

March 30, 2008

Dear Harvard Schools' Trust,

I would like to report back about the Star Party which took place on St. Patrick's Day for third graders and their families. Your funding was critical to hosting such an event.

A follow-up survey was given to all children who attended. Approximately 70 children and their families attended, bringing the number of people at the event to about 160, (including nine astronomers).

The survey asked if the event was "interesting and fun." Of those who filled out the survey the next day, 61 children responded "yes", 2 responded "no." The last question asked children to share one thing that they learned. Their documented responses follow this update.

Feedback about the event from parents, children, teachers and ATMOB members has been 100% positive (and frequent). One parent replied that it was the best event run in the town in years.

Children were given mini key-chain flashlights with red filters to help them navigate safely through the cables and power cords. From afar, the superintendent's lawn looked like a swarm of fireflies in the dark night. (Flashlights were definitely the "hit" of the evening.) Hot chocolate was provided to all to help keep hands warm in the cold.

ATMOB members, numbering nine (a record!), were impressed with the facility, (a nearby building to warm themselves), the food (Bravo pizza, pretzels and home-made M&M cookies), the children, who were "smart and interested" and the parents, who were respectful and curious.

Although HST prefers to grant "seed money" for projects that will hopefully then be incorporated into school budgets for following years, I will say that I think this was the most "bang for your buck" that HST could hope for. Funding for this type of evening is very difficult to put into a school budget, yet it is so very worthwhile. I would hope to repeat this incredible evening for every class of third graders and their families for years to come. ATMOB has promised to return (IF M&M cookies are repeated...), perhaps in the fall to impress and awe another few hundred of Harvard's finest.

Thank you for funding this event. I hope to be in touch again.

Judy S. Moore

## Comments from Star Party Review

### One thing I learned was...

- that Sirius is the first star to come out in the night sky.
- when you look at Saturn, it looks fake.
- the North Star has two stars.
- you can make your own telescope.
- Saturn is yellow.
- a little group of stars were formed by a kind of gas.
- that you can see Saturn from a telescope.
- that Orion has a nebula.
- Saturn has three moons.
- the moon was bigger than I thought.
- that on the Big Dipper handle there is a double star.
- that the Seven Sisters is a constellation.
- I never knew the moon had deep craters.
- all about the moon. It was bright.
- that the moon looks awesome.
- that Mars can be seen.
- that Saturn was small in the sky.
- that Saturn has 4 moons and the moons have millions of craters.
- that the moon looks like a big golf ball.
- that Saturn looks really bright in the night sky.
- that the moon is 75 million miles away.
- that Star Parties are fun.
- when you look at Saturn is gets foggy, so people put something in the telescope that makes it bright and clear.
- that Saturn is a little ball with a ring around it.
- that one of the stars is 700,000,000,000 years old.
- that Saturn has at least 66 moons.
- that there is a clump of stars called the Seven Sisters.
- Mrs. Moore showed me where the Big Dipper is.
- that even if the telescope isn't huge, it still is as powerful as others.
- that Mars looks orangey-yellow in a telescope.
- that Mars looks tiny from Earth.
- that the moon has craters that are 60 + miles long.
- that in a few days the moon will be full.
- all about the Big Dipper and how telescopes work.
- that the Earth is 240,000 miles away from the moon
- about lots of different nebulae on a computer.
- that Saturn looks like a sticker.
- that telescopes can see so far that you can see craters.
- that stars can be born in a cloud.
- that Saturn is hard to see.
- there is such a thing called Orion's nebula.
- that you can only see a few of Saturn's moons.
- the first star to come out is Mars.
- that you can take pictures of the things you see with a telescope.
- that it was fun, but not interesting.
- don't touch the telescopes.
- that stars are cool.
- that I love astronomy.