

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

December 2008

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ANC News

NOTES FROM THE NOV. 19 MEETING

Agassiz Baldwin Children's Programs Update

Jacy Edelman, School Age Director, presented a photo-filled update on ABC's school programs: Sacramento St. Preschool, Agassiz Afterschool, and Outback Summer Program. Below is a summary of her remarks.

Enrollment

Ms. Edelman told the Council that enrollment is up in the programs for 2008. Preschool, in particular, following a successful Open House on October 17, is at capacity with high interest from families for the 2009/10 year.

Parent Survey

Ms. Edelman highlighted the findings of a survey sent to families as part of a strategic process to improve the school programs. Many families desired access to specialized arts instruction, organized sports, and clubs focused on reading,

music, art, science, and dance. The Afterschool is now offering an "all-in-one" program that includes teachers specializing in music, dance, and visual arts. This refreshed focus has attracted numerous new families.

Goals

The following 2007/08 programmatic goals have been met:

- Upgraded teacher arts credentials
- Upgraded Site Director's position: 1-5 and Early Education Site Director are now full-time, salaried positions
- Added five part-time specialists; students can either participate with specialists in the program or sign up to take paid lessons (dance and piano are currently offered)

Goals for 2008/09 include:

- Reevaluate and reaffirm shared goals and vision of quality as a children's program, including working with Agenda for Children to create an action plan based on self-assessment
- Train teachers and staff to communicate

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



DEC. 17 - 7:30 PM

Baldwin School Cafeteria
28 Sacramento Street
(Press buzzer for entry)

AGENDA

- Review of community's response to survey about Lesley development in neighborhood with **Willie Bloomstein**
- View map of "**The City Formerly Known as Cambridge**" created by performance group **The Institute for Infinitely Small Things**

- message and values
- Professional development: Partnerships with Harvard Achievement Support Initiative (HASI), Boys and Girls Clubs (pen pals), and Museum of Fine Arts

Outback

This past summer's Outback Program found success with two new features: arts-infused curriculum and weekly themes. Outback students enjoyed the teaching talents of professional visual artists, dance instructors, and a drama teacher. They had the opportunity to explore a range of themes, including a week of activities featured around "Outback Olympics" to coincide with the Olympics in Beijing, "Recycling Week," and "Pirates and Yetis."

Porter Square's Friendly Neighborhood Bookseller

"The real bookie," stated Jane Dawson, co-owner of Porter Square Books, "Is someone who likes to come into the store, touch the books, and talk to a staff that actually reads."

Porter Square Books, operating in Porter Square for four years, prides itself on offering a breadth of titles and is staffed by a collection of confirmed book enthusiasts. The store regularly schedules author visits, readings, a Sunday knitting/yarn craft group, and other unique opportunities, such as this December's collaboration with the Cambridge Public Library that encourages patrons to donate new books to children living in transitional lodgings in Cambridge.

Fred Meyer, Realtor

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agassizcambridge.com

Ms. Dawson told the Council, "When we initially opened the store, one of our goals was to create a strong connection with the community. It's people like you who provide our substance."

Among numerous other gift options at Porter Books, holiday shoppers can find American Booksellers Association (ABA) gift cards for use at any participating independent bookseller. Not sure where the closest independent bookseller to your gift recipient is? Visit the website www.portersquarebooks.com to try out the store locator (click on the "IndieBound" link), and learn more about goings-on at the shop while you're there.

Agassiz Survey about Lesley Development at Porter Square

Agassiz resident Willie Bloomstein, following multiple Council discussions and meetings with Lesley over the past several months, developed a community survey to query Agassiz and Neighborhood Nine neighbors about specific issues of concern related to Lesley University's proposed expansion in Porter Square. Lesley proposes to relocate the Art Institute of Boston (AIB) from Boston to a new building at the corner of Mass. Ave. and Roseland St.

"Our goal is to get at least 100 responses to this survey so we can get a general feeling as to what concerns neighbors most about Lesley's proposed Porter Square development," Mr. Bloomstein told the Council. He plans to present the compiled results of the survey to the community at the December 17 ANC meeting.

For more details on Lesley development in Porter Square and the Agassiz neighborhood, please review the "Notes" section in *The Whistler* newsletter at www.agassiz.org/TheWhistlerNewsletter.asp. May 2008, September 2008, October 2008, and November 2008 issues all feature information on this topic.

Community members are also welcome to learn more on Lesley University's website at: www.lesley.edu/portersquare.

Harvard Redesigns Fire Command Center

Several months ago, a group of Agassiz residents approached Harvard University about the Fire Command Center located on the grounds of the new Northwest Science Building. The small brick structure, which houses the egress for the underground parking garage and other necessary safety elements, was built as a stand-alone structure after the Northwest Science Building was re-oriented on its site (turned on its axis) in response to resident requests for more open space along Hammond St. When the NW Science building was re-oriented, the functions in the Fire Command Center, originally located inside the building, ended up outside of it.

Residents inquired about removing the fire command center or making it less obvious. While the University cannot remove the building, Harvard agreed to replace the façade with a new design.

Tom Lucey, Director of Community Relations at Harvard, explained, "The Fire Command Center needs to remain where it is to meet important safety codes. However, we have re-designed it to better compliment the Skidmore, Owens and Merrill designed Northwest Science Building. We've tried to make the new structure more transparent."

Resident Willie Bloomstein told the Council, "Harvard has agreed to redesign the building and has worked with us amicably. The new design uses glass for transparency, is representa-

tive of what we asked for, and we think it is much better than the current brick facade."

Discussion ensued where various residents shared their thoughts about the re-design and wondered if more could be done to mitigate the impact of the structure. It was agreed that the community would get back to Harvard with a coordinated response.

Lead an ANC Meeting

The Council seeks volunteers to chair some ANC meetings. In particular, someone is needed for February's meeting (Wednesday, February 25), as Stephen Diamond will not be available to chair. Interested? Please contact Phoebe Sinclair at psinclair@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287 x10.

ABC Board to Update Agency Bylaws

Stephen Diamond explained that the ABC Board plans to update the agency's bylaws, written in 1985, to better reflect the current goals and character of the agency. Mr. Diamond suggested forming a committee of Board members and community members to facilitate this process. Interested Council members should contact him.

ABC Community

AGASSIZ SNOW REMOVAL PROGRAM CANCELED

ABC has canceled the snow removal program for residents over the age of 50 for the 2008/09 winter season. We thank residents who took part in our pilot program for the past few years, and apologize for any inconvenience the cancellation may cause.



Residents still interested in securing a snow removal service are welcome to contact the service provider we worked with last year, Socelvic Company. Additionally, some Cambridge residents who are elderly or disabled

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may be eligible for snow removal assistance from the city. To learn more, see below:

Socelvic Company

215 Brighton Ave. Suite #202
Allston, MA 02134
(617) 787-1223
socelviccompany@aol.com

City's Snow Exemption Program

Cambridge Council on Aging
(617) 349-6220 (voice)
(617) 349-6050 (TTY)
www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks/services/snow.html.

37TH ANNUAL THANKSGIVING POTLUCK DINNER A SUCCESS!

ABC extends our thanks to this year's volunteer chefs, turkey carvers, Agassiz Afterschool's young artists who created the signs and follow-the-turkeys, and all who donated a dish and contributed good company and conversation. The 37th Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner was a great success, in no small part due to all who helped out and attended.

A special thanks goes out to Pemberton Farms of 2225 Mass. Ave. for their cider donation, and Ricky's Flower Market of Union Square in Somerville for contributing the mini gourds that became our table centerpieces.

We look forward to seeing everyone's smiling faces and sampling delicious home-cooked dishes at next year's annual event.



Lose a Dish?

Did you leave behind a serving dish or spoon at this year's Thanksgiving Potluck? View the photo below to see if you recognize your long-lost bowl or utensil. Unclaimed items will be donated to the Afterschool and Preschool programs. Thanks for looking!



DONATE A COUCH

ABC is seeking a "gently used" couch to replace worn furniture in our Community Room located in the basement of Harvard University's North Hall building on Mass. Ave. As the room is used by weekly infant/toddler playgroups, we need a couch sturdy enough to withstand frequent use. Please send digital photos or inquiries to Phoebe Sinclair at



psinclair@agassiz.org or call (617) 349-6287 x 10.

LOCAL BAND

In last month's *Whistler* newsletter, we printed a photo of a band performing at a block party on Prentiss Street. The band has been identified as "The Artifacts," though we were unable to confirm if it includes the young guitarist and tambourine players you see in front.



Agassiz Afterschool Programs

KIDS ONLY HOLIDAY SALE 2008

Kids, grab your shopping list and enlist the help of Agassiz Afterschool and ABC staff to purchase fun and inexpensive gifts for your family and friends!

The sale runs from Wednesday, December 10 through Friday, December 19 and will be held in the Sacramento St. gallery.

ABC extends a special thank you to Joie de Vivre of 1792 Mass. Ave, Greenward of 1776 Mass. Ave., and Tags Hardware of Porter Square, for their continued, valuable, and much appreciated support of this event.



SACRAMENTO ST. PRESCHOOL UPDATE

Prepared by Priscilla Browne, Lead Teacher/Preschool Director

November was a busy month in preschool. The children really enjoyed learning about bears and hibernation. Some highlights of the month include: painting a cave and rocks, having bears "hibernate" inside our baking, and counting teddy grahams (then eating them)! In November, the children also enjoyed stories by my favorite author Mo Willems, *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* and others.

This December the preschool children will be learning and talking about shapes. Activities we have planned include: shape collages, baking shape cookies, and making shapes using shaving cream.

READ PICKLES

Did you know that the Agassiz Afterschool publishes a monthly newsletter, written by the students and staff? The newsletters are PDF files that can be downloaded from our website at www.agassiz.org/PicklesNewsletter.asp.



DONATE MATERIALS TO AFTERSCHOOL CONSTRUCTION CLUB

Agassiz Afterschool is searching for donations for the Afterschool Construction Club. Contact 1-5 Site Director Alice Vogler at avogler@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287.

- Mat board
- Cardboard tubes

- Architecture modeling items (tagboard)

City Wide

CLEARING SIDEWALK SNOW AND ICE IS THE NEIGHBORLY THING TO DO...

Prepared by Cambridge Department of Public Works

We all have a shared responsibility for keeping our community safe and accessible during winter weather. For you, your neighbors, people with strollers or using wheelchairs, and the many people in Cambridge who walk, please do your part. It's the law.

Cambridge Ordinance requires that all property owners:

- Remove snow from all sidewalks next to their property or business within 12 hours after snow stops falling in the daytime, and before 1 PM when the snow has fallen during the night.
- Make the path wide enough for someone using wheelchair, walker or stroller (at least 3 feet, preferably 4 feet.)
- If you are on a corner, don't forget to shovel the side-street sidewalk and to clear ramps at crosswalks.
- Remove or melt all ice within 6 hours of the time the ice forms.
- Stock up on ice melter before a storm.
- Use ice melter with calcium chloride (CaCl₂), which is the best choice for the environment and only a small amount is required to melt ice. Potassium chloride (KCl) is okay, too.
- Avoid rock salt (NaCl or sodium chlo-

ride), which kills plants and trees.

- Do not use sand. It doesn't help pedestrians; but it makes hard ice more slippery. It gets into street drains and is expensive to clean up in the spring.
- Remember that, for people on foot, ice can be worse than snow. It can cause dangerous falls. You are as responsible for ice as you are for snow.

The fine for failing to comply with the City's sidewalk clearance ordinances is \$50 a day each day that you don't comply. Even if you aren't around, it is your responsibility to ensure someone clears sidewalks and ramps next to your property.

You can report the address of unshoveled or icy sidewalks using our online form at:

www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks/services/snow/complaint.aspx

GIVE EXPERIENCES INSTEAD OF STUFF THIS HOLIDAY

Prepared by Cambridge Recycling

Reducing waste is especially important during the holiday season. Americans throw away 25 percent more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day than during any other time of the year. This year consider these thoughtful alternatives:

- tickets to a film, concert, play, or game
- a gift certificate for dinner, massage, museum, or fitness
- rechargeable batteries
- donate to a charity in the name of a family member or friend
- use the comics as gift wrap.

ASHLEY BRYAN AT CPL

Ashley Bryan, award-winning illustrator and author, returns to Cambridge for Family Night. Mr. Bryan has won three Coretta Scott King Awards, received the Lifetime Achievement award from the Society of Illustrators, and was named a 2008 Literary Lion by the New York



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Public Library. His passionate and joyful presentations have delighted audiences throughout the country. *Let It Shine: Three Favorite Spirituals* and *Beautiful Blackbird* are among his many books.

The event is free but registration is required. Ages 6 and up. Pizza will be served.

What: Family Night with Ashley Bryan
When: Thursday, December 11th at 6:30 PM
Where: Fletcher-Maynard Academy
225 Windsor Street, Cambridge

Contact the library at (617) 349-4409 or TTY (617) 349-4421. Sponsored by the Friends of the Cambridge Public Library and the Fletcher-Maynard Academy.

CANDLELIGHT MUSICAL SERVICE

Please join us for a Christmas Eve. Candlelight Musical Service with a Prelude of Carols and Seasonal Music Quartet with organ and piano.



Presenting: Lorna Jan Norris, soprano; Emily Romney, mezzo soprano; Kenneth Harmon, tenor; Athan Mantalos, baritone; and Daniel Lamoureux on organ & piano. All are welcome. Admission is free.

Where: Church of the New Jerusalem (Swedenborg Chapel), 50 Quincy St. at Kirkland St, Cambridge
When: Wednesday, December 24, 2008 at 4:45 PM

For more information, contact: (617) 864-4552.

ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE GOSPEL CHOIR CONCERT

Lesley University's UNITY Gospel Choir with Linda Brown-San Martin, presents "Anything's Possible" on December 6, 2008. Admission is free and light refreshments will be served. This event is sponsored by the Division of Student

Life & Academic Development.

When: December 6, 2008, 7:00 PM
Where: Prospect Hall, 1803 Mass. Ave., Cambridge

For more information, contact Dr. Katherine Barone, UNITY Coordinator at Lesley University at (617) 349-8159 or kbarone@lesley.edu

DESIGN HIVE

Design Hive, an urban street market and collective retail experience, has opened house in the Baldwin School (28 Sacramento St.) on Saturdays from 10 AM to 5 PM. This free event features rotating designers every week and will continue through December 20, 2008.

Enjoy the live DJ and sample wares from 50+ vendors selling one-of-a-kind, handmade items:

- * clothing (modern and vintage)
- * handbags and accessories
- * jewelry
- * housewares
- * ceramics, prints, and paper goods
- * and much more!

To learn more, visit:
www.designhivemarket.com.

Grow Your Business

A D V E R T I S E

With a web and hardcopy circulation of approximately 2,000, *The Whistler* newsletter is a great vehicle for getting the word out about your local business or event.

- * **Ads start at \$50 per month for business card size**
- * **Scan your business card, or let us design your ad**

More info: contact Phoebe Sinclair at psinclair@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287 x10

Community Calendar

December 2008

Wednesday, December 10	3:00 - 6:00 PM	Kids Only Holiday Sale 2008 begins and runs through Friday, December 19
Wednesday, December 10	6:00 - 7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St, 2nd Floor Public welcome
Wednesday, December 17	7:30 - 9:00 PM	ANC Monthly Meeting (see page 1 for agenda) Baldwin School Cafeteria, 28 Sacramento St. All are welcome
Sunday, December 21		First day of winter
Monday, December 22		Hanukkah begins at sundown
Wednesday, December 24		ABC School Programs and Office closed through Friday, December 26
Wednesday, December 31		News Years Eve, ABC school programs closed

The Whistler is published monthly September - June by the Agassiz Baldwin Community, distribution 2,000. Call (617) 349-6287 to receive by mail or email. The newsletter is also posted each month online at www.agassiz.org. Items of interest to the neighborhood may be submitted for consideration no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication date.

THE WHISTLER DECEMBER 2008



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DO NOT FORWARD