

BROWN PTO

BROWN BEAR REPORT

JANUARY 3, 2012 ISSUE

From the PTO Co-Presidents

Happy New Year and welcome back from winter vacation. Though the wintry weather may be keeping us indoors, there's lots of activity around Brown.

The school orchestra will be performing on the 26th, boys and girls basketball season has started, another Boston College basketball game is coming up, and rehearsals for the school musical are in full swing. If you need activities for after school, check out the Triple E program featuring: winter running, knitting, Model UN, and homework club. And mark your calendar for the school musical, "Bye, Bye, Birdie!" which will be staged on February 15 & 16th.

The Newton Public School and The Newton Partnership are hosting an "English Language Learner Resource Fair" on January 19th at Newton North. Visit our [website](#) for more information.

As always, we ask you to support the Brown community in whatever way you can by volunteering or donating. We also welcome any suggestions.

Beth Grandi, Tanya Lazar and Florin Luca
brownpto@brownpto.org

MUSIC COMMITTEE NEWS

Music Committee

Special thanks to all for your donations and support. One of our responsibilities is to fundraise for the school Music Department. So far we've purchased sheet music, a tuner, binders, instruments, as well as hosting post-concert receptions. We are hoping to raise funds to buy a much-needed spotlight (\$900) for performances, a cello (\$450) for the orchestra, and a baritone saxophone (\$1,800) for the band. You can help by making a donation by check (payable to the Brown PTO Music Fund), by cash (collected before/after concerts), or via [PayPal](#). The Committee and Music teachers thank you!

School Musical Committee Blog

We have launched a [blog](#) to keep parents and BYE, BYE, BIRDIE cast up-to-date! Subscribe/follow to get rehearsal reminders, forms, costume and cast members details.

Benjamin Brown Bear Raffle

Congratulations to raffle winner Lisa D'Ambrosio (mother of Harry Mayer)! Thank you to all of you who have taken part. The Raffle proceeds (\$610) will be going towards the purchases for the Music Departments.

CALENDAR

January

- 3 Back to School, 8:30 a.m.
- 16 MLK, Jr. Day, no school
- 26 Early Release, 11:30 a.m. dismissal
- 26 String-a-Rama, Brown Auditorium, 8:00 p.m.
- 29 Boston College Basketball Game (sold out)

February

- 15-16 School Musical, Brown Auditorium
- 20-24 Winter Vacation, no school

March

- 15 Winter Music Showcase, Brown Auditorium

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The next issue will be published on Tuesday, January 17. Please send all submissions to the [Editor](#) by Friday, January 13.

QUICK LINKS

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CREATIVE ARTS & SCIENCES NEWS

Potato Hill Poetry

On December 8 and 9 Creative Arts and Sciences sponsored the 7th grade poetry workshops featuring poet Andrew Green of Potato Hill Poetry. A former teacher, Mr. Green demonstrated the joy of language through poetry by reading a variety of rhyming and free verse poems. Students analyzed and discussed the poems realizing that the only limits to creating poetry are their vocabulary and imagination. Students wrote their own poems and later had the opportunity to work one-on-one with Mr. Green. Ask your children about the poems they wrote during their workshop.

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you!

Kudos to **Keith Spatz** and **Emily Williams** for coordinating tickets for the BC basketball games.

Thanks to **Marcy Navarro** for managing the printing of the flannel pants and **Sungmi Lee-Foster** for assisting with the sales.

Counselor's Corner

Q: When friends stop being friends, how do both sides move on?

A: This is a tough one, and it happens a lot. Most of the time the kids on both sides of the (former) friendship feel badly. Of course no one likes to feel "ditched", but very often the kid who has made new friends and is moving on feels guilty for leaving someone behind. Every situation is different, but here are a couple of tips that will help most kids.

The easy one to start with is the kid who is moving on to other friendships. As long as (s)he can be respectful to the former friend, allowing the kids to have an honest, direct conversation with each other should be encouraged. In many situations the kids are capable of handling the situations on their own with minimal parental support. Sixth graders and some seventh graders may need a little more guidance. Role playing how these conversations might go is a useful tool. Have your son/daughter role play the friend and you role play your child. In this way you're giving your child a script (s)he can use and it offers you the opportunity to respond to the worst case scenario responses your child will inevitably say back to you. Ask your child for feedback on what you said. If they tell you what you said is cheesy try to come up with something else: something that they can envision themselves saying. It may be helpful to then switch roles so your son/daughter can practice their side of the conversation.

More difficult to deal with is the child who feels as if (s)he is being left behind by a trusted friend. Unfortunately this is a normal part of adolescence, and the best thing to do is encourage your son/daughter to pursue activities and interests that (s)he likes. Join clubs, groups, sports, activities where a child can meet kids with similar interests. Kids are more resilient than we realize and they appreciate their independence. That does not mean that they will not be upset, and it may be hard to watch them struggle to navigate their complicated social worlds, but the freedom to do things for themselves is empowering, and parental involvement can, in some cases, increase feelings of embarrassment that a kid may have.

You can always call the counselors at Brown. Often we are successful at helping a student or uncovering what is really bothering him or her simply because we are not their parent.

Until next month...

Brown Middle School Counselors

Please email your questions/concerns to Betsy Woodman, Administrative Assistant for Student Services, betsy_woodman@newton.k12.ma.us. No names will be used in this column and we will keep all queries in strict confidence.

BROWN NEWS

Math Team Takes First!

Congratulations to the Brown Math team who took first place at their meet on December 8th! The other teams were: Bigelow, Day, Oak Hill, Belmont Chenery, Brookline Heath, and Jewish Community Day Schools.

Going into round 5 Brown was down by 12 points. The students tied it up at the end of round 5 and we came into the team round tied for first place. And then pulled ahead by 12 points! The kids were so excited this was the first time we took first place and it wasn't a shared first place.

Our next meet will be on January 12th.

Got extra coats?

Help children and families in need stay warm this winter, and maybe Brown wins, too!! Donate your gently used winter jackets and coats (good condition; no holes, permanent spots, broken zippers, etc.) for those without them, from now until **January 6th**. All sizes welcome, from baby to adult. Place coats in the designated box in the school entry. Your donation can help Brown win the CFK School Challenge! For details, please go to <http://www.antons.com/cfk> and check out the School Rewards program. Questions? Contact [Grace Lirio](#). Thanks!

FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE

Injury Accomodations

Has Your Child Had a Recent Orthopedic Injury, Concussion, or Surgery? If so, please send a copy of the physician's recommendations to my office. This enables me to plan what accomodations are needed to provide a safe environment while your child is at school.

Thanks for your help in this and as always if you have any questions feel free to call.

Sincerely,

Maureen Bisaga R.N.

617-559-6906

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEWS

Elements of a High Quality Reading Program for Children with Reading Disabilities

Please join NewtonPAC on **January 12, 2012** for an evening with Elaine Holden, reading specialist and Fellow of the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators. Presentation from **7 pm to 9 p.m.** (note earlier time!), networking and light refreshments begin at 6:45 pm in Room 210 of 100 Walnut St., Newtonville.

If you have questions you want to share with Elaine before the meeting, send them to Sandy and Jo-Louise at info@newtonpac.org.

SPED Review and Trend Report: Follow-up and Next Steps

David Fleishman and Judy Levin-Charns are hosting an evening meeting on **January 19 at 7:30 p.m.** for discussion of special education in Newton with NewtonPAC.

Also attending will be Dorsey Yearley, the consultant helping to implement the changes at Newton South HS and who will be working with staff to make changes to middle school sped programing.

The evening will provide an opportunity to share and discuss special education planning by NPS in light of the release of new information available in the sped review, the trends report, and the ongoing work at South and the middle schools by Dorsey Yearley and NPS staff.

Networking and light refreshments beginning at 7:15 pm. Room 210 at 100 Walnut Street, Newtonville.

Please plan to attend! Questions, contact Sandy and Jo-Louise at info@newtonpac.org.

Newton Parent Advisory Council (NewtonPAC) for Special Education meetings are free and open to all. For more information: www.newtonpac.org.

NEWTON SCHOOLS NEWS

ELL Resource Fair

(*Chinese, Hebrew, Korean, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish translations available*)

There will be a Resource Fair for families of English Language Learners or former ELLs on **Thursday, January 19th from 6:00-8:00 p.m.** in the Newton North cafeteria. Families are invited to learn about some of the different school and community resources in Newton. There will be information available on the following topics:

- understanding the college process with high school guidance counselors
- supporting your child in school, understanding the schools - conferences, report cards, testing etc.
- adult English classes
- summer camp and after school programs
- food and nutrition

The city social worker will answer questions and free flu shots from the Health Department will be available.

Childcare, dinner and interpreters will be provided in Chinese, Russian, Spanish and Korean.

Transportation available upon request. Please RSVP to your child's ESL teacher or to Dianna Kobayashi at 617-559-6045 or Dianna_Kobayashi@newton.k12.ma.us. Let us know if you need an interpreter in another language.

Inclement Weather: School Closings or Delayed Openings

In the event of inclement weather, Newton Public Schools may be closed or use a delayed opening of one or two hours. The bus company and crossing guards will know about any delay and will rearrange their schedules accordingly.

As soon as a decision has been made we will be calling the number(s) designated as your child's emergency number(s) on the Student Contact yellow sheets you received at the beginning of the school year. Please make sure your child's emergency information is kept up to date at all times.

Also, an announcement will be called in to the following radio stations and television channels before 6:00 a.m.: WBZ Radio 1030, WRKO Radio 680, TV Channels 4, 5, 7, 56, and Newton Cable TV.

Or, log on to: www3.newton.k12.ma.us or call (617) 559-9699 for a pre-recorded message. For more information read the full **NPS Inclement Weather Letter**.

SUPPORT BROWN

amazon.com

Brown PTO earned \$122 during the holiday season when families shopped using the Amazon link on our **PTO website**. Easy and you will not see anything different once you are on Amazon.com and your personal information is private.

Box Tops for Education

Please keep collecting those General Mills Box Tops. In December we received a payout of \$211.80 from General Mills! Send them in with your kids or drop them off in the main office the next time you're at Brown.



Magazine Subscriptions

Please order, renew or gift magazines through www.qsp.com school code 1091450, 40% of your order goes directly to Brown.



Annual Fund

Have you contributed to the **Annual Fund** yet? Thank you to all who have donated. Please consider donating to the school. Your donations go a long way to help support the students and the staff.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Highlands After School Program.

The Newton Highlands After-School Program, just for middle school children, has openings. Are you looking for after-school activities for your child during the cold winter months? HASP has terrific winter fun, with lots of cozy indoor activities, gym time and ice skating! SPACE IS LIMITED! For more information contact: Rochelle Acker at 617-999-4617 or highlandsafterschool@gmail.com or visit our website highlandsafterschool.org.

Earn \$\$\$ Shoveling Snow. Sign up on the City's [snow removal website](#) to be added to a list of snow shovelers for hire this winter. Or, do a good deed and volunteer to shovel for a low-income neighbor who is physically unable to shovel. Sign up forms for both paid and volunteer shovelers are in the middle of the page under "Can you help your neighbors shovel snow this winter?"

Newton South Recreation Complex. Located at the Newton South High School, the Newton South Recreation Complex offers a variety of sports and educational classes on Sundays starting January 8, 2012 through February 12, 2012. Sign up for Karate, Tennis, Fencing, Badminton, Bollywood and

Bhangra Dance, Engineering with Lego or a Babysitters Training Course. Online registration is available at www.activityreg.com. For more information go online to www.newtonma.gov/parks or contact Channon Ames at comes@newtonma.gov or at 617-796-1529.

Be a Winter Buddy: Join Newton at Home's New Winter Buddy Program! We've designed a new Winter Buddy Program to encourage connections between seniors and other community members when the snow and wind are swirling outside. Volunteering as a Winter Buddy will require minimal time commitment, but would give both buddies a sense of connection and satisfaction from helping others. If you would like more information, please contact Bonnie Katz at bkatzdesign@gmail.com or 617.244.0694. We are holding a Winter Buddy Information Session on **January 9 at 11:30am and January 19 at 2pm**. Please join us.

FREE Parenting Group Series: Navigating the Rocky Road of Adolescence. Join other parents of teens and a professional facilitator to explore the many changes that occur during adolescence, and how they affect relationships at home and school. Discuss relevant

topics such as promoting healthy choices, setting realistic limits and appropriate consequences; understanding when and how to negotiate; dealing with changes and crises (e.g., divorce); identifying risk factors for anxiety and depression; handling experimentation with sex, alcohol, drugs, and learning to "let go" while maintaining family connections. Led by Deborah Weinstock-Savoy, a licensed psychologist with a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, and over 20 years of professional experience working with families and educators. Meeting for four sessions from **7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Wednesdays (February 8, 15, 29, and March 7)** Location: The Freedman Center, 225 Nevada St., 02460 (Newton Cultural Center in Newtonville). Pre-registration required: <http://freedman.mspp.edu> or 617-244-INFO x 250.

Theatre Ink Proudly Presents CABARET TROUPE'S "CRAZYTOWN."

An evening of contemporary musical theatre. Directed by Anna Nemetz and Jon Paul Roby January 12 and 13, 2012 at 7:30PM in the Performing Arts Center Auditorium at Newton North. Tickets are \$7 each. Available on line at www.theatreink.net or at the door.

TUTORS, LESSONS, SPORTS, AND MORE

Tutor. My name is Marianne Marks, I live in Newton Upper Falls and have taught middle school in Newton for 25 years. Currently, I teach science at the Oak Hill Middle School, and have time in my schedule to tutor students in the areas of organization, writing, projects and homework completion. Please email me at mmarks8854@aol.com if you would like me follow up with you by phone to discuss putting a support program in place for your child.

Tutor. Former Brookline and Concord teacher, 25 years teaching experience (grades 1-12,) and certified Reading Specialist. Available to tutor students in elementary, middle, and high school-academic subjects, writing, study and organizational skills. SAT / ACT / ISEE / SSAT prep. Experienced with gifted / Special Needs students. Build skills and confidence. Excellent parent and professional references. Please contact me to discuss your child's needs. Cynthia Carpenter, cscarp@gmail.com, 978-952-8871.

Newton Community Ed classes for Middle Schoolers. Registration is open for Winter classes. For middle schoolers we have Lego Robotics, The Stockmarket Game, Fencing, Archery, and Babysitting. During both vacations we are offering our ever-popular Make a TV Show program at NewTV, and during February break, new this year, we are offering Advanced Domino Physics. We have family cooking classes and Saturday sports options for kids ages 2 and up. For information or to register, call 617-559-6999 or visit our [website](#).

TUTORS, LESSONS, SPORTS, AND MORE, CONTINUED

New Art Center February School Vacation Week Program. Grades 7-10. For teens who love art and want to move to the next level, our classes in Ceramics, Painting/Drawing, and Sculpture/Mixed Media, are taught by professional art educators who help teens develop and hone their skills. All skill levels are welcome. Tuition \$295 (4 days), siblings \$280. For more information or to register: www.newartcenter.org. Questions? Call 617-964-3424.

Flute And Saxophone Lessons. An experienced teacher (New England Conservatory faculty) teaches all levels. Come and explore music in a unique and professional environment. Jazz, classical, world music, improvisation and ear training. For further information and a free trial lesson please contact: **Amir Milstein**, or call 617-795-5923. 2012

Think Spring! Think Softball! Newton Girls Softball registration is underway for the 2012 spring season. This is a recreational league for over 500 Newton girls in grades 1-10. Players of all skill levels will have a fun and rewarding experience. Visit our website www.NewtonGirlsSoftball.org for more details, access to our on-line registration, and winter indoor clinic information. Register before January 31, 2012 to avoid a late fee. February 29, 2012 is the last date you can register with guaranteed placement.

Newton West Little League Spring 2012 Registration is Open! Newton West Little League (NWLL) runs baseball programs for children (boys and girls) in the Williams, Burr and Franklin school

districts for ages 4 through age 12 (as of April 30, 2012). The season runs from early April through the end of June. Please visit our website at www.newtonwestll.org for more information. Financial assistance is available if needed. Registration must be completed by February 24 to guarantee placement. If you need more information please send an email to info@newtonwestll.org.

Newton Youth Lacrosse spring registration is now open. The spring season begins in April and is now accepting registrations for 1st-8th graders. Practices are 2 nights per week with a game on Sundays. The season runs through June. With the growing popularity of this sport, we are expecting teams to fill very quickly. Get on and register today, and then forget about it till April. Registration information at <http://www.newtonlacrosse.com>. Also feel free to email Rich Claflin at Lochct@aol.com if the website does not answer all your questions.

Boston College Women's Soccer Junior Academy program. Join us for 8 one-hour clinics on Sunday afternoons: January 8, 22, 29, February 5, 12, 19, 26, and March 11. Girls ages 9-12. Coaches will be the BC Women's Soccer coaching staff and players. This is an opportunity for the younger female soccer player to improve her comfort level on the ball, increase skill development, and have competitive fun. For more information including registration contact (617) 552-0982 or bhattacn@bc.edu.

A Step Ahead Basketball. This Winter "A Step Ahead" is offering variety

of basketball opportunities boys and girls ages 7-14 in Newton. Our MLK day clinic on January 16th is always well attended. Don't miss out. For more information please visit www.asahoops.com or contact Coach Smith at 617-909-5990 / Coachb@asahoops.com. Partial scholarships available.

Middle School Yoga. Yoga is a great tool to help pre-teens and teenagers develop healthy relationships with their bodies, as well as to help them feel empowered, and manage the stress in their busy lives. Down Under Yoga's Christyn Schroeder will be teaching a session in Waban for kids ages 10-14 on Thursdays from 6:30-7:30 pm starting January 5, 2012. \$160 for 10 classes, January 5 through March 15, no class during the week of February vacation. Contact Didi von Deck at mvdand3@gmail.com or Christyn Schroeder at kids@downunderyoga.com for more information or to register.

The School of Rock Boston 2012 Rock & Roll Boot Camps. This year we are looking for guitarists, bassists, singers, drummers, and keyboardists for our one-week day camps in Feb, April, and June/July/August, which include songwriting, recording seminars, and a final concert at a real live rock venue. Ages 7-17 accepted. Camps run 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at our 120 Elm Street location in Watertown and are staffed by instructors from the Berklee College of Music. Please email Boston@schoolofrock.com or call 617-923-3434 to receive your information packet. Register by 4/1 and save \$100!

Community News, Vacation and Summer Program Information, and Classified listings for lessons, sports, and tutors are published for the benefit of the Brown Middle School community at the discretion of the editors. A voluntary contribution of \$25.00 would be much appreciated; the Brown PTO is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and your donation is tax-deductible. The Brown PTO does not guarantee the accuracy of information nor endorse the activities and/or organizations listed.

