Back to School Picnic – 5:30-7:30PM – Peirce field and playground
16	State Primary Elections, Peirce Gym, voting site, 7AM-8PM
18	Curriculum Night, 7-9PM – Auditorium and Classrooms
22	Newton METCO Parent Meeting, Reggie Lewis Track Center, Roxbury, 7PM-9PM
22	Peirce School Council, 1st Meeting, 3:30PM-4:30PM, Library
23	Teacher Appreciation Breakfast
29	Kindergarten long days begin
30	No School - Rosh Hashanah

Principal's Letter

Dear Peirce Families,

The school year begins anew! The first days are always so very exciting with students and teachers eagerly anticipating new friendships and reconnecting with former friends. Names on class lists come to life as a classroom community forms under the skillful direction of our teachers. What an energizing first two days! It was great to see all of you and especially your children!

I want to take this opportunity to thank our teachers who spent a considerable amount of their own summer days preparing curriculum, planning for the year, in addition to recreating their organized cheery classrooms. As always, much thought and planning result in classroom features from bulletin board displays to the organization of furniture and materials to ensure that the environment supports student learning; every detail has an instructional purpose. As a result, our classrooms invite your children to a year of learning.

Additionally, I offer kudos to our custodian, Bill Pepicelli, for his thorough cleaning of the school building from washing furniture to stripping and rewaxing floors to shampooing carpets, replacing filters in all ventilation units and so much more. He did all this while understaffed due to a shortage of custodial personnel due to budgetary constraints.

Our secretary, Ginette DeSantis has also been busy processing school orders and supplies, registering new students, and ensuring that classrooms are well stocked with all the supplies needed for the start of school. We do have a very dedicated staff working to support the needs of the school!

Did you notice how beautifully manicured our front gardens look?! We owe the Bilotta family a huge thank you for coming to clean up the gardens, even though their daughter is now at Day Middle School! Thanks

also to Sharon Schindler for planting flowers and greens in the flowerpots at the front and rear of the building. The school looks wonderful inside and out due to these collective efforts! Thank you!

Enrollment and Class Size: An Update

Our enrollment has shifted just a bit from 331 students in June with 17 classrooms to 337 as school opens with 15 classrooms. It is fortunate that most of the students are spread out over the grades, resulting in reasonable class sizes except in two grades. Grade 2 has 27 students in each class and grade 3 has 25 and 26 students. Almost every elementary school had at least one grade with large class sizes as we monitored enrollment over the summer.

In July, when the School Committee shared that some funds came back to the schools from various sources, the principals worked with the administration to devise a plan to allocate this funding. The following statement from the School Committee website details the decision-making process:

"In an August meeting, the School Committee authorized the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education, Dr. Patricia Kelly, to meet with elementary principals and work out the best plan for providing additional staffing to the most overcrowded classrooms in grades K-3. They met a number of times and studied the latest data on students moving into the schools before reaching the following decision:

-- NPS will appoint three additional teachers to the most crowded situations in grades K-3 on August 21 so that student placement letters can be sent out the next day. These new positions would be at Cabot, grade 3; Mason-Rice, grade 3; and Memorial Spaulding, grade 2. Cabot grade 3 has the largest class size in the city; Mason Rice grade 3 is a close second, and those students have been in very large classes since kindergarten; and Memorial-Spaulding grade 2 has class sizes just as big with even younger children.

-- NPS will defer decisions on the other schools with class sizes of 27 or more until the third day of school when the number of children enrolled is absolutely clear. Dr. Kelly and the elementary principals will then decide how to allocate to the largest classes K-3 the remaining \$72, 546. The additional staffing may involve full or part-time teachers or aides."

As you can see, we will know sometime in the beginning of next week how and where these funds will be allocated. I will be sure to keep you informed as this process unfolds. Our second grades will surely have some sort of support and, depending on enrollment in other schools; our third grade classes may qualify. In the meantime, our building aide, Mrs. Linda DePasquale, will be supporting the second grade classes. Additionally, we are fortunate to have special education assistants in each of these 4 classes who can be supportive to small groups.

I look forward to seeing you at the Back to School Picnic next Wednesday, September 10! Let's hope for good weather!

Warmly yours,
Eva M. Thompson

School News

BACK TO SCHOOL PICNIC – Please join your fellow Peirce School families to celebrate the start of another school year at the Back-to-School Picnic on Wednesday, September 10th from 5:30-7:30PM. Attached is a form you can use to order pizza, salads or sandwiches or, bring your own family picnic. All food must be ordered in advance. Bring a blanket and a desert that all can share. So please join us for this casual, fun evening for all. Hope to see you there!

CURRICULUM NIGHT – Curriculum Night is Thursday, September 18, 7PM– 9PM. This is a great opportunity to meet our principal and your child's teacher in the classroom where you will learn about the

curriculum and goals. You will also have a chance to meet the various specialists who support our school programs.

HEAD LICE – This week a flyer will go home in back packs from the PTO asking all parents to PLEASE CHECK THEIR CHILDREN FOR HEAD LICE during this FIRST WEEK of school. On the Peirce PTO website, Health section, we have compiled tips "by parents for parents", as well as information gathered from a professional nitpicker, to help share experiences in identifying and getting rid of head lice: <http://www.peircepto.com/Health/LiceMainPage.html>

NEWTON COMMUNITY ED CLASSES AT PEIRCE – Registration is now underway for fall classes through Newton Community Education. Coming up at Peirce we have Mad Science on Mondays, Chess on Wednesdays, Wicked Cool Forensic Detectives (Girls-Only) on Thursdays, and The Stockmarket Game on Fridays. For 5th graders we offer Babysitting at North, and Create a TV Show at NewTV. For kids in grades K and 1 we have Exploring Nature at Crystal Lake on two Wednesday afternoons, and for kids in grades 3-5 we have Fencing at Bigelow on Mondays. We have many exciting Saturday classes for adult-child pairs, such as Arboretum Tour, Stargazing, Meals in Minutes, and the ever-popular Chocolate Connection. We also have lots of Saturday sports options for kids ages 2 and up, and many more weekday classes at schools throughout Newton. For more information or to register, call our office at 617-559-6999 or visit our website at www.newtoncommunityed.org.

Community News

CHILD ASSAULT PREVENTION (CAP) – Newton's CAP is seeking volunteers. Each year CAP volunteer Prevention Specialists present 125 workshops to students in Newton's kindergarten, second and fifth grade classrooms. Working in teams of 3, we teach Newton children that they have the right to be Safe, Strong and Free with their friends and peers, with adult strangers, and with those who are trusted to take care of them. Using simple and age appropriate language we address bullying, stranger safety, and sexual assault by known persons. We are looking for parents who are interested in becoming volunteer Prevention Specialists. Please join us. The next training (24 hours) will begin the week of October 13. We will be offering a series of 3-hour morning and evening training sessions. CAP volunteers include parents and other community members who are interested in child safety, and who can contribute 6 hours per month for one school year, October - May. For more information about this training, please call Gail Sommer, (617) 969-5906, ext. 143 or by email, gailns@aol.com or gsommer@ncscweb.org. CAP is a program of the Newton Community Service Center. Visit our website to learn more about CAP and other NCSC programs, www.ncscweb.org.

ASTRID LINDGREN EVENT – On October 5, 2008, from 2–4 PM, the Scandinavian Living Center West Newton, 206 Waltham Street, West Newton, is inviting all elementary school age children in Newton to come play games based on Lindgren's books, story telling, learn about the author, Pippi Longstocking and other characters. The program will also include information about Swedish culture, a craft table for making orange wigs and other fun things. We will have Swedish treats for everyone and every child participant will receive a participation certificates. Parents are invited to enjoy the festivities while accompanying their children. Astrid Lindgren book prizes will be raffled off.

NEWTON FREE LIBRARY – On **Wednesday, September 10 at 7PM**, graphic novelist, illustrator and computer game artist Gareth Hinds will give a 90 minute multi-media presentation and will speak about how he became a graphic novelist. All welcome. On **Monday, September 15 at 7PM**, Gareth Hinds will give a hands-on demonstration on digital techniques for comics and computer games. Attendance at the September 10 program is a pre-requisite for the workshop and registration is required. Sign up at the Young Adult desk beginning on August 21. On **Thursday, September 18 at 7:30PM**, Suzanne Rostler will give a program called Healthy Families, Healthy Kids: Helping Your Child Achieve a Healthy Body Weight. Ms. Rostler is a registered dietician specializing in pediatric weight management. She is the lead dietician for the Optimal Weight for Life (OWL) program and Children's Hospital Boston

NEWTON HISTORY MUSEUM – The following events will be held at the Newton History Museum this month:

Play games at the Newton History Museum each Saturday beginning September 27, 2008. Enjoy card games, board games - including *Newtonopoly!* - and more during Game Days at the Museum. Noon to 5PM. Free with admission.

Saturday & Sunday, September 6 & 7, Noon to 5PM: COMMUNITY WEEKEND

Free admission to the Museum for all Newton residents.

Tuesday, September 9, 7:30PM: NEWTON HISTORY BOOK CLUB

Meet with other members of our newly-launched book club to discuss the book *Ladies of Liberty* by author Cokie Roberts. The book selection for the November meeting will be made as well. Free.

Sunday, September 14, 2PM: SUNDAY WALKING TOUR: CRYSTAL LAKE

From skating in winter to swimming in summer, Crystal Lake has functioned as an important community resource for outdoor recreation. Did you know that it also provided much of the ice that kept local resident's food cold before refrigeration? Learn some of the stories behind this beloved lake, and add some of your own. Meet at the Crystal Lake bathhouse on Rogers Street. Free.

Sunday, September 21, 2PM: NEWTON CENTER HISTORY HUNT

Come out as a family to Newton Center to test and expand your knowledge of Newton. Use old maps and photos to find important sites, learn about their historic significance, and claim your prize at the end! Call 617-796-1450 to confirm the meeting place. Free.

Tuesday, September 23, 3:30-5PM: An Early Release Day Program – GAMES THROUGH TIME

At this drop-off program, find out how today's games and popular pastimes evolved. See games from our collection (games your parents and grandparents may have played!). Play reproductions of 19th-century games as well as more recent ones, and create your own game to take home. Cost: \$10 (\$8 for members); includes admission, materials, and snack. Prepaid registration is required, and space is limited. Appropriate for ages 6 and up. Call 617-796-1450 to register.

Saturday, September 27, Noon to 5PM: SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE'S MUSEUM DAY

Enjoy free admission to the Museum for yourself and one guest by presenting a Museum Day Admission Card. A printed version is available in the September 2008 issue of *Smithsonian Magazine*, or may be downloaded from <http://microsite.smithsonianmag.com/museumday/admission.html>

All programs are held at the Newton History Museum, 527 Washington Street in Newton unless otherwise noted. For more information and to register for programs, call 617-796-1450. For more details about any of our programs or events, please visit our website at www.newtonhistorymuseum.org.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION OPEN MEETINGS – Newton's Community Preservation Committee will hold the following series of community meetings to solicit community priorities for future funding:

Community Housing, September 24, City Hall, Room 209; **Historic Resources**, October 22, Newton Free Library Auditorium; and **Open Space & Recreation**, November 19, City Hall Cafeteria. All meetings will be held at 7PM. For more information, contact Alice Ingerson, City of Newton Community Preservation Program Manager, at 617-796-1144.

NEWTON METROWEST BASKETBALL TRYOUTS -- Tryouts for Newton travel basketball teams are scheduled for October. Newton places at least one team in each age group in the Metrowest Basketball League, which includes 35 area towns. Players who live in Newton or attend Newton schools through the METCO program are eligible. No pre-registration is necessary. Games begin in December. For more information and a complete schedule, see the Newton Metrowest website at www.eteamz.com/NewtonTravelBB or e-mail Ted Tye (girls teams) at tye@natdev.com or Lenny Gentile (boys teams) at lennypmgi@aol.com. All tryouts are at Brown Middle School.

Girls 4th grade – Wednesdays 10/15 and 10/22, 6:00 p.m.

Girls 5th grade – Fridays 10/17 and 10/24, 6:00 p.m.

NEWTON FOOD PANTRY –The Newton Food Pantry, located in the basement of the Waban Branch Library, is still going strong despite the closing of the branch libraries. It serves over 200 families in our community, providing a 3-day supply of nutritionally balanced, non-perishable foods once a month.

TO DONATE: Please bring non-perishable food and household/hygiene items on Wednesdays between 9:30-11AM. Go to back basement door next to parking lot. **TO RECEIVE:** Please come on Wednesdays between 1:30-3PM. **TO VOLUNTEER:** Contact Jackie Colby at 617-527-2394. Middle Schoolers and older welcome. If younger, please have adult to accompany.

Donation Wish List: cereal, meals-in-a-can, canned fruits, peanut butter, canned tuna and meats, spaghetti or meat sauces, canned vegetables, coffee/tea, juice, macaroni & cheese, jams & jellies, soups, toilet paper, laundry detergent, dishwashing soap, hand soap, toothpaste & brush, shampoo.

Classifieds

CHILDREN'S DENTIST – Looking for a new, kid-friendly dentist? Dr. Heidi B. Aaronson is a recent graduate of Tufts Dental School, where she received extensive training in pediatric and general dentistry. Dr. Aaronson's new state-of-the-art office on the Newton-Wellesley border was designed with children in mind, including dental puppets and books, special instruments and materials to decrease children's anxiety, and a TV mounted on the ceiling to ensure that your child's next visit to the dentist will be fun! Dr. Aaronson is a general dentist, so adults are welcome, too! For more information, please call 781-431-9999 or visit www.birnbaum.org

KIDS' KARATE – Free trial class. For girls and boys, entry ages first through sixth grades. Friday, September 12, 4:45-5:45 or Saturday, September 13, 10:00-11:00 a.m. \$79 per 7 weeks at Trinity High School, Newton. For more information, please call (617) 527-8052 or see www.kids-karate.org

PIANO LESSONS – Piano teacher with Harvard master's degree has openings for new students. Over twenty years experience including accompanying in the Newton Public Schools. Active member of the New England Piano Teachers' Assoc. Beginners welcome. Call Anne Hartman for interview at 617-332-5092 or e-mail: annehartman@comcast.net

KEYS FOR KIDS PIANO LESSONS – Small groups organized by age (4-11). Outstanding methodology. Experienced, certified instructor. Proven success. Keys for Kids goes beyond ordinary piano lessons: it teaches well-rounded musicianship. Fall registration. Free sample lesson 9/23. Contact Marina Gorny: MDGorny@comcast.net or (617)527-4942. For more information, please visit www.NewtonKidsLoveMusic.com

DANCE CLASS – All That Jazz Dance Studio is still accepting registration for this school year. We offer classes in Ballet, Pointe, Tap, Jazz, Hip Hop, Funky Jazz, Musical Theater Dance, and Modern for ages 2-adult. Classes are taught by experienced professionals who love children and believe in making the process of learning how to dance fun. Please call Deb Vogel at 617-641-0784 or check out our web site at www.allthatjazznewton.com to find out more information and to register. Don't forget to ask Miss Deb about having your birthday party at All That Jazz!

PIANO LESSONS - Learn Jazz/Blues/Classical, theory, sightreading from a Berklee & New England Conservatory graduate with 25+ years teaching experience. Build a high quality musical foundation with a patient, caring instructor. Beginners welcome. Gloria Jasinski, phone: 617.566.9704, email: piano566@comcast.net

Submissions may be made by email only to newtonpeirce@yahoo.com

Submission deadline is Wednesday, by 5:30pm.

For fairness and reliability, we strictly adhere to this deadline.

Coordinating Editor: Roberta Martone-Pavia.

Editors: Alexa Dulchinos, Lisa Gianelly, Sarah Kish, Katya Salkever, and Ursula Steele.



PEIRCE BACK TO SCHOOL PICNIC

Wednesday, September 10th 2008

5:30 to 7:30 pm

Have your dinner delivered to the Peirce Playground, enjoy supper with friends and support the Peirce PTO!

- Send order form with payment to your child's teacher or place in the bin marked "Back to School Picnic" located outside of the front office.
- Make checks payable to the "Peirce PTO".
- **Deadline for receipt of orders is Tuesday Morning, Sept 9th.**
- Drinks will be available for purchase at the picnic.
- Questions? Call Dana Davis cell) 917-887-6444 or Darlene Sheehan 965-5346.
- Please bring a blanket and a dessert to share.

Please detach and return with payment to your classroom teacher or the 'Back to School Picnic' bin located directly across from the office. Make checks payable to the 'Peirce PTO'.

Child's Name _____

Your Name _____

Cheese Pizza (#) _____ @ \$11.00 each = _____

Pepperoni Pizza (#) _____ @ \$12.50 each = _____

Caesar Salad (no chicken) (#) _____ @ \$ 5.00 each = _____

Chicken Caesar Salad (#) _____ @ \$ 6.50 each = _____

Roast Turkey Sub (#) _____ @ \$ 6.80 each = _____

Meatball Sub (#) _____ @ \$ 6.60 each = _____

TOTAL = _____

