

THE PIERCE SCHOOL BROADSHEET

Issue 10 - 1/22/09

PTO NEWS is also available online at <http://www.pierceschoolbrookline.org>

The Pierce School Broadsheet

Welcome to the current issue of the Pierce School Broadsheet, published every other Thursday by the Pierce PTO. There is a Firm Deadline for submissions of Monday at 2:00 p.m. Please drop

notices in the Broadsheet box in the PTO/Outreach Office; mail to PTO Newsletter, Pierce School, 50 School St., Brookline 02446; or email (preferred!) to: Piercebroadsheet@gmail.com.

*PAPERLESS*

We hope that you will continue to enjoy our Paperless issues. If you know families who would like to be on our e-mail list, please mention that they can sign up on the Pierce web site at <http://www.pierceschoolbrookline.org>.

Paper versions of the Broadsheet will be available outside the main office.

www.pierceschoolbrookline.org - Main # 617-730-2580 Please Recycle!

In This Issue

Save the Date	Pg. 1
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Pg. 2
Skate Night @ Larz Anderson Skate Rink	Pg. 3
4th Annual Dress for Success Winter Coat & Clothing Drive	Pg. 3
Elementary World Language has begun!	Pg. 3
Developing a Unified Community Voice	Pg. 3
Pierce Problem of the Week #9	Pg. 4
Answer to POW #8	Pg. 4
Pierce GREEN Corner	Pg. 4
"Bee" Part of the Excitement...	Pg. 4
Brookline Library's 12th Annual Winter Gala & Auction	Pg. 5

Save the Date

Friday, January 23, 2009 **Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. Assembly** (8:30 am)

Sunday, January 25, 2009 **K.I.D.S. (Kids Involved in Summer) Brookline's Summer Opportunities Fair** (12-3 pm)
Tappan Street Gym, BHS

Friday, January 30th **Brookline Commission for Women 4th Annual Dress for Success Winter Coat & Clothing Drive Donation Time** (11am - 7pm) **Brookline Police Headquarters Community Room**

Friday, January 30, 2009 **Skate Night @ Larz Anderson Skating Rink** (5:15 pm - 7:30 pm)

Saturday, January 31st **Brookline Commission for Women 4th Annual Dress for Success Winter Coat & Clothing Drive Donation Time** (8am - 11am) **Brookline Police Headquarters Community Room**

Friday, February 6, 2009 **Chinese New Year Celebration**

Monday, February 16, 2009 through Friday, February 20, 2009 **No School February Vacation**

Friday, February 20, 2009 **Adult Team Registration Deadline for the Brookline Education Foundation Adult Spelling Bee**

Thursday, February 26, 2009 **Pot Luck Community Breakfast**

Latest News

From the desk of the Principal

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day--Fifth-Eighth Grade Assembly: Witnessing History

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would have been 80 years old on his birthday this year. He was killed when I was 11 years old. I knew he was an important man in the civil rights' movement because of the active participation of my family in this cause. Last year I spoke of the conflict between my sisters on how they each chose different ways to be active in the movement. The assassination of Dr. King unified my family in facing this tragedy together. I knew his death was a tragic moment in our history as a nation because of the reactions of my family, family friends and neighbors. I also knew the day of his death was a tragic moment in our country's history because of the anger that was expressed by many in the black communities across the country. I remember vividly the violent images that were shown on TV. Two things happened outside of my home that also helped to shape my memories of that time. My whole school, the William Lloyd Garrison Elementary School in Roxbury, gathered together to sing "We Shall Overcome." That moment taught me the power of music and song to communicate both idealism and determination. Then, I saw his "I Have a Dream" speech, not for the first time, but for the first time that I really listened carefully. The power of Dr. King's oratory gifts and inspirational words made me realize the magnitude of our loss. The part of his speech that jumped out to me was when he said, "My four little children will one day live in a nation where they will be judged, not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." Those words moved me. I thought, "Yes, that's how the world should be."

Today, those words are even more meaningful to me, as the first African American female principal of Pierce. I am proud of the diversity of our school. Thinking of Dr. King's words and Barack Obama's achievements, I believe we have moved closer to this being more of a reality for more people. Let our remembrance of Dr. King and our being witnesses to history today serve as reminders that if you work hard, respect others and serve your community, the color of your skin, your first language, your religion, your social economic status, your physical challenges, your place of birth, your sexual orientation or your gender, will no longer keep you from realizing your dreams.

Other words from Dr. King also moved me. In "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," King wrote, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Your first response to these words might be, "Why should it matter to me if others are mistreated, as long as I am strong enough, smart enough, cool enough or popular enough, to be treated well by others?" Dr. King's words tell us an important truth: If we let some people be mistreated, it is only a matter of time before we ourselves are mistreated. On the other hand, if we seek to protect those who are vulnerable, we in some way protect ourselves, because we are all vulnerable at one time or another.

So now we are about to witness a historical moment, Barack Obama's inauguration as our 44th president, and our first African-American president. Let's take a few minutes to consider what this means to our country. It means a very important part of Dr. King's Dream has come true, and that it has come true, partly through the power of words and music. It means that we live in a great country, where even those who opposed Obama in the presidential campaign celebrate his achievement. In The Boston Globe the day after the election one columnist wrote, "As a politician, Obama distresses me . . . As a symbol-a son of Africa elected to lead a majority white nation that once enslaved Africans and treated their descendents with great cruelty-Obama's rise makes me proud of our country." So the historical moment we are about to witness is not reserved for Democrats or Republicans, or for blacks as opposed to whites or others. It is for all of us to witness and celebrate.

Barack Obama has also been inspired by Dr. King's words. In talking to students, he quoted King's words just after four black girls were killed in a church bombing in Birmingham in 1963. Many black Americans, and many of their white allies, were understandably feeling despair over this tragedy. Dr. King told them, "The arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice." In 2008, Obama took this idea a step further. He told students at George Mason University, "It doesn't bend on it own. It bends because you put your hand on that arc . . . and you bend it in the direction of justice."

So what does this mean to you as students? I hope that it means that you will be prepared so that you will be proud to be judged by the content of your character. If in fact, you were to be judged today, would you be proud? Would your parents be proud? Would your teachers be proud? I hope it means that you will treat others justly in the understanding that you want others to treat you justly. Most importantly, I hope that just as our country is bending toward justice, you will understand and guide your own growth as individuals toward justice. Put your hand on the arc of your own growth, and bend it towards building a sense of justice. You might do this simply by learning to think more carefully about how you treat others at school. You might do this by becoming more involved in community service or politics. You might do this by learning to see those who are different from you in a new way, as people you might learn from, and reach out to. You might do this by learning to better appreciate what you have.

You won't succeed all the time. None of us do. Living up to these ideals requires idealism and determination, something the civil rights movement, led by Dr. King, brought to us so powerfully through music and song. That's why we observe Martin Luther King, Jr. Day by remembering his legacy, committing ourselves to continually strive to be our best selves, sharing some of those songs, and the meaning they hold for us.

Thank you for being an attentive audience as we witness history together.

Pipier Smith-Mumford
pipier_smith-mumford@brookline.k12.ma.us
January 20, 2009

Latest News and Events

Developing a Unified Community Voice

On Wednesday, January 14, we held our 2nd Principal's Forum for the year. The focus of the evening was to continue a discussion that began last November at our Community Potluck Breakfast. The topic centered on how the adults in the school community, both staff and parents, could work more collaboratively before and after school and at evening events, when students are not adhering to school rules, especially as they pertain to safety. Anne Robinson, social worker from the Brookline Center, facilitated a great discussion with parents and teachers. A number of suggestions were made. One of the first was to make the parent community more aware of the concerns and then secondly, to generate a variety of activities to address these concerns. A joint letter to the parent community from the PTO and the principal will be one of our next steps. Our primary goal is to increase the likelihood that we are all clear as to who is in charge or responsible for the students when both their parents and their teachers are present after school hours. Want more information about the evening or our next steps? Speak with our PTO leadership, Charlie Walsh at Charlie@bostonsoftware.com, Eileen Regis at serandz@msn.com or Deb Heffan at heffan@verizon.net or with myself or vice principal, John Badger at john_badger@brookline.k12.ma.us, to learn more.

Pipier Smith-Mumford
pipier_smith-mumford@brookline.k12.ma.us

Elementary World Language has begun!

On Jan 21, 2009 at 8:00am, Spanish instruction started and Mandarin instruction continues as Brookline implemented its district wide Elementary World Language Program!

In the seven schools teaching Spanish K-6, the Spanish teachers will be speaking exclusively Spanish in class, using lots of visual supports, gestures, repetition, songs and chants to engage students in learning this new language. Students will start by getting comfortable hearing a flurry of language they don't yet understand, and move toward limited expression in controlled, familiar situations. We are very excited to begin this world language program.

Dawn Carney
dawn_carney@brookline.k12.ma.us
K-8 World Language Coordinator

Upcoming Events

Join Pierce School for another "fit and green event"



Skate Night @ Larz Anderson Skating Rink
Friday January 30th 5:15-7:30
No cost to attend
Skate rental available
Food available for purchase by rink

Win a pair of Red Sox/Yankee tickets! Look for raffle tickets sales beginning Wednesday, January 21st - Friday January 30th. The winner will be announced the night of the event.

Questions?
Nancy Leventhal & Chuck Silverston
nancyandchuck@comcast.net

Brookline Commission for Women

4th Annual Dress for Success Winter Coat & Clothing Drive

Donation Times and Location:
Friday, January 30th 11am - 7pm
Saturday, January 31st 8am - 11am

Brookline Police Headquarters, Community Room
350 Washington Street
Brookline

Dress for Success is a not-for-profit organization that offers services to help women enter the workforce and stay employed. Each Dress for Success client receives one suit when she has a job interview and a week's worth of separates when she gets the job.

Please limit your donations to winter coats, business attire, and accessories (gloves, scarves, shoes and handbags/briefcases, etc.). This is NOT a general clothing drive. All donated coats and accessories should be appropriate for the workplace. If possible, please have the coats dry-cleaned prior to donation so they are ready to wear. We will also be accepting financial donations for a dry cleaning fund for items that need to be cleaned.

Latest News and Events

Pierce Problem of the Week: #9



HAWAII

When spelled with all capital letters, each letter in the U.S. state HAWAII has vertical symmetry.

A letter is said to have vertical symmetry if you can draw a vertical line through the letter and it produces two identical halves. A vertical line through W yields V and V.

Find the name of any U.S. state whose letters all have vertical and horizontal symmetry.

Are there any states that just have vertical symmetry?

Are there any states that just have horizontal symmetry?

Answer to Pierce P.O.W. #8

"Keeping FIT in the New Year!".

The answer is: four and one half minutes.

Welcome to the Pierce GREEN Corner!

GREEN TIP

Did you know that you save energy when you wash your clothes in cold water? It's a greener choice because you are not using lots of energy to heat water for a warm or hot water wash. Your clothes come out just as clean with cold water and it is kinder to the planet!



NEWS FROM THE
Brookline Education Foundation

"Bee" Part of the Excitement

Who said Spelling Bees were just for kids? Get your dictionaries out and start studying up for the 15th Annual Brookline Education Foundation's Adult and 5th Grade Spelling Bees, which will take place at the BHS Auditorium on Sunday, March 8th. The Children's Bee will begin at noon and is an old-fashioned spell-off, open to all Pierce 5th grade students. Information about the Children's Bee will be mailed soon to the home of each 5th grade student. Adult teams of three must register by February 20th, and as always, prizes will be awarded to the first and second place teams and to the team wearing the most creative costumes! And don't forget to buy your ticket for our Win a Mini Raffle, which will be selected at the Bee!

To "Bee" in the Bee or to buy a raffle ticket, please contact Pierce parents Cherie Gaehde adams_gaehde@hotmail.com and Julie Leitman julie.leitman@academicintl.com or visit www.BrooklineEducation.org or call the Foundation at 617-232-3846.

Pierce and the Brookline Education Foundation

January '09

Julie and I are relatively new Board members of the Brookline Education Foundation, and Pierce parents of three, and High School parents of two. One fantastic part of being a part of the BEF is that we get to regularly see teachers from Brookline present what they do with their grants, and in the past week alone we were able to see two events back to back about Pierce. If you don't know, the BEF is an organization which funds teacher-driven professional development and systemwide improvements that the schools could not otherwise afford. Many of our teachers at Pierce are applying for and receiving all kinds of grants from the BEF each year. On Friday, January 9th we had a breakfast at Pierce with the K-8 science coordinator Janet MacNeil at janet_macneil@brookline.k12.ma.us. This year the BEF has donated three new stereo microscopes to each 2nd grade classroom as well as other exciting new science-related equipment and educational materials to all the Brookline grades. At the breakfast we got to see the new equipment and learn specifically about the new K-2 science curriculum. If you'd like to see her presentation and its resources yourself, you can go to: <http://brooklineeducation.org/images/K-2Science/K-2Science.htm>

On Monday evening Melissa London melissa_london@brookline.k12.ma.us, Pierce 6th grade teacher, talked about her fantastic service learning project that was done this fall with the entire 6th grade. Ms. London attended a course this past summer with several Pierce and Heath teachers to learn how to successfully incorporate community service into a curriculum. Our 6th grade teachers came back, and with Ginny Carroll of the 3rd grade, carried out 2 amazing projects with our children: 6th graders with Barakat's Literacy Program for young girls and women in Afghanistan, and 3rd graders with the HopeFound Shelter (formerly Shattuck Shelter). Both projects were so clearly successful and rewarding to both the students and teachers. The Cambridge organization that worked with the 6th graders now even has a link on their own web site showing us as an example for other schools to copy and learn how to get involved in a productive and satisfying way. You can check it out here: http://barakatworld.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=272:brookline-public-school&catid=12:whatsnewatbarakat&Itemid=12 and these are just 2 examples of Pierce teachers and their work with the BEF! So we were hoping, that if you could see what we get to see, you might now know why we are out there selling raffle tickets and fundraising for the BEF - it is touching our kids in so many ways! Cherie Gaehde at adams_gaehde@hotmail.com and Julie Leitman at julie.leitman@academicintl.com.

8th Grade SADD meeting Wednesday, January 28th. 8th Grade Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) is back!!!

The first meeting is Wednesday, January 28 from 6:30 pm to 8 pm in room 385A at Brookline High School. Please encourage your 8th grader to attend this meeting with his/her friends. SADD meetings give 8th graders an opportunity to meet BHS Peer Leaders and discuss their perceptions about the high school social scene, including the variety of situations that often arise on the weekends. These meetings are also an opportunity to become familiar with the Brookline High facility and meet 8th grade students from all the elementary schools. Feedback from students who attended as 8th graders indicate the program has been very engaging and helpful over the past few years. Drop-in meetings will be held once a month through May. We hope to have details and dates available after the first meeting. (We are currently checking all the elementary schools calendars). If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Hope Schroy at 617-713-5149 or via email at Hope_Schroy@brookline.k12.ma.us.



Please join us for a Winter Gala & Auction.

The Brookline Library's 12th Annual Winter Gala will be held on Sunday, Feb. 8th from 7-10 p.m. at the Main Library, 361 Washington Street. Dine, dance, and bid on fabulous items and meet local authors while supporting the library. To buy tickets, preview auction items or bid online, visit www.brooklinelibrary.org. Tickets are also available at the Main Library for a cost of \$85 in advance and \$100 at the door.

Thank you for your interest and support!

Sincerely,

Felina

Felina-Marie Mucha-Cyr
Editor, The Pierce School Broadsheet
piercebroadsheet@gmail.com