



The Hemel Hempstead School

News

12 December 2008

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HeadLines

Probably you all have your favourite Christmas songs and certainly we are spoilt for choice this Christmas with so many vying for top spot in the December chart. A recent poll put Wham's 'Last Christmas' at the pinnacle of all time festive hits. When I was 10, one was able to buy three singles for a pound and the first '45' I purchased to capitalise on such a bargain was the immortal 'Lonely Pup in a Christmas Shop' by Adam Faith. Perhaps not so immortal or memorable as I thought! I remember my parents being of the fixed and immovable opinion that nothing was ever going to supercede Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas' and some would still agree, although the song that always encapsulates Christmas for me is Judy Garland in 'Meet Me in St Louis' exhorting us to 'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas.'

Whatever your own preferred seasonal soundtrack, it takes a great deal to better the voice of a young child or children singing sweet carols in a nativity play or a school carol service. Some of my happiest memories are of watching my nephew and niece in their school Christmas shows of yesteryear or my friend's son portraying a Christmas pudding very movingly a couple of years ago. Yes, you remember the pudding in the stable. It's up there with the lobster in the nativity in 'Love Actually.'

The next week holds the delight of our annual Carol Service at St John's Church where the school's long relationship with the parish is renewed and we present a very different programme of music and words to those heard in the much acclaimed Christmas Concert last Friday. I hope that many of you will be able to share the service with us and reflect on the good gifts we have received throughout the year, as well as the hope instilled within us by meditating on the story of Jesus' birth in its humble surroundings. So many messages, so many resonances for us in the turbulent times in which we live.

A famous 'New Yorker' cartoon depicts a high level board meeting. The managing director speaks: 'Season's Greetings sounds OK to me, but let's run it past the legal department.' We shouldn't be apologetic about marking advent and celebrating Christmas in a school such as ours but neither should we forget the Christmas lessons which can be the most relevant in schools: charity in its broadest sense, remembering those less fortunate than ourselves and giving being more important than receiving.

It's a strange, potentially cold, unwelcoming world we inhabit in this latter part of 2008. I write on a day when the old familiar of the high street, Woolworths, seems about to 'go under' and many thousands will lose their jobs on a day when in another part of the world, an autocrat has allowed his own people to die unnecessarily of eminently preventable disease. I write in a year when, elsewhere in the world, a new leader said: 'It's been a long time coming, but ...change has come to America' what will the future hold for us? We live in more uncertain times than when I wrote to you last Christmas, but the story remains simple and clear and true as far as I am concerned. If we can welcome in the Christchild, or what it stands for, in whatever way is appropriate to our own faith and beliefs, then we have staked our claim on a life of hope and change. Our young people need to be inspired by such a message which can help them achieve their ambitions for themselves and their world.

Sandra Samwell, Headteacher

HEADTEACHER'S COMMENDATION

for Service to the School
Rebecca Turner 8C

PTA News

Summer Fair

The event has been arranged for Saturday May 16th. If you would like to run your own stall, or know someone who would, please get in touch. We have lots of things planned already including Hemel's Got Talent, which Miss Samwell will be hosting. Also our Sports Leaders are putting together a tournament for our linked Primary schools' Year 6 students.

Next meeting is on Tuesday 20th January 2009 at 7pm in the Library.

Judith Stallworthy, Chair HHSA (01442 393266 or mobile 07749 727350), email s.stallworthy@sky.com

Dates for Your Diary

Blue Week

- 15th – 18th Dec** Year 11 Mock Exams in Class
- 16th Dec** Carol Service, St John's Church, Boxmoor, 7 pm
- 18th Dec** Speech Day, 7.30 pm – school finishes at 1.25 pm for most students (see Gold Letter 86)
- 19th Dec** Mistletoe Day
Last day of term, school finishes at 1.20 pm (see Gold Letter 86)

Last two days of term

Arrangements for the last two days of term have been detailed in Gold Letter 86. End of school details are:

Thursday 18th December – school finishes 1.25 pm

Friday 19th December – School finishes 1.20 pm

On 18th December there will be **NO** food in the canteen at break and Christmas lunch will be served at lunchtime to those who have pre-ordered.

On 19th December the canteen **WILL NOT** be serving food at break or lunch.

BOVINGDON BUS ARRANGEMENTS

Speech Day and End of Term

Buses will pick up at the normal time on Thursday 18th December. Students wishing to catch an early bus must go to the bus station.

Both 850 bus services will pick up at **1.30 pm** on Friday 19th December.



arts colleges

Music Department News

Congratulations to Bridget Philpott 10P who gained a distinction in her Grade 6 Organ exam last week.

I would like to wish the very best of luck to all of our students who are taking their instrumental exams next week.

Mrs D Bailey, Director of Music

Christmas Concert – Friday 5th December

Concerts that are packed with joyously challenging and entertaining musicianship must be savoured. It was fitting that the ‘new’ arrangement of the hall allowed performers and audience to share the diverse treats on offer.

Selecting highlights would be invidious as all of the pieces performed sparkled in their own specific way. Perhaps my best memory is of the way in which all of the players and singers, regardless of experience or musical ability, listened and supported each other to give great performances that transcended the notes on the page.

Each teacher in the Music Department should be proud of their students, as the young people should be grateful for the expert tuition that they receive.

Regular members of the audience will also be impressed by the casual efficiency of the stage crew, lighting crew, caterers and front of house personnel. Few schools can enjoy the large number of students and adults who give of their time so willingly to ensure that the event is a success.

Every concert has its own character; to me, this will be remembered for the innovation, enthusiasm and understated professionalism of Mrs Debbie Bailey. Christmas celebrations started with this affirmation of the skills of our students and staff.

Thank you all for such a splendid evening!

Mr P Stanbridge

‘Body Worlds’ Exhibition

On 3rd December the Year 10 BTEC Sport group went on a trip to the O2 Arena, to see an exhibition called ‘Body Worlds’. In this exhibition there were different types of plastinated bodies on show (including animals). These were graphically intriguing and the whole group enjoyed seeing them.

We learnt that our skin is the heaviest organ in the body. We learnt in more depth how muscles move and attach to the skeleton, which is what we have been focussing on in our lessons. We also found out the effects of smoking on the lungs and were able to see the difference between a healthy lung and a diseased lung.

We had an enjoyable day and are putting what we learnt into practice in our lessons.

Year 10 BTEC Sport group

Sickness/absence line

Please will all parents contact us daily if your child is sick, going to be late in due to a medical appointment, or is absent for any other reason. Please call our sickness/absence line on 01442 390103 by 9am if possible.

SPORT



FIXTURES

Sat 13th Dec Yrs 7 –10 Football v Cavendish

Mon 15th Dec 1st XI District Cup Soccer quarter-final v Adeyfield (H) 2 – 3.45 pm

Tues 16th Dec Yr 7 Basketball v Bridgewater (H) 3.30 – 5.30pm

Weds 17th Dec Yr 7 County Cup Soccer v John Warner (A) 2 pm

RESULTS

U16 English Schools Basketball v Biddenham won 46-39

U14 County League Basketball v Longdean won 39-16

U16 County League Basketball v Longdean won 47-41

1st XI Soccer v Dr Challoners drew 1-1

Year 7 Nutella 5-a-side Football (see below)

Team One

v Tring won 2-1

v Astley Cooper won 4-0

Semi-final v Longdean lost 4-2

3rd/4th Play-off v Kings Langley won 1-0

Team Two

v JFK drew 1-1

v Kings Langley lost 3-1

Attendance at Extra-Curricular Activities

A reminder that members of staff voluntarily organise and attend extra-curricular activities. If a pupil is unable to attend a practice or fixture for any reason, it is polite for them to provide the teacher involved with a note explaining their absence in advance. It was disappointing to see that a large number of pupils failed to do this prior to District Cross-Country last Saturday. The Senior Girls, Year 9 Girls and Year 9 Boys would have each won their team competitions with just one more runner. Well done to all pupils who took part; results to follow next week.

Mr P Bryson, PE Department

MFL Stars of the Month for November

Year 7 French: Paige Foster 7C, Wilfred Stepto 7N, Ethan Mills 7L, Sophie Vivanti 7A, Lauren Nicell 7F.

Year 8 French: Olivia Church 8A, Megan McKenzie 8F, Pippa Gobby 8A, Ollie Cox 8P, Zoe Dennis 8L, Bushra Tariq 8P.

Year 8 French: Adam Zambardi 8C, Ben Kaye 8P, Paige Baah 8F, Courtney Rowe 8N, Emily Crawley 8F, Kristian Fomes 8L.

Year 9 French: Sophie Hatchett 9L, Jess Sear 9A, Emily Cook 9P, Stephanie Foster 9L, Lewis Kent 9N, Casey Lambie 9L.

Year 9 German: Adam Reed 9F, Emily Barton 9A, Olivia Scott 9L, Julia Openshaw 9C, Ross Hawkins 9A.

Year 10 French: Sophie Clayson 10L, Anna Maduro 10L, Fay Breed 10N.

Year 10 German: Hannah Gulley 10L, Chris Veall 10N.

Year 11 French: Dan Crisci 11N, Rovena Nagy 11L.

Year 11 German: Jade Gurney 11F, Matthew Reynolds 11A.

Year 12 French: Michael McLaughlin 12N.

Year 12 German: Rosie Prestedge 12N, Katie Gillingham 12N.

Year 12 Spanish: Ashley Petchey 12C.

Year 13 French: Tom Lewisohn 13A.

Year 13 German: Nicole Thoma 12F.

Gold Letters issued recently:

Letter 80 Year 10 West Herts College

Letter 81 Year 11 West Herts College

Letter 88 Year 13 Interim Report

All Gold Letters can be viewed on our website: www.hhs.herts.sch.uk

School policies can be viewed on our website under ‘about HHS/School Policies’. If you require a hard copy of any of the policies please get in touch with the School Office.

S J Samwell