

# PAW PRINTS

November 17, 2008

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

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## UPCOMING EVENTS:

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 MR. GILLIGAN...

Salute To our Veterans! Our Salute to our Veterans Program last Wednesday was terrific. Our students did an outstanding job. WE ESPECIALLY WISH TO THANK ALL THOSE WHO HELPED MAKE THE MORNING HAPPEN: Sutton Hill Nursing and Retirement Center; Panera Bakery; Thomson PTO Members and Parent Volunteers; Diane Camire for Invitations; Laura Queenan for Kitchen Set Up; Girl Scouts and the Boy Scouts from Pack 82 in particular; Peter Vaillancourt and Family; All our local U. S. Military Representatives for their assistance, posters, and participation; The Shannon Twomey's Family for loaning the flag of Alex Jimenez; Donna Perez (Thomson Alumni) & the Lawrence Exchange Club; Rita Neal; and Conte-Dewhirst Funeral Homes for all donating flags; Thomson Staff for their support and encouragement; Donna Dragosits and Karen Kriz for their Musical and Artistic talents with our students; Our Friends and Neighbors in and around North Andover; State Representative David Torissi; AND MOST ESPECIALLY Our Thomson Teachers and Students who have embraced this event with much enthusiasm and especially *Kathy O'Neill, RN, our Thomson School Nurse*, who was inspired to make this celebration event possible.

**Field Update:** The playing field project at the Thomson School will be complete on Tuesday, November 19. Work was supposed to be finished on November 7<sup>th</sup> but we have experienced delays because of the rain. We are excited that we will have an awesome field for next year. We will be back outside in the AM and for recess next week.

**Thomson or Thompson?** Do you know who the school is named after? Thanks to Ted Tripp for the interesting article about Albert Thomson. Unraveling the Mystery of Thomson vs. Thompson, Ted Tripp. Most people in North Andover know that Private Albert Thomson was the town's first soldier killed in World War I. The War Monument in Patriots Memorial Park proudly lists his name and the Thomson School on Waverley Road was dedicated in his honor. One of the great controversies over the years has been how he spelled his name. Was it Thomson without the "p," or Thompson with the "p"? It is easy to be confused because many old documents and newspapers show Albert's name spelled both ways. There now appears to be a logical explanation for the dual spelling. Let's start with some facts. Albert was born on October 25, 1901 in Collinsville, a village in Dracut, to Thomas Thompson and Mary Goldsborough. Thus, there was a "p" in the Thompson family name. On June 10, 1922 when North Andover's World War I Memorial was dedicated, his name was cast in bronze as Albert Thompson. Also, the program for the dedication ceremony lists Mrs. Thomas Thompson as one of the two women who raised the banner showing the names of those who served and died in the war.

In 1924, the town opened a new elementary school on Railroad Ave. called the Albert Thompson School. All this would indicate that the family name was Thompson with a “p.” On the other hand, all of Albert’s military communication was spelled Thomson, without the “p.” This includes the original telegram bringing news of his death in battle from the acting Adjutant General of the Army to the address where he worked in Amesbury. In a personal letter dated April 17, 1919, Capt. Thomas P. Riley, 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry, wrote to Albert’s parents in North Andover explaining the details concerning how Albert was killed and spelled both Albert’s and his mother’s name as Thomson. Records from the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery in France, where Albert is buried, list him as Albert Thomson. These sources would indicate that the Army only knew him as Albert Thomson, without the “p.” Then there are the more confusing sources. Both the Lawrence Evening Tribune and the Lawrence Telegram newspapers, in front page stories on September 14, 1918, announced the war death of Albert Thomson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Thomson of 60 Railroad Ave., North Andover. A 1929 official document from Boston on Gold Star Mothers mentions both Albert and his parents and showing the last name as Thomson. Adding more mystery, the Albert Thompson elementary school dedicated in 1924 all of a sudden becomes the Albert Thomson School in the school superintendent’s annual reports to the town from 1928 onwards. Here is how I believe the story unfolds. We know that Albert was 15 years old when he was working at The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Co. in Amesbury in 1917. Since this would have been an almost impossible commute from North Andover for a 15-year-old boy, we have to assume that Albert was not living at home at the time. He was probably living in Amesbury, close to work. So, why did he leave home? Did he have trouble getting along with his six brothers and sisters? His parents? Maybe he was just adventurous and wanted to go out on his own. We also know that when Albert enlisted in the Army, he did not give the recruiter his North Andover address. That’s why the telegram announcing his death went to his place of work in Amesbury. Thus, it seems that he was trying to hide his family address from the Army. Could this be because he enlisted at 15 and didn’t want the Army contacting his parents to verify that he was at the minimum age of 18? Perhaps he felt that his parents didn’t support the war and he didn’t want them to know when he joined the Army. Whatever the case, Albert’s desire to keep the Army from finding out where his parents lived probably also led him to change his last name from Thompson to Thomson. This would obviously further hinder the ability of authorities to discover his family background. I believe this is what Albert intentionally did either shortly before or at the actual time he enlisted in the Army. If you believe this is what Albert decided to do, then everything else falls into place. The Army only knew him as Albert Thomson and everybody else back home knew him as Albert Thompson. The newspaper accounts in 1918 took the Thomson name from the telegram of his death and erroneously assumed the family name was spelled the same. The change in the name of the Thompson School to the Thomson School in 1928 could have been the result of efforts by a local veterans group or a family member who wanted the town to use Albert’s Army version of the name. There are still some other unresolved issues about Albert Thomson. The original telegram announcing his death and Capt. Riley’s 1919 letter both describe Thomson as killed on August 20, 1918. A document from 1929 and the overseas cemetery records indicate the date of death as August 21, 1918. At this late point in time there is probably no way to determine which is correct. Albert Thomson, or Albert Thompson, was an intriguing and adventurous young man who made a lasting impression on all of us in North Andover.

**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.

**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:**

### **THE HOLIDAY FAIR IS THIS SATURDAY FROM 10 - 3!**

Join us for a fun filled day with arts and crafts, games, a bake sale, decorating gingerbread man cookies, snacking on pizza and popcorn, painting ornaments with Fun 2 Paint, and shopping at the kid's store and from local crafters. The kid's store is being provided this year by Fun Services. 85% of the items are under \$5.00. It's a great way for the kids to do their own holiday shopping for parents, grandparents and siblings. All purchases will be wrapped in gift bags.

Raffle Tickets....Great Tip!!!! There will be lots of great raffles & baskets to win at the holiday fair this year...a great time-saving tip is to bring address labels with you so that you do not have write your name and phone number over and over again!! You just stick the label on your ticket, drop it in the bag and you are good to go!! Good luck and hope to see everyone at the fair on Saturday!!

Bake Sale Reminder... All goodies can be dropped off during the day on Friday (11/21) between the hours of 8 am – 4:00 pm or the morning of the fair between 9:30 – 10 am....any questions, please contact Kelley Plodzick at [gkplodzick@comcast.net](mailto:gkplodzick@comcast.net)

Holiday Fair Set-up We will be setting up for the holiday fair starting at 3:00 pm on Friday, November 21<sup>st</sup>....if you are available and would like to help out, please contact Sherrie Cashman at [sheriecash@verizon.net](mailto:sheriecash@verizon.net) or come meet us in the gym on that day!

Thank you to Alexandria Burzlaff, Carly Fraser and Sam Wright for the wonderful drawings for the holiday fair thank you cards! They were all so fantastic, we decided to use all three drawings for the cards. As a thank you for your hard work, you will each receive 3 free game tickets for the holiday fair.

**Save the Date!** On Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, Flourishes Gifts & Home Décor, (1015 Osgood Street) will donate 20% of every sale that is purchased on that day to the Thomson School. Flourishes have a unique selection of gifts for your home, baby and much more. Watch your child's backpack for more information.

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 @ [sheriecash@verizon.net](mailto:sheriecash@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

**THE GENEIVE ORDERS ARE IN AND READY TO BE PICKED UP.** Please pick up your orders after school Monday thru Thursday this week. Orders will NOT be going home with the children Orders must be picked up before Friday November 21. Thank you to everyone who participated this fundraiser was a great success!!!!!!

**Sunshine Math UPDATE:** Remember that every Monday the next Sunshine Math work sheet is posted on the web-site. This week is the third week in the program, with the answers for last week, week 2. Both Week 1 and 2 are still available. Please hand in those corrected worksheets! It's not too late to get started, so, log on to the web-site today and Good Luck!.

### **AROUND TOWN:**

The North Andover Booster Club has on-line registrations open for the following sports. For more information and to register please visit [www.eteamz.com/nabc](http://www.eteamz.com/nabc).

Basketball, Grades 5-8, open with \$20 late fee through 11/15

Basketball, Grades 2-4, 8/1 – 11/15

Wrestling, Grades 4-8, 9/1 – 10/31

Volleyball, Grades 5-8, 10/1 – 1/15

Softball, Grades 1-8 opens on 12/1 -2/28

Go Green Tip of the Week: Pack Up Your Peanuts. The high season for mailing packages begins! If you receive a box full of packing peanuts, bubble wrap or air pillows, reuse them to box up those holiday packages or take all those materials to the UPS stores for reuse. (Go Brown!) Our local UPS location (on 114 in Jasmine Plaza next to Stop & Shop) also accepts Styrofoam such as inserts from electronics & appliance packaging and clean Styrofoam trays from the grocery store. Styrofoam is not accepted by our town's single stream recycling