

October 2010 Blanchard Bits

Blanchard Calendar

October

- 4 Working Session for School Committee. 7:00 p.m.
- 5 BSE PAC Meeting with David Cook. 7:00-9:00 p.m.
- 6 6th Grade Parents Night. 7:00 p.m.
- 7 Half Day. Noon dismissal. No lunch served.
- 11 Columbus Day. School Closed.
- 13 SEPAC Open House. 7:00 p.m.
- 14 School Committee Meeting. 7:30 p.m. Blanchard Library.
- 18 First Beginning Band Rehearsal.
- 20 6th Grade Ziti Supper.
- 20 Working Session for School Committee. 7:00 p.m.
- 21 Grants Application Deadline.
- 26 5th Grade Cape Cod Meeting. 6:30 p.m.
- 29 Pumpkin Walk. 6:30-8:30 p.m.

November

- 2 Professional Day. School Closed.
- 4 Drama Club Kick-off Meeting. 7:00 p.m.
- 10 School Committee Meeting. 7:30 p.m. Blanchard Library.
- 11 Veteran's Day. School Closed.
- 12 BINGO Night
- 17 SEPAC Meeting. 7:00 p.m.
- 18 Drama Auditions. 3:00 p.m.
- 22 School Council Meeting. 5:30 p.m.
- 24 Half Day. Noon dismissal. No lunch served.
- 25-26 Thanksgiving Recess. School Closed.
- 29 PTF Shopping & Social Event

Blanchard Updates

PTF Updates by: Jennifer Campbell

Thanks to the feedback we've received from all of you, the PTF has been making plans for a wonderful year. We appreciated the high turnout at the first PTF general meeting, as well as the thoughtful responses to the survey we sent out in late August.

PTF 2010-11 Goals

The PTF board has set the following goals for this school year:

Community outreach through presence at town (such as Agricultural Fair) and school events (Open Houses) to raise awareness of PTF.

Use technology to improve PTF communications (including our new [Facebook page](#)).

Continue to expand the enrichment programs supported.

Continued focus on high return and efficient fundraising.

Survey & Fundraising Plans

The most important feedback we received was about fundraising. Many people feel that they would prefer to support the PTF's events and enrichment programs by direct donation. In fact, 88% of respondents said that they would make a donation to the PTF this year! Along with Boxtops and our spring fundraiser, direct donations will be a large focus of the PTF's fundraising. Donation forms went out in backpack mail last week, and our [online donation form](#) is always available. Don't forget to check if your company has a matching gift program, and thanks for your financial support of the PTF! If you'd like more complete survey results, send me an e-mail at PTFboard@blanchardptf.org.

2010-11 Events and Volunteers

We have a tentative schedule of events for the year, including the upcoming Pumpkin Walk (10/29), Bingo Night (11/12), and Shopping & Social Event (11/29). Thanks to everyone who has volunteered for committees and events; throughout the year, when an event is coming up, please consider contacting the event co-chair to volunteer. We can always use more help!

Our big family fundraiser will be held in the Spring. We're still working out the details, and would love your input. We are also looking for chairs for this event, as well as for the Shopping & Social Event coming up soon. To volunteer or find out more information, send me an e-mail at PTFboard@blanchardptf.org

Shopping Social Event

Join the PTF for a pre-holiday shopping event at Littletowne Toys on Monday, November 29th. The PTF will be providing coffee and snacks from **9:00-11:00 a.m.**, and desserts from **6:00-8:00 p.m.** In addition to getting to mingle with other Blanchard parents and get some holiday shopping done, Lisa Hesch, store owner and Blanchard mom, will be donating **20%** of sales for the day to the PTF.

We are still looking for a chair for this event. Duties would include taking over the publicity, and arranging the two social hours. Contact Jennifer Campbell at PTFboard@BlanchardPTF.org if you're interested.

Instructional Technology Tips By: Peggy Harvey

Kid-Friendly Internet Searching

Is Google always the best way to search on the Internet? Students at Blanchard are learning that there are other options that can be safer, more appropriate, and more relevant for elementary school kids.. Here are some alternative search engines and search directories that I recommend for Blanchard students:

AskKids: www.askkids.com

This kid-version of Ask.com is designed exclusively for elementary school students. It has a fun but simple user interface, and is the one I primarily recommend for students doing research on the web. AskKid's search tool gives plenty of results, and is especially good for image searching. While Google filters cannot reliably prevent inappropriate images, this search engine only returns images that have been deemed safe for children.

KidsClick: www.kidsclick.org

Here's a terrific search directory created especially for kids by librarians. Users can either search using a keyword, or can search subjects by letter—or even by a Dewey Decimal number.

KidRex: www.kidrex.org

Perfect for primary grade students, KidRex uses a combination of Google's safe mode, and a selected database of filtered keywords, phrases and websites. In the event that a questionable website does get past the filters, KidRex provides a site removal request form.

GoGooligans: www.gogooligans.com

Similar to KidRex, this filtered search engine is recommended for older elementary school children and teens. It uses a database of filters in an effort to return only websites of educational value, and recently introduced a feature that allows searching in 38 different languages.

The Awesome Library: www.awesomelibrary.org

This directory of over 37,000 carefully selected child-safe and educational resources also allows searching in foreign languages. Also included is a "Homework Helper" feature, which directs students to educational web directories, such as InfoPlease, ThinkQuest, and Bartleby's.

Zoodles: www.zoodles.com

Here's a downloadable search tool that is perfect for children 8 years old and younger. This web browser provides pre-selected web-based activities for both fun and education. By providing information about your child, including learning ability and hearing or vision issues, Zoodles will suggest appropriate websites. Downloading and using Zoodles is 100% free; you can pay for the premium version if you want some additional features.

PTF Grants Committee Applications Deadline, October 21
By: Christine Smith

The deadline for the first cycle of PTF Grant Applications is **October 21, 2010**. Grant applications may be submitted for any educational purpose, such as enrichment activities in the classrooms, special equipment or supplies not funded by the school operating budget, or professional development. The PTF is particularly interested in projects that have a long-term impact, benefit a large number of students, and involve multiple classrooms, teachers or disciplines. Grant applications are welcome from teachers, parents, and all members of the community.

When writing your grant request, please submit eight copies of the [PTF Grant Application](#) and follow the [PTF Grant Checklist](#). The Application and Checklist can be found on the PTF website ([BlanchardPTF.org](#)) or on the PTF bulletin board outside the library. Eight copies of the completed application must be placed in the PTF mailbox in the school office by **3:00 p.m. on October 21, 2010**.

SEPAC News By: Leah Russell

Meet the new Special Education Leadership Team! SEPAC will be hosting our fall Open House on Wednesday, October 13th from 7–9 p.m. in the Cafeteria (please note date change as event was originally scheduled for October 5th). Join us in welcoming David Cook, Assistant Principal & Director of Pupil Services, Curtis Bates, Superintendent & Principal, and Robin Smirlock, Special Education staff liaison . You'll learn about new special ed regulations and implications for you, changes to Blanchard's programs and staffing models, and much more. Come listen to David share his perspective and approaches, ask questions and exchange ideas with staff and other parents. We look forward to seeing you.

The SEPAC Team welcomes Julie Harrington as our new Treasurer.

The PTF Pumpkin Walk By: Beth Bortree

Goblins, Ghost, and Witches, Oh My!! It's the Blanchard PTF Pumpkin Walk.

When: Friday, October 29th

Time: 6:30--8:30

Cost: \$2.00/child (\$5.00 maximum /family) AND a pumpkin

This will be a fun family friendly event that everyone will enjoy.

BoxTops 4 Education, By: Judy Kosakowski

The Fall/Winter Contest has begun! All classes that collect 1,000 or more BoxTops by **December 20, 2010** will be treated to an ice cream sundae party provided by the PTF BoxTop Committee.

Tips: Enter your name on the BoxTop website for our school, call all your friends, family and neighbors and ask them to save for you.

Bingo Night, Nov 12 By: Molly Wong and Marcia Russo

Save the date! BINGO NIGHT is happening on November 12th from 7:00 – 8:30pm, in the Blanchard Cafeteria! Come and bring the family for an evening of BINGO, complete with prizes and snacks. Doors open at 6:45pm. Bingo cards are \$2 per person and will be available at the door.

We still need volunteers to help run the event (taking tickets, helping with the snacks, prizes and clean up). If you are willing to help, please call Marcia Russo at 978-263-0450 or Molly Wong at 978-263-5302.

We look forward to seeing everyone there!

Roald Dahl's "The Witches" on Stage at A-B in October

PC, the student theater at ABRHS, opens it's 43rd season with "The Witches," a perfect scary-funny show for Halloween. The story involves a boy who accidentally encounters a secret meeting of witches while at a seaside hotel with his grandmother. Led by the Grand High Witch, they are planning to rid England of all children with a secret potion. Encouraged by his grandmother, the boy bravely makes his own plan to stop them.

"This play is based on a book by Roald Dahl, an author whose books have been read by nearly every child in the United States and Great Britain," said director Linda Potter. "It is very exciting to bring this story to life on stage."
(The show is recommended for students age 7 and above.)

The cast will present a sneak preview at Oktoberfest on Oct 2 in West Acton. Students are invited to stop by the PC table to take the Roald Dahl quiz and enter to win prizes.

Evening performances are Oct 22, 23, 29 & 30 at 7:30 pm (tickets \$12). The matinee is Sunday, Oct 24 at 3:00 pm (Tickets \$10). Tickets are on sale at MKTix.com and Roche Bros. The show is approximately 90 minutes long, including intermission. Seats are not reserved. Doors open 30 minutes before each show. For more information, email ABDrama@comcast.net.

Drama Program, By: Chris Brolin

A new school year has begun and the Drama program for 2010/2011 is starting to bloom. We have a director and producer, and are considering several musicals for the show. There will be an information meeting in early November for interested 5th and 6th graders, parents, and anyone else who wants to help. We are planning for two performances in April or May, with auditions in late November and rehearsals starting in December. At the information meeting we will go through the audition and rehearsal process, explain what commitment is necessary for students and parents, discuss the rules of using school facilities, and provide details of this year's performance. Come join us, or send me your drama questions at BlanchDrama@gmail.com.

Community News

Library Book Sale: November 19 and 20

The Friends of the Boxborough Library will hold its annual fall book sale in the meeting room of the Sargent Memorial Library, 427 Massachusetts Avenue, on Saturday, November 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. A Preview Sale for members will take place Friday, November 19 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. (Memberships will be available at the door). Proceeds from the sale of books will go toward additional library programs, speakers, and the purchase of museum passes.

Please support this sale by donating your gently used hardcovers, paperbacks and audiovisual items and attending this sale. Books will be accepted November 15, 16, 17 and 18th at the Library during regular library hours. Please no old text books, no magazines or no books in really poor condition.

Sargent Memorial Library Scheduling Local Artists

The Sargent Memorial Library in Boxborough is in the process of scheduling local artists to exhibit their work in the library meeting room. If you would like to be considered for the current year or in the future, please contact Maureen Strapko, Library Director at 978-263-4680 or mstrapko@cwmares.org.

A-B Cultural Council Presents Srishti, October 30

Srishti-The creation, an Indian dance group in collaboration with the Movement Center Performing group, an American Ballet group will be presenting "Rhythm of Life" a unique dance recital where Ballet meet Bharathanatyam, a south Indian dance form at the National Heritage Museum, 33, Marret Road, Lexington, MA- 02421-5703 on Saturday 30th October at 3:00pm. The dancers explore the process of creation, preservation, dissolution of nature and sustenance of happiness - interpreted using both traditional & movement based style of dancing to a smooth blend of carnatic and jazz music. Tickets can be purchased at www.cryboston.org

For more information please visit www.srishtithecreation.com or www.cryboston.org

Boxborough Museum Hours

The Boxborough Museum at 575 Middle Road will be open from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday October 10 and Sunday November 14. Admission is free, all are welcome and members of the Boxborough Historical Society will be on hand to discuss Boxborough's history and the exhibits. Free brochures for the Boxborough Town Center Walking Tour will be available. If anyone wishes to arrange a private tour for a small group at a different time please call John Fallon at 978-264-0069.

Apply for an Arts Grant from the A-B Cultural Council

The Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council is accepting applications for our Fiscal Year 2011 Grant Cycle. Individuals, non-profit groups, schools, libraries and religious organizations may apply for funding for arts projects. Grant application forms and guidelines are available at both Town Halls, all town libraries, or at www.actonboxboroughculturalcouncil.org or www.massculturalcouncil.org. Applications, mailed to **P.O. Box 2291, Acton, MA, 01720**, must be postmarked on or before **October 15, 2010**. A grant writing workshop is being planned. Please check our website for more information or visit our table at the West Acton Oktoberfest on October 2.

Author Visit@ the Library-Save the Date

Jenna Blum, author of the recently published book, *The Stormchasers*, will visit the Sargent Memorial Library in Boxborough on **Tuesday, October 26 at 7:00 p.m.** Jenna Blum proved herself a master storyteller with her debut novel, *Those Who Save Us*, which spent nearly two years on the New York Times bestseller list and was hailed by critics across the country. The Boston Globe called it "both vast and intimate in its reach." In her new novel, *The Stormchasers*, Blum once again examines how guilt and secrecy twists relationships when people's lives are devastated. Drawing on her personal experience with storm chasing to reveal the fascinating world of tornado chasing and storm chasers, Blum also pulls back the curtain on a unique and mysterious human relationship: the bond between twins. Jenna will discuss her books and the art of writing. Please call the library (978-263-4680) to reserve a book or purchase a copy of *The Stormchasers* for Jenna to sign.

Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council News

The deadline for applications for arts grants for 2011 is October 15th. Check our website (www.actonboxboroughculturalcouncil.org) for information and application forms.

A Dessert Cabaret celebrating the Fitzgerald piano (donated by John and Mary Fitzgerald, Grandparents of John, Robert & Edward Kennedy) will be held at the Acton Memorial Library on Saturday October 16th at 7:30 pm. Proceeds will benefit the Acton Memorial Library Foundation.

Don't miss the Longwood Opera's performance of family opera Hansel and Gretel by Engelbert Humperdink at the Acton Congregational Church on Friday October 22nd.

For more information about these and other Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council sponsored events, please go to our website – www.actonboxboroughculturalcouncil.org.

Check It Out @ the Sargent Memorial Library

The Sargent Memorial Library will be closed on Monday, October 11 in observance of Columbus Day.

3rd & 4th Grade Book Group

Join us for the first 3rd & 4th Grade Book Club on Wednesday, October 6th at 4:00 p.m. We will talk about popular books, favorite authors, and classic stories. The children will work together to decide what books they want to read and discuss. This book group is a great opportunity for children to share their love of reading! If you would like to sign-up for the book group, please call the Library at 978-263-4680 or email Miss Heather at hwilkins@cwmares.org. A snack will be provided.

Early Release Movie

On Thursday, October 7th at 1:00 p.m., come to the Boxborough Library and watch Jaden Smith in The Karate Kid. This feature film is rated PG. No sign up is required. Please bring a comfy pillow from home so you can enjoy the movie!

Halloween Story-time

On Monday, October 25th, children are invited to dress up in their Halloween costume for a special Halloween story-time. The fun begins at 10:45 a.m. After some spooky stories, children will make a ghost craft and enjoy a Halloween snack. No sign-up is required.

Halloween Cookie Decorating

On Wednesday, October 27th at 4:00 p.m., make some fun Halloween goodies at the Library. Sign-up is required so we have enough treats, so please call the Library at 978-263-4680 or email Miss Heather at hwilkins@cwmares.org.

These programs are made possible through the generosity of the Friends of the Boxborough Library!

Blanchard Bits is published by the Blanchard PTF and circulated to all Blanchard families. To submit an article or calendar item, please email Aga Dresser at scottandaga@gmail.com or call 978-264-9709. The submission deadline for the November 2010 Blanchard Bits is **Friday, October 29, 2010.**