

# Newsletter

Lansdowne Middle School and the Greater Victoria School District wish to recognize and acknowledge the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories we live, we learn, and we do our work.



**Lansdowne  
Middle  
School**

1765 Lansdowne Road, Victoria, BC, V8P 1A7 Phone: 250-598-3336

December 3, 2013

## Calendar Dates



### December 9

- LMPA Meeting

### December 10, 11 & 12

- Scholastic Book Fair

### December 11 & 12

- Winter Celebration of Music  
9:00 am & 7:00pm  
School Gym

### December 13

- PAC Gift Emporium
- Report Cards go home

### December 18

- PAC Meeting 7:00 pm  
School Library

### December 20

- Winter Spirit Day
- Last day of school before  
Winter Break

### January 6

- Students return to school

### January 13

- LMPA Meeting

### January 14

- Newsletters on website

### January 22

- PAC Meeting 7:00 pm  
School Library

## In the Library

*"We have an obligation to read aloud to our children. To read them things they enjoy. To read to them stories we are already tired of. To do the voices, to make it interesting, and not to stop reading to them just because they learn to read to themselves."*  
– Neil Gaiman

Happy December Lansdowne Community!

As we are heading into the holiday season, when we all get a much needed break to spend quality time with our families and children, I wanted to remind you that reading to your children is not only a great way of modeling the importance of reading for pleasure, but it is also a wonderful bonding experience for the whole family. I see it daily...kids **love** books. Books allow the doors to their imaginations to be swung wide open - nothing else can do this quite like a great book.

It really is a gift to be read a story aloud - and it's free! ☺ Reading for pleasure (fiction or non-fiction) is also the most effective way to build reading skills, intelligence, empathy, vocabulary and overall comprehension skills. The results cross all curriculums – reading for pleasure will help children in all subject areas and more importantly, instill in them a love of literature and create lifelong learners.

When a child finds that one book they love, it changes everything – a reluctant reader can become a keen reader in an instant. In the library, I make it my mission to seek out a wide variety of books and get them into our students' hands. Every person can love reading for pleasure – it's well worth the little bit of effort to get them there. Although libraries are hugely important, the most powerful place for children to learn is at home. Encourage them to read whatever interests them, make frequent trips the public or school library, create opportunities to read (turning off the TV, phone, computer), read stories aloud often and most importantly, let them see you enjoying a book!

Happy reading,

*Sarah McLaughlin*, Teacher Librarian

*"Do not discourage children from reading because you feel they are reading the wrong thing. Fiction you do not like is a route to other books you may prefer. And not everyone has the same taste as you."*

– Neil Gaiman

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## *Lansdowne Middle School*

# ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

*A miscellany of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and events taking place at LMS.  
Please encourage your children to get involved! For more information contact the staff member listed.*

Event/Activity	Timeframe	Contact (Coordinators, Sponsors, Coaches, etc)
Student Leadership Me to We	Regular meetings Wednesday at 8:00 a.m. Numerous opportunities to participate	Melinda, Leblond & Gagne
Eco Action Club	Monday / Thursday at recess and as needed	Du Plessis
Backpack Club	Ongoing activities during the year	Albany & du Plessis
Caught You & Project X tickets	Ongoing throughout the school year	All Staff
Games Group (including chess)	Tuesday at lunch recess	Javorski & du Plessis
Jazz Band	Tuesday after school / Thursday lunch	Rawson
Concert Choir	Monday after school / Wednesday lunch	Georgesesen
R & B Band and Vocal Jazz	Tuesday lunch / Thursday after school	Rawson & Georgesesen
Seaquarium	Ongoing	Kilpatrick
Hip-Hop Dance Club	Wednesdays at lunch recess	D'Angelo
Basketball	Mid-October to mid-December.	Coaches needed. Please see Mr. Stevenson
Swimming	Mid-October to early March	Stevenson, Edwards
Volleyball	End of January to early March	
Youth Creating Inclusion/Connectedness	Friday at lunch	du Plessis
Homework Club	In the Library (all students welcome), 2:50 to 3:30 Monday to Thursday	Dusseault
Learning Over Lunch (LOL)	In the Library at Lunch recess Mon to Fri	Logan

### INCLEMENT WEATHER - SCHOOL CLOSURE INFORMATION

*We are now approaching the season when inclement weather may affect the safety and welfare of students. In particular, snowy weather has the potential to cause school closure or some School District 61 services to be suspended.*

*During inclement weather, information about schools will be updated continuously on the Greater Victoria School District 61 website at <http://www.sd61.bc.ca/>.*

*Within the Greater Victoria School District, the Superintendent of Schools, John Gaipman, will provide media outlets with information about the status of our facilities and transportation services by 6:30 a.m.*



## In **the** Library (cont'd from page 1)

If you haven't had a chance yet, bookmark and check out the new library website:

<http://sarahmtait.wix.com/lansdownelibrary>

Neil Gaiman quotations from an interview with The Guardian, October 15, 2013.

To read full article click on link:

<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/oct/15/neil-gaiman-future-libraries-reading-daydreaming>

### Great book ideas for **December**:

- **Book Advent:** Find, buy or loan (from a library) 25 picture books or short stories. Wrap them separately and have your children unwrap 1 book a day until Christmas. Reading it with them or to them makes for a great holiday tradition. Perhaps saving your favourite story until Christmas day.
- Create a **Christmas Tree made of Books**. Put lights on it. Voila! A cost effective and creative Christmas decoration!
- **Giving or donating books** you have finished reading to a friend for Christmas, a family in need or to a donation centre.



## News From the . . . Lansdowne PAC



8<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Gift Emporium

### Items Needed !!



Now is the time to send **gently used** items to stock up for this year's event! The Emporium is a great opportunity for students to buy gifts for their loved ones without breaking the bank. The Gift Emporium will be held during school hours on **Friday December 13<sup>th</sup>**, with all items for sale from 25 cents to \$2.

Include any items that would make nice gifts for siblings, parents, grandparents and friends. Books, CD's, toys, games, jewelry, small household items are a few ideas to get you thinking. **We also need all the saved gift bags, gift wrapping and gift cards we can get!** Please bring your "regifts" to the office as soon as possible so we have plenty of time to sort before this fun event. Please nothing dirty or broken. Think of items you donate as gifts you might like to receive!

Volunteers are still needed for sorting, pricing  
and on the day of the sale!



Questions? Email Ruth Swinton at [reswinton@telus.net](mailto:reswinton@telus.net)

# *News From the . . .*

## **Lansdowne PAC** (cont'd)

### **Highlights from PAC Meeting, Wednesday, November 27<sup>th</sup>**

1. A brief presentation to the group was made by two PAC members and Ken Andrews, who attended (along with other Lansdowne parents, teachers, and students) the educational presentation in early November by John Abbott, on 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. Mr. Abbott is a prominent educator from the UK with many innovative ideas on education. Highlights from this conference were the importance of early learning in children and “how” the brain learns, with less of an emphasis on instructing students on “what” to learn. It was also noted that the new BC Curriculum provides a great deal more flexibility and emphasis on higher order thinking and communication skills as well as personal & social responsibility, supporting the vision articulated by Mr. Abbott.
2. PAC has spoken with the traffic planner for the Municipality of Saanich about our concerns and ideas for the stretch of Lansdowne Road adjacent to the school – including the concerns about the speed limit and bus stop safety as well as ideas we have for a cycle path. PAC representatives are arranging for a meeting with city engineers and police to further look at the concerns and options. Stay tuned... more updates to come!

***Next PAC meeting: Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm in the school library.***

### **Lansdowne's Annual PAC Contribution Drive**

Thank you to those who have already donated to Lansdowne's Annual PAC Contribution Drive. For those who have not yet donated, contribution forms are available in the school office. **Any and all contributions are gratefully accepted. Tax receipts will be issued for any donation of \$20 or more.**

Your financial contribution supports PAC projects such as class field trips, special guest presentations, and the SafeTeen program. This year, we will also continue our work to improve the school's outdoor playground facilities.

### **Vancouver Island Parent Conference**

The VCPAC's annual Vancouver Island Parent Conference is coming up on February 1, 2014. Featured speakers include Dr. Gordon Neufeld, Alvin Law and Darren Laur. This is always an excellent event, and sells out each year. You can visit this site for more details:

<http://www.vipc.ca/>

Each school is provided two free tickets for this conference. In addition, the Lansdowne PAC has some limited funds to help parents attend such events. Tickets are \$75, including lunch. If you are interested in requesting a free ticket or financial assistance to attend, please contact the PAC prior to its December 18 meeting at

[lansdowne.pac@vcpac.ca](mailto:lansdowne.pac@vcpac.ca)

# LMPA

Our Winter Concerts will take place in the gym on December 11 & 12 at 7 PM.

We will be holding a 50/50 draw, a bake sale and will have Fernwood Coffee & Fairway Gift Certificates for Purchase.

Hope to see you there!



The Scholastic ***Book Fair*** is coming back to LMS this December for 3 days, and will be taking place on these concert nights before and during intermission. Please consider this great opportunity to purchase holiday gifts that promote reading and support literacy. Our PAC contributes all proceeds from the Book Fair to the Lansdowne library to further its collection.



Thank you to the PAC for helping organize and run this event.

**Book Fair Dates:**

**December 10<sup>th</sup>:** 11:00am - 3:30pm - in the Library  
**December 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>** 9:00am - 3:00pm - in the Library.  
6:30pm - 8:30pm - in the main entrance foyer in conjunction with music concerts



## "A TOONIE AN INCH" COMING IN JANUARY!

In January, we will once again give students a chance to cut their teacher's (or principal's) tie!

So parents, if you have any ties lying around at home, please bring them into the school office for this fun and fundraising event to support the **United Way**.

All TOONIES raised on this day will be a part of our campaign to support the **UNITED WAY!**





# The Great Lansdowne Christmas Sleepover

Starts: Friday December 13<sup>th</sup> at 8 p.m.  
 Ends: Saturday December 14<sup>th</sup> at 8 a.m.



BRING YOUR PJS, SLEEPING BAG, PILLOW, AND FOAMY TO SLEEP ON (OPTIONAL)



**Tickets are \$10 and they go on sale beginning the week of November 25<sup>th</sup>. This is a fundraiser for the Lansdowne trip to France. Limited spaces available. Give \$10 to Ms. Fawcett in the school office as soon as possible to register and reserve your space.**

**Entertainment for the evening: A Christmas themed movie on a big screen with popcorn and Candlelight songs and stories with Mr. Andrews**

## Counsellors Corner



### Hats off to The Church on Townley



A big thank you to the folks at The Church on Townley, one of our neighborhood churches who supply our school with snacks throughout the year, facilitate our breakfast club and provide five families with personalized hampers at Christmas.



Special thanks to Pastor Kyla and Greg who reach out to serve our school community.

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## Counsellors Corner (cont'd from page 6)

### KEEPING SPIRITS BRIGHT

The holidays can be an exciting magical time for many families, for others it is filled with stress, financial burden, binge eating and drinking and family feuds. For many, it is a combination of the above. Traditionally Christmas was about peace, the birth of a baby, Santa's joyful laugh and generosity. Hanukkah, celebrated around the same time, means 'dedication', Hanukkah celebrates the triumphs to maintain religious values and traditions.

Much of this is threatened by the commercialization of the season. Buying the right gift, the nightmare and expense of Technology, the pressure we feel from our children while their wish list grows.

So how do we guide our children into keeping the spirit of the holidays without disappointment, guilt or debt? There are many things we can do to encourage Christmas spirit that do not cost a lot of money and bring us together. I hope this list helps your family feel the true spirit of the holidays.

1. Turn the radio on to a channel playing **holiday music**.
2. Watch Christmas **movies** together and MUTE the commercial, I think they are louder than ever and encourage us to be filled with envy instead of thanksgiving.
3. Take a drive to see the **lights**, make hot chocolate at home for the drive and walk up the special streets.
4. Help your family focus on "giving" rather than "receiving". Make a list together of things you can do for others, ways of giving of the self.
5. Encourage your family to make a list of **1-2 gifts** they would like. Give older kids a spending limit on their wish list.
6. Talk openly and honestly about your financial situation and **brainstorm** together how Christmas can still be fun without spending lots of money.
7. Check out the many **free** and inexpensive things to do in Victoria this holiday season.
8. **Make your own holiday cards and gifts**.
9. Encourage your children to **recycle** gifts they have outgrown.
10. **Read** stories; check out books from the library and read them together.
11. Remember it's a **holiday season**, not just one day. Avoid putting all your energy and expectations on Christmas Day or on New year's Eve. Instead, try living and enjoying every day of the holidays.
12. It's not **what's under** the tree, but **who's around** the tree.



WISHING YOU ALL A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS,  
HAPPY HANUKKAH AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS!









## Eco-Action Report!



Our Eco-Action Team has chosen to focus on *water*. They are researching how we use water, how we need water, how we can reduce wasting water and how we can take care of our precious water supply. Stay tuned for more updates and facts about our water consumption and ideas for water stewardship. Everyone can bring reusable water containers to school- no more single use water bottles please!

### Naturescape Update

Lansdowne staff and the school district have been working on the amazing naturescape complete with indigenous gardens and an outdoor classroom for students and staff to use. Did you know that... More than six years ago, several staff became inspired after reading the book "Last Child in the Woods" by Richard Louv. There was animated discussion around creating an outdoor space for students to learn and connect with nature. A vision was created and from there collaboration began with the creation of indigenous gardens and an outdoor classroom. A vision that is also shared by parents, caregivers and community and thanks to the Parent Advisory Committee and our Principal, there has been an incredible support for building of the Naturescape! Conversations continue around acknowledging the Coast Salish territory, establishing sustainability and planning for the future.

Thank you to all the folks who have been participating in the planning of, implementing and the caring for this incredible space!!! It is truly transforming and taking shape~

Keep checking in to see about upcoming mulching and weeding parties ☺ We welcome all hands!



Spring student weeding



Fall District work nearing completion (thank you)



## FIRST LEGO LEAGUE

The Lansdowne FLL team is going to the FIRST LEGO League Practice Tournament on Saturday, December 7 at Christ Church Cathedral School (912 Vancouver Street) from 9:30am to 3pm. You are welcome to come and watch! Admission is free.

Teams will be doing presentations (all about some aspects of natural disasters and possible innovative solutions), interviews and practice robot runs in the morning, and scored robot runs in the afternoon.

The event includes a short presentation on emergency management, plus a demonstration of the new LEGO EV3 robotics set.