



Happenings on the Hill

2015 Winter Newsletter

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Newsletter Editor: *Carrie Burton*

Letter from the Ryerson PTO Executive Board

Dear Ryerson Families,

Happy 2015! The year 2014 closed with your generous giving; from the Ryerson children who collected monies for UNICEF on Halloween, to the Ryerson families who gave to the Food Drive benefiting the Madison Community Services Food Pantry, and to the Toy Drive benefiting Madison families and the Yale-New Haven Hospital Children's Toy Chest. The year 2015 has opened with Ryerson parents -- and former Ryerson students -- sharing their time and talent during Winter Workshops ranging from computers to crafts to Kindergarten science.

This school year, we continue our commitment to the arts and sciences at Ryerson. We are proud to involve our children in the performing arts as they take the stage in our first ever Talent Show on February 27th! Our cultural arts programs with the Daniel Hand High School show choir VIBE, a capella group ENCORE, and Jazz Band have shown our children that they -- like these talented high school students in our community -- can aspire to be singers, dancers, and musicians. Our 4th graders have engaged their artistic skills by participating in a cover design contest for the Ryerson School Yearbook (this newsletter includes the winning cover and artist selected by the Ryerson student body). Beginning in February, High Touch-High Tech is coming to Ryerson, bringing science into the classrooms for each grade. In March, we have initiated Science Exploration, a new after-school program with Cool-ology for children in 1st through 4th grades. Our children then have the opportunity to become real scientists as they brainstorm and conduct their own science experiments to display at our 4th annual Science Fair on April 14th, in conjunction with *Ryerson Loves Science Week* during the week of April 13th.

All of these PTO activities, and others, could not happen without your dedication and support. To continue PTO support of the arts and sciences at Ryerson, please join us at *Give to Grow MMXV* on March 20th at Bill Miller's Castle in Branford. Tickets go on sale soon, and the best way to support *Give to Grow MMXV* is to come to the event!

In the following pages, you can learn more about the PTO activities at Ryerson, as well as other events of interest to the Ryerson community. The Ryerson PTO Semi-Annual Financial Report details some of our incoming funds from membership dues and fundraisers, and outgoing expenses for activities. If you would like to volunteer or have any questions, please contact any Ryerson PTO Executive Board member. You can find each member's contact information, as well as our newsletters and Ryerson PTO meeting minutes, on the [Ryerson PTO website](#).

Best wishes,

Ryerson PTO Executive Board

Carol Ahlijanian

Karen Burns

Diane Infantine-Vyce

Linda Maniatty

Karin Staschke

Nancy Tong



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Ongoing and Upcoming Events



Cultural Arts

The Ryerson PTO has planned the following cultural arts programs for 2015:

- **January 30th: Daniel Hand High School Jazz Band, led by band director John Gage**
The Daniel Hand High School Jazz Band is an auditioned ensemble comprised of 9th-12th graders in the DHHS bands. The Jazz Band plays everything from 1920's swing to Latin jazz to progressive rock. This year's repertoire includes music by some of the most famous composers in jazz -- Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Gordon Goodwin, John Coltrane, Cannonball Adderly, and Dave Brubeck. The Jazz Band also plays traditional New Orleans "second line" swing, a vocal chart made popular by Michael Bubl , as well as the music of Steely Dan and Earth Wind and Fire.
- **February 23rd: Lion Dance by Dance China NY**
It's the Chinese New Year (4713) on February 19th, and Ryerson celebrates the Year of the Goat with Dance China NY! Founded in 1973 in New York City's Chinatown, Dance China NY includes internationally-renowned artists from performance stages and academies throughout mainland China, Taiwan, and the U.S.
- **Spring: TBD**

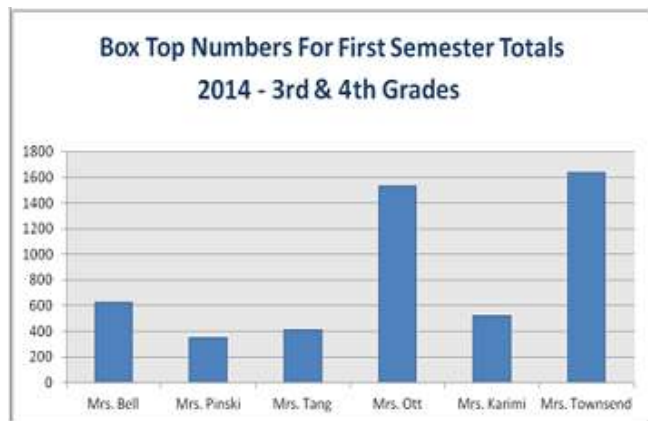
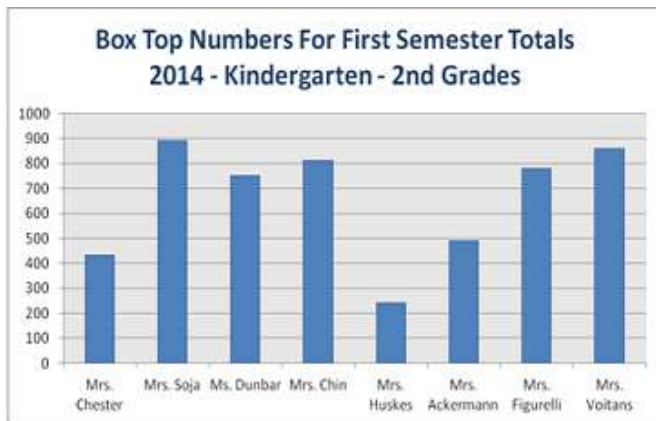
For details on any of these events, please contact Nancy Tong at tong_nancy@hotmail.com.



Box Tops for Education

Thanks to all your efforts, Box Tops had an amazing first half of the school year! For collecting the most Box Tops, the following classes won ice cream parties sponsored by the Ryerson PTO:

- Grades K-2: **Mrs. Soja**
- Grades 3-4: **Mrs. Townsend**



With over 10,000 Box Tops collected so far, we have raised over \$1,000 for the Ryerson PTO! Keep clipping and sending in those Box Tops and together, let's meet (or exceed) our \$2,000 goal of Box Tops collections at Ryerson!



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Box Tops would not be successful without all of our dedicated volunteers, led by chair Janice Wolf. A special thank you goes to The Box Top Team -- Colleen Anderson, Susann Boroczky, Heather Crawford, Kathy McEwen, June Nuzzi, Kerri-Anne Moore, Beth O'Keefe, Gita Sullivan, and Beth Pantano -- for all the picking-up, sorting, and cutting of all those 10,000 plus Box Tops! If you have questions, or to volunteer to be a part of this incredible team, please feel free to contact Janice Wolf at janiceadam1@yahoo.com.



School Store

The Ryerson School Store is open for business from 8:30a.m. to 9a.m. in the Ryerson lobby on the following Fridays:

- February 20
- April 24
- May 15
- June 5

Thank you to chair MaryBeth Hughes for managing, stocking, and running the School Store. A big thanks goes to Lisa Brown, of Taylor Brown Illustration and Design, for designing the new Ryerson T-shirts, which have been big sellers this year. Thanks also go to all the volunteers who have helped out, including Suzanne Owen, Kristi Sweitzer, Meghan McGuire, and, especially, the student helpers Nora Hughes, Noelle Soja, Elise Owen, Will McGuire, and Madeline St. Pierre. For any questions, or to help volunteer for the School Store, please contact MaryBeth Hughes at neehughes0720@yahoo.com.



February 27: Talent Show

On Friday, February 27th, at 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., come to the first ever Ryerson Talent Show! Does your child dance, sing, play an instrument, juggle, or tell a joke? Then this is the event your child has been waiting for! Participation forms have been sent home via backpack express. As the Talent Show has a limited amount of time slots, acts will be chosen on a first come, first serve basis from submitted participation forms. All acts need to be less than two minutes and all participants must attend at least one rehearsal, on Tuesday, February 24th, at 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. and/or Wednesday, February 25th, at 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. In order to have this event run smoothly, we are looking for volunteers to help out with rehearsals and on the evening of the show. For questions or to volunteer, please contact chair Karen Burns at tucker_monkey@hotmail.com.



March 2-25: Science Exploration

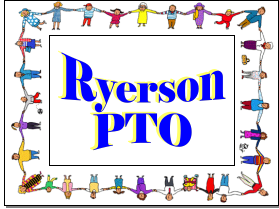
Come wonder, explore, and discover with Science Exploration, a new after-school program with Cool-ology! Children will learn all about the scientific method and engineering design process while investigating cool topics, including chemistry, physics, and engineering. The four-session program will run on Mondays and Wednesdays for children in grades 1 through 4, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., as follows:

- Grades 3-4: Mondays, March 2, 9, 16, and 23
- Grades 1-2: Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18, and 25

The fee will be \$50 for the program (\$40 for each sibling). Look for the flyer to come home via backpack express in February. If you have any questions, please contact chair Linda Maniatty at seaestalc@aol.com.



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March 16: PTO Meeting -- Presentation by Superintendent Thomas R. Scarice

Please join us at the Ryerson PTO meeting on Monday, March 16th, at 7 p.m. at Ryerson. Mr. Thomas R. Scarice, Superintendent of Madison Public Schools, will make a presentation regarding the proposed 2015-2016 educational budget. This will be a joint meeting with parents from Jeffrey and Island Avenue elementary schools.



March 20: Give to Grow MMXV

On Friday, March 20th, please join us at *Give to Grow MMXV*, our 3rd annual fundraiser to support the arts and sciences at Ryerson. This is a night out for us to come together, strengthening our community and having fun! *Give to Grow MMXV* will be held from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. at [Bill Miller's Castle](#) in Branford. The ticket price per person is \$45. The deadline for ticket orders is March 11th. There will be sit-down dinner and jazz music, as well as a live auction, silent bidding, and take-a-chance prizes. We are still seeking volunteers to help make this event a success. If you would like to volunteer, or have any questions regarding *Give to Grow MMXV*, please contact chairs Nancy Tong at tong_nancy@hotmail.com, Kristen Waterman at kristinadubbs@sbcglobal.net or Beth Ackerman at pbandjeli6@cox.net. We hope to see you there!

SQUARE 1 ART March: Square 1 Art

With Square 1 Art, your child's artwork will be memorialized on mugs, mobile device cases, and more! Children will create their artwork in art class with Mrs. Smith. Look for free stickers and the Square 1 Art catalog featuring your child's artwork in March. You can place your order for products adorned with your child's artwork, to arrive in time for Mother's Day. For any questions regarding Square 1 Art, please contact chair Beth Pantano at elizabeth.flanagan@yale.edu.



April 13-17: 4th Annual Science Fair and Ryerson Loves Science Week

The 4th Annual Science Fair and *Ryerson Loves Science Week* will take place the week of April 13th, with the Science Fair to be held on the evening of Tuesday, April 14th. The 2015 Science Week kicks off with two High Touch-High Tech assemblies:

- **Extreme Matter** for grades K-2: Demonstrating how matter behaves at extremes of temperature and pressure using liquid nitrogen and dry ice.
- **Making Waves** for grades 3-4: Exploring the properties of light and sound.

During Science Week, children will engage in exciting hands-on activities with the goals of exploring the wonders of science, nurturing their scientific curiosity, and developing a lifelong love of science. Children also will have the opportunity to design and carry out their own independent science experiments, then display and share their results at the Science Fair. More information about finding a science experiment and creating a poster for the Science Fair will be coming home with your child in March. If you



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would like to volunteer, or have any questions regarding the Science Fair or *Ryerson Loves Science Week*, please contact chairs Karin Staschke at knt714@aol.com or Nancy Tong at tong_nancy@hotmail.com.

In addition, the Ryerson PTO is proud to continue our support of science at Ryerson. This year, the Ryerson PTO is funding one High Touch-High Tech science program for each grade level. With High Touch-High Tech, children learn science by doing hands-on experiments. Ask your child about the science going on in the classroom during the High Touch-High Tech program:

- On February 9th, the 4th grade will participate in *Newton in a Nutshell*.
- On February 19th, the 1st grade will participate in *Force of Habit*.
- On February 20th, the 3rd grade will participate in *Mixed Up Matter*.
- In April 20th, the kindergarteners will participate in *ChemFun*.
- On a date to be determined, the 2nd grade will participate in *What's the Matter*.



May 6: Ryerson Staff Appreciation Breakfast

The traditional Staff Appreciation Breakfast will be held on May 6th. If you are interested in obtaining gift donations for staff and/or providing goodies for the breakfast, please contact Hospitality chair Beth O'Keefe at elderok@hotmail.com. In addition, volunteers will be needed to cover each classroom while teachers are attending the breakfast. If you would like to help cover your child's classroom, please be on the lookout for your room parents' request for coverage as the breakfast draws nearer.



May 30: Fun Fair

Hear ye, hear ye! The Ryerson PTO will host its annual Fun Fair on Saturday, May 30th, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the Ryerson school grounds. The fair includes games, prizes, a cake walk, food, music, take-a-chance baskets, mystery bags, and much more. In the upcoming months, look for additional information about the Fun Fair and opportunities to contribute to its success. It is a great time for "children" of all ages, so please save the date! If you have any questions, please contact chairs Beth Ackerman at pbandjeli6@cox.net or Kristin Waterman at kristinadubbs@sbcglobal.net.



June 10: Field Day

Once again, the students of Ryerson will take to the outdoors on June 10th (rain date of June 11th) for Field Day! Our terrific physical education teachers are busily planning on this year's Field Day; thank you, Mrs. Jarvis and Mrs. Daub! We would love to have parents join us as volunteers. If you signed up to volunteer for Field Day in the beginning of the school year, you will be contacted as the event gets closer. Keep a look out for a flyer later this year with all the details. If you have any questions regarding Field Day, or wish to volunteer, please contact chairs Linda Maniatty at seaestalc@aol.com or Lei Jin at leij101@yahoo.com. Hope to see you there!



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Past Events

Food Drive



November-December: Food Drive

The Food Drive was a huge success! Through your generosity, over the five-week collection period, **418 pounds** of food and drink were donated to the Madison Community Services Food Pantry. With the focus on kid-friendly food items, including juice boxes, snacks and cereal, all of the children really seemed to take pride in being involved with giving and helping their neighbors in need. Thank you to Rebecca Bixon for chairing the Food Drive, as well as to all the members of the Ryerson community who donated. It means so much to our neighbors who are in need of a little helping hand. For information of how you can help the Madison Community Services Food Pantry all year long, please contact Rebecca Bixon at rbixon@yahoo.com.



December: Ryerson Staff Holiday Luncheon

On December 18th, the Ryerson PTO hosted the traditional Ryerson Staff Holiday Luncheon. Thank you to Beth O'Keefe, chair of the Hospitality Committee, for organizing and overseeing this lovely event. Thank you also to the following volunteers for donating goodies to make this annual event for the staff so special: Kim Anderson, Amy Kobelia, Beth Ackerman, Kerri-Ann Moore, Ari Potter, Nancy Tong, Karin Staschke, Pam Schneider, Linda Maniatty, Meg Sawyer and Stacy Bungiro.



January: Winter Workshops

This year 127 students participated in Winter Workshops -- making this year the biggest Winter Workshops ever! Thank you to the following instructors, aides, and "floaters" who devoted their time and talent to making Winter Workshops such an enriching experience for our children -- we couldn't have done it without you!

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Acting/Theater | Emily Webster
Francoise Roth
Violet Johnson - Polson student | Sports | Kristen Waterman
Trish Black
Nicole Tanner
Evan Waterman - Brown student
Matthew Waterman - Brown student
Joey Cozza- Brown student |
| Baking | Amanda Zawacki
Christina Morris | Yoga | Bee Gordon
Jen Santi-Montero
Cathy Miller |
| Computers | Deb Huskes
Shannon Timme
Martha McCrann
Lori Hendershot | Kindergarten Science | Truc Diel
Janice Wolf
Sarah Shelton |
| Games | Jeanne Allen
Rebecca Olson
Jacob Allen - Polson student | Floaters | Pam Schneider
Beth Pantano
Rebecca Bixon
Kayla Howard - Polson student |
| Legos | Amy Johnson
Amie Freeman
Rebecca Bixon | | |
| Let's Get Crafty | Diane Infantine-Vyce
Beth O'Keefe
Maisy Cutler - Hand student
Emily Lyons - Hand student
Brigid O'Keefe - Brown student | | |



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Our heartfelt thanks go to chair Maxine Howard for her leadership and vision in leading and growing Winter Workshops. Maxine has chaired Winter Workshops for the past 3 years, and we will miss Maxine and the Howard family as Maya, her 4th grade daughter, leaves Ryerson next year.

Announcements



Ryerson PTO Semi-Annual Financial Report

This Semi-Annual Financial Report as of January 23, 2015 reflects some of the activities of the Ryerson PTO to date, and the associated incoming funds and/or outgoing expenses.

NET INCOME

Book Fair	\$ 2,432
Box Tops	622
Intramurals	290
Membership Dues	3,480
School Store	146
Winter Workshop	2,008

NET EXPENSE

Accounting	\$ (325)
Bulletin Board	(11)
CT Loves to Read	(450)
Cultural Arts	(1,900)
Fun Fair	(317)
Gardens	(26)
Give to Grow	(700)
Hospitality and Events	(359)
Teacher Classroom Startup	(700)



Board of Education News

The Madison Board of Education approved the Board of Education 2015-2016 budget, with a 2.49% increase, on January 20, 2015. Parents wanting their voice to be heard regarding the 2015-2016 education budget can attend and participate in any of following pivotal meetings scheduled as follows:

- **February 4th, 7:30 p.m., at Town Campus** -- Board of Education budget presentation to Board of Selectman and Board of Finance
- **February 17th, 7:30 p.m., at Polson School auditorium** -- Public hearing, including Board of Education budget presentation
- **April 21st, 7:30 p.m., at Polson School auditorium** -- Budget public hearing

([Click here](#) for the complete Town of Madison 2015-2016 Budget Workshop Calendar). The foregoing is intended to inform Ryerson parents regarding the status of the 2015-2016 education budget and is in no way an endorsement by the Ryerson PTO as to what or whether any action be taken in respect thereof.

GARDENING Gardening Committee

Mother nature with a human touch

In November, Garden Committee volunteer Ed Pantano obtained a generous donation of flowering bulbs from the Madison Flower Shop and Garden Center at 376 Durham Road. The bulbs were planted in the front entrance garden and, this spring, we look



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forward to pops of color greeting our students and staff. If you would like to volunteer with the Garden Committee, please contact chair Sheri Romblad at theromblads@comcast.net.



2014-2015 Ryerson School Yearbook

Yearbook volunteers, led by chairs Karen Burns and Diane Infantine-Vyce, have been busily capturing those memorable moments this school year for the 2014-2015 Ryerson School Yearbook. Please help us put together the best yearbook yet! If you've got great photos of your children at school, a club or other school-oriented event, we'd like to see them! Look for the yearbook order form coming soon in your child's backpack. Yearbooks will be \$20 each, with a new discount this year for additional copies purchased by the same family (just \$15 per additional copy!)

The yearbook will be full color, soft cover and . . . also NEW this year, *a student designed cover!* The Ryerson PTO sponsored a Yearbook Cover Contest amongst the 4th graders, and the finalists were:

- **Isabel Stella** and **Eddie Zhou** from Mrs. Karimi's class
- **Cali Anselmo** and **Lauren Bettuchi** from Mrs. Ott's class
- **Janie Akers** and **Grace Barrett** from Mrs. Townsend's class

The students have voted and the **Yearbook Cover Contest Winner is Janie Akers!** Congratulations, Janie!



April 1: *Race to Nowhere* Screening and Community Conversation

On April 1st, at 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., the Madison Public Schools, in collaboration with Madison Youth and Family Services, M.A.D.E. in Madison, and The Scranton Memorial Library, will host a screening of *Race to Nowhere*, followed by a community conversation. *Race to Nowhere* is a film that calls us to challenge the current thinking about how we prepare our children for success. To be held at the Polson School auditorium, the event is free but advance registration is required; to register, [click here](#). Come view this thought-provoking film and be a part of the community conversation, as the issues raised by *Race to Nowhere* may be ones faced by our children in the future or even now in elementary school. However, due to the subject nature of this film, *this event is not intended for elementary school age or young children.*



May 16: Relay For Life

On May 16th, from noon to midnight at Walsh Intermediate School in Branford, come join Relay For Life, a global fundraising event for the American Cancer Society to support cancer research and patient/caregiver support programs. Last year, Ryerson's faculty team raised over \$5,000 for this important cause. We are looking for parent volunteers who would be interested in helping create a Ryerson Parent/Student team. If you are interested, please contact Christine Ackermann at ackermann@madison.k12.ct.us for more information. Together, we can make a difference!

If you have anything you would like to include in our upcoming spring newsletter, please email information and photos to Carrie Burton at carrieburton@aol.com.