

# PAW PRINTS

November 10, 2008

[www.northandoverpublicschools.com/thomson](http://www.northandoverpublicschools.com/thomson)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> – No School – Veterans Day  
Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> – **Salute to our Veterans**  
Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> – PTO Meeting @7:00pm  
Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> – **HOLIDAY FAIR 10am-3pm**  
Nov. 24<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> –Early Release and Parent/Teacher Conf.  
Nov. 26<sup>th</sup> – Literacy Day & EARLY RELEASE DAY  
Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> – No School - Thanksgiving

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**FROM THE CAFETERIA:** SNACK HAS BEEN REDUCED TO \$ .75.  
LUNCH REMAINS \$2.25 and MILK is \$ .60.

## FROM MR. GILLIGAN...

**Dear Thomson Families,** Monday November 24 and Tuesday November 25 are conference days. The parent conference is one of the occasions during the school year when you get to meet face to face with your child's teacher to discuss their academic progress. The teacher will have a variety of topics to discuss with you but be sure to ask questions you may have about your child. Please keep in mind that the teacher has to meet with a lot of parents and is on a tight schedule. Most conferences have been scheduled for 15-minute intervals.

Governor Deval Patrick has declared November 2008 as Family Literacy Month. This annual celebration, sponsored by the Massachusetts Family Literacy Consortium and the Massachusetts Reading Leadership Team, underscores the importance of strong literacy skills that help each family member be successful in school and in life.

We know that students do better in school when they are reading, writing, and participating in literacy activities with their families. Please see the back of this page for some family literacy ideas!

### Opportunity to Provide Input to the Superintendent Search Committee

The North Andover Public School system is looking for a new superintendent. If you are interested in providing input to the search committee on the qualities and characteristics you think our new superintendent should have, please forward your comments in an email to [suptsearch@northandover.k12.ma.us](mailto:suptsearch@northandover.k12.ma.us).

### Redistricting Advisory Committee Public Hearing Update

The Redistricting Advisory Committee held a public hearing on October 28th at the North Andover Middle School Auditorium. The purpose of the public hearing was to allow community members an opportunity to provide input on the proposed redistricting. It was a well-attended meeting with active participation and discussion. If you were unable to attend we would still like to hear from you. Please submit questions and/or suggestions to the Advisory Committee via email at [redistricting@northandover.k12.ma.us](mailto:redistricting@northandover.k12.ma.us) and check

for updates for upcoming information or news regarding redistricting at <http://www.northandoverpublicschools.com/>

**The Role of the Parent in Family Literacy. You Count.** Parents are a child's first and most influential teachers. Family literacy stresses the word "family," as family members are essential in supporting learning at home, at school, and in the community.

**Parents play specific roles in children's literacy development:**

creating a literacy-rich environment; sharing reading and writing activities; acting as reading models; demonstrating attitudes toward education; A strong educational environment at home can be a major factor in reinforcing the home-school connection.

**Read to Your Child:** As parents, you should know that shared learning and reading experiences are valuable gifts you can give your child. Reading is a key learning skill that will enable your child to become proficient in other areas. Reading aloud can also help your child become a better listener. Reading doesn't take a lot of time, either. As a parent, finding the time to read to or with your child is not always easy. However, it is an investment that pays off in big dividends! Research shows that children who spend as little as 30 minutes a day reading books, magazines and newspapers are more likely to become good readers.

**Raising a Reader: Getting Started:** These easy-to-do activities are designed to build a solid foundation of family literacy at home. **Know your children.** Before selecting books, make sure you know your child's reading abilities and interests. Your school's teacher or reading specialist can assess your child's ability. Your child's teacher or school/town librarian can make recommendations on age-appropriate books. **Set aside time for reading.** Designate a time of day when family members can read for pleasure. Make reading a part of your family routine. **Make reading special.** Children should feel as if having a book is special. Help them create a space for storing their books. However, if your child doesn't show an interest or strong ability in reading, be patient, but don't give up. Reading should be viewed as an enjoyable activity. **Use your local library.** One of the best resources you will have as a parent is access to your community's library. It costs nothing to borrow books. Many libraries also offer story hours and other fun literacy activities. Make visits to your library a routine activity.

**Limit television time.** Monitor program selection for your children. Discuss programs with them. Have a "NO-TV" night with your family on a regular basis. Read magazines, write letters to relatives living far away, or play charades or Scrabble as a refreshing alternative. Some ideas adapted from **Creating Young Readers**, by Stephanie Loer, Children's Book Reviewer for the Sunday Learning Section of *The Boston Globe* (1989). Used with permission from Stephanie Loer. Developed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education family learning staff team in collaboration with the Title I Dissemination Project and the Children's Trust Fund (1996)

**Save the Date:** On Wednesday, November 26<sup>th</sup>, we will celebrate our 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Literacy Day at Thomson School. Family members will be invited to come to school from 8:15-9:00 a.m. to read to their children. Details will follow in upcoming Thomson Paw Prints. We hope you will be able to make arrangements to come and join in the fun!

## **PTO UPDATES:**

**HOLIDAY FAIR VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED!** The Holiday Fair is a fun filled day for families that includes arts and crafts, games, food, raffles and shopping. The fair will be on November 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10-3. Several volunteers are needed to work at various stations at the fair. You can volunteer as little as an hour so please consider signing up. If you would like to volunteer to work the day of the fair, please contact Sherrie Cashman @ [sherriecash@verizon.net](mailto:sherriecash@verizon.net) or 978-688-9101.

**Calling all Bakers!** The Holiday fair is fast approaching and once again we will be having our famous bake sale table...if you would like to contribute home baked (or store baked) goodies to this year's fair, we would GREATLY appreciate it...all donations can be dropped off on Friday, November 21st between the hours of 8:00 - 4:00 pm....or you can bring them in on the day of the fair between 9:30 am - 10:00 am...a flyer with more information will be sent home so watch for it in your child's backpack! If you have any questions please call Kelley Plodzick at 978-682-8491 or email any questions to [gkplodzick@comcast.net](mailto:gkplodzick@comcast.net) We hope to see you all at the fair!

North Andover CAM is looking for volunteers to run the camera for town meetings/events. Volunteers will be trained on how to use the equipment and cameras. If interested, please contact Brian Fraser at [bfraser@northandovercam.org](mailto:bfraser@northandovercam.org) or 978-687-6570.

Do you have a question about the PTO agenda or what was covered at the last meeting? Do you have a topic you would like to discuss at our next meeting? If so, please email Laurie Burzlaff @ [laurie.burzlaff@verizon.net](mailto:laurie.burzlaff@verizon.net) or Sherrie Cashman @ [sherriecash@verizon.net](mailto:sherriecash@verizon.net). We value your input and strongly encourage all parents to contact any PTO board member with questions or concerns.

Did you know you can help raise money for Thomson School every time you shop at Target? Go to [www.target.com/tcoe](http://www.target.com/tcoe) and enroll Thomson as your school of choice.

**Go Green Tip of the Week: Bag the Bags** - With tree's shedding their leaves, the worst accessory seen on bare branches is a grocery store bag. Help save the landscape! Ditch those plastic grocery store bags for reusable totes. To help you remember to use them, fill your empty totes with those plastic bags and your bottle returns. Most grocery stores have a recycling bin in their stores just for bags. Plastic recycling #2 & 4 bags are accepted and include the produce bags (debris removed), and newspaper plastic sleeves as well as the grocery store bags.

**Academic Opportunities:** There will be no Chess Club this Wednesday Nov 12th. Chess Club will resume Wednesday Nov 19th.

## **AROUND TOWN:**

**GOT BASKETBALL?? The North Andover Crusaders Special Olympic Basketball Team will begin its third season on Tuesday, November 11th!** This Special Olympics Unified Sports Basketball Team includes players (ages 8-18) with intellectual disabilities playing along side similarly aged non-disabled teammates. Special Olympics Unified Sports brings together Special Olympic Athletes and Team Partners building friendship, character, and leadership and inspiring greatness in ALL who participate. **Come join the fun!** The team will practice Tuesday nights (excluding holiday weeks) starting November 11th through February 24th. Practices are held at the Joseph N. Hermann Youth Center. The Elementary School teams will practice from 5:30 to 6:30pm and the Middle and High School teams will practice from 6:45 to 7:45pm. **WE ARE ALSO LOOKING FOR ASSISTANT COACHES!!!** Volunteering for the Special Olympics is rewarding experience, provides a meaningful contribution to our community, and is a lot of fun!! Please contact Kathleen Keith at [northandovercrusaders@hughes.net](mailto:northandovercrusaders@hughes.net) for more information.

More...

**Our Veteran's Salute at Thomson is shaping up fine.** If your Cub Scout will participate, please make sure he arrives at Thomson IN UNIFORM next Wed, Nov 12 by 7:45 am, in time to be lined up by 8:00 am. As you know, the school is in the neighborhood, so traffic and parking are always difficult. The flag ceremony will be at 8:15 am, in front of the school in nice weather or in the gym if it is raining.