



# McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

Volume 37, No. 7

March 7, 2008

## A Unique Opportunity

*by Kate Fitzmaurice*

Recently I was given the opportunity to experience McCarthy-Towne in a whole new way. For the last eleven years I have been a fifth grade teacher here at McT and before that I was a member of this vibrant community as a parent. Now I am taking a short break from my classroom to intern with Marcia as a principal-in-training. I am taking part in the Commonwealth Leadership Academy and am going to classes as well as participating in this practicum. While I miss my students and the classroom, I am truly enjoying my time learning about administration. I've only just begun, but a few things have jumped out at me that I wanted to share with you.

The first involves kindergarten night and our kindergarten tours. I had the pleasure of making the presentation to future McT families this year at our annual open house. After the power point presentation was over families had the chance to walk about the school and ask questions of the teachers. You may remember doing this yourself! I truly enjoyed listening to our amazing faculty talk so passionately about our school! Though the overall message was that you really can't go wrong when picking a school in Acton, the families who came learned about what makes McT special, from the art to the writing to math projects and special classroom events. I know that many families were very impressed with our level of commitment to our work and to our students.

The second observation comes directly from the classrooms. I walked around the school visiting every class and saying hello to the children last week. This is something most teachers don't get to do every day! In every room I found children who were actively engaged in a wide variety of exciting activities. The students were different ages and the projects were different, of course, but there was a similar feeling in each space...it was a feeling of calm and thoughtful productivity. While painting or thinking through a science experiment or talking with Tina about "warm fuzzies" and "cold pricklies" the children were happily attentive. I notice this general feeling of well-being while students enter the building in the morning, as well. (Standing in the lobby at this time is a fun job, believe me!). The people who come to McT each day, both students and faculty alike, are happy to do so!

The last great experience I had is the auction. Parent power is strong at McCarthy-Towne! Our trip back to the sixties was an incredible success! Each year I marvel at the amount of work that goes into this event. Many, many parents worked long, hard hours and they should be commended. It was fun, too! There were many items in the silent auction that had people standing by the tables watching the bids. The dinner was delicious and once the coffee and dessert were served, we were ready for the live auction. The classroom projects were a big hit, as usual! Parents were so generous as they bid on penguins, fish and landscapes. Clearly, the work we do with the students each day at school is supported by strong families at home. We couldn't do it without you parents, thank you! I was also touched by the gift of a flowering tree for Marcia from McT families in recognition of her coming retirement. Marcia is an inspirational leader for us all and I know she appreciated this lovely gesture.

My six week experience has only just begun but I know it will fly by and soon I will be back in the fifth grade. For now I am lucky to be able to work in this new and different way. What a positive experience it has been so far!

**Thank You, MCT Parents! Thank You, Carolyn and Susan!**

*By Lynne Densen and Suzi Yarin*

On behalf of the PTSO, we would like to thank everyone who supported our school at the Auction; it was a GROOVY evening.

We would like to offer thanks to two very special people, Carolyn Imperato and Susan Lerner. They took on the huge task of chairing the auction AGAIN, spending countless hours planning, meeting with various committees, following up on the phone, and making many family sacrifices along the way. On behalf of the whole school community we want you to know—we so appreciate all your hard work. Thank you both.

## The Importance of Sleep

*from Betty Johns, MCT Nurse*

Why is sleep important to overall wellness?

- Health—Not getting enough sleep increases the risk of having high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. During sleep your body produces hormones which fuel growth in children, help build muscle mass, and repair cells and tissues.
- Mood—Not getting enough sleep can make you irritable and contributes to bad behavior and difficulty with relationships. People who chronically lack sleep are more likely to be depressed.
- Learning—We need sleep to think clearly, react quickly, and create memories. The pathways in the brain that aid with learning and creative problem solving are very active during sleep.
- Athletic performance—According to the National Sleep Foundation, sleep deprivation can affect athletic performance by reducing cardiovascular performance, decreasing mental functioning, reducing endurance, impairing motor function, and delaying visual and auditory reaction time.

How much sleep do you really need?

Sleep needs vary from person to person and change throughout the lifespan. According to the National Sleep Foundation: preschoolers (3-5 years) need 11-13 hours of sleep, school-aged children (5-12 years) need 10-11 hours of sleep, teens (13-17 years) need 8.5-9.25 hours of sleep, and adults need between 7-9 hours of sleep each night.

For more information on the importance of sleep visit:

[www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov) (National Institutes of Health) and [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org) (National Sleep Foundation)

## Tidbits from Tina

*by Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor*

More from *Positive Discipline A-Z* by Jane Nelsen:

Tool #9: Set Limits

Setting limits is part of the job of a parent. When children are young, we set the limits for them. When they are older, we negotiate to find the right limits for the individual child. Sometimes a child thinks he/she is ready for looser limits; we may disagree. Let the negotiating begin!

“Positive Discipline parents set limits using natural consequences, logical consequences and routines.”

- Natural consequences: These happen naturally—you don’t need to do anything! You can let the situation teach your child. For example, if you leave your shoes out in the rain, they will get wet—yuk! Parents don’t need to lecture or nag to make the point. In fact, those are the times when we shouldn’t say anything! As Jane Nelsen tells us, “Frequent nagging about natural consequences usually produces children who can function properly only when bossed, reminded, or nagged. You’ve interfered with the natural order and robbed your child of the opportunity to learn from the consequences of her choices.” (Note: This is NOT the time to go to the store and purchase a new pair of shoes since the old ones got wet! Buying new shoes would be a reward rather than having the child learn from his/her mistake.)
- Logical consequences: Sometimes using natural consequences is too dangerous or not timely enough to teach your child. At that point parents can use logical consequences to help their child learn. Logical consequences are not punishments in disguise; rather, they are meant to teach a lesson for the future, not to cause pain for a past mistake. Jane Nelsen gives the example of a child who forgets to take his lunch to school. Instead of the parent delivering the lunch to school, Mom lets her son/daughter figure out what he/she can do (ie: share some food, perhaps, or just be hungry). This is the logical consequence of forgetting lunch, and it is a wonderful teacher. Unfortunately many parents “would prefer to lecture, or give one more chance, or rescue, or scold” rather than let the situation do the teaching. Wouldn’t it be easier and more effective to allow your child to learn from the event rather than us being the “bad guys”?

Next month read about Establishing Routines . . .



## Hurray for Parent Power!

On Saturday night, March 1, 2008, McCarthy-Towne held its annual auction at the Devens Common Center. Thank you to all of the incredible parents, faculty, and staff of McCarthy-Towne for all your amazing assistance to make this auction such a success!!! We appreciate everyone's effort!

Everyone enjoyed a groovy evening filled with tie-dye, great music provided by the MCats, awesome auction items and lots of fun! In fact, we all had such a good time that the "official" auction article will have to wait until next month's bulletin.

Special Note: As part of the McT Auction 2008, we are donating a flowering plant in Marcia's honor that will be planted at the Parker Damon Building.

Families who wish to contribute can send in their donations to the office with "**Marcia's Plant!**" written on the envelopes. Thank you for your support!

## Halloween Fun

Did you miss the auction? Did you leave empty handed? Do you want something fun to do for Halloween? Then, you are in luck! "Be There or Be Scared IV: Get a Clue!" is for you! We can take more couples at \$50 per couple (or individuals at \$25 per person) to attend this annual, adult-only event. It will be on Saturday, October 18th from 7:30pm-12 at Dr. Bobby's Maynard Mansion (aka Maynard Rod and Gun Club). A local band, Busted Flat, will be playing and everyone is encouraged to arrive wearing disguises for this Who Dunit event! Ask anyone who was attended before, and they will tell you not to miss it!

Please contact #1 suspect, Anwen Hayes at [anwenhayes@arundela.com](mailto:anwenhayes@arundela.com), for more information and to sign up. All money raised will go towards our McT Auction 2008 totals.

## News from the Sloyd Studio

*by Heidi Kupferman*

Did you know that March is Youth Art Month? The Worcester Art Museum is celebrating by having a wonderful student art exhibit running until March 31 showing work from dozens of schools in and around Central Massachusetts. Five McT students will have work they created in Sloyd class in the show. Congratulations go to first grader Abby Beilman, second grader Joey Dutton, third grader Oliver Kehm, fourth grader Alyssa Wooden and fifth grader Tim Manning. Support your friends and come to the opening on Sun., March 9, from 1-4.

I'm looking for several volunteers to help in Sloyd on Tuesdays from 12:45-2:30 and on Thursdays from 8:45-12:00; weekly or 2x/month would be great.

Don't worry if you've never handled a brush or a hammer, I promise you'll have fun. Please e-mail Heidi at [hkupferman@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:hkupferman@mail.ab.mec.edu) if you'd like to help.

## Spring Shopping Day

- Cambridgewear Fundraiser at Acton Woods Plaza (at the intersection of 2A/27)
- Thursday, May 1, 2008 All day (10am-8pm)
- Come see the new Spring fashions! Just in time for Mother's Day!
- No need to mention MCT: all sales count for 10% to MCT.

## Thank you

*by Astrid Trostorff, Parent Involvement/Community Outreach Coordinator*

Thank you to all the members of our school community who volunteer and contribute in so many ways to help make McCarthy-Towne such a wonderful school, including (though not limited to):

- Lloyd and Debbie Simon for donating office furniture and fixtures
- Amanda Dindal for volunteering to help Debbie Simon with the cell phone/printer cartridge recycling program
- Julie Greenspan, Betsy Gitelman, Patty Lee, Lena Saetre-Grant, Melissa Grigsby, Carolyn Imperato and Marie Clougher for being wonderful guides for prospective parents during Kindergarten Tour season
- Lynne Densen and the awesome Hospitality Committee for providing snacks, drinks, paper goods and flowers for the Informational Evening with prospective kindergarten parents
- the Student Council as well as Melissa Grigsby and Lena-Saetre Grant for being guides for the Informational Evening with prospective kindergarten parents
- the amazing Auction Committee, led by Carolyn Imperato and Susan Lerner, and the endless list of parents, faculty and students who contributed in so many generous ways to make the auction so much fun and such a successful event!

## McCarthy-Towne School Spirit Sale

This month the McCarthy Towne PTSO is making available a variety of custom-printed and embroidered products: shirts, sweatshirts, polo shirts, flannel pants and shorts, hats and duffle bags. Show your school spirit while supporting the PTSO. All items are made up in our school colors and are embroidered or printed with the McCarthy-Towne logo. All items, except the tee shirts, may be personalized for an additional cost.

To place an order for yourself, your student, or as a gift for anyone else, please complete the order form at the back of the bulletin and return it to the school with full payment by **Thursday, March 20th**. The orders will be sent home with your child approximately 2 to 3 weeks after this date.

Samples will be available in the school lobby. If you are unsure of what size to order, please order one size larger. The PTSO cannot exchange items that have been personalized. Additional order forms are available on the website – [www.mctptso.org/store](http://www.mctptso.org/store). If you have any questions, please contact Kerry Bremer at [kbremer@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:kbremer@mail.ab.mec.edu).

## Scrip Gift Card Program

We would like to thank all the families that ordered Scrips in the month of February and to all those families that continue to order Scrips on a monthly basis.

Scrips are a great way to help the school raise money without having to “buy” anything additional. Before you head over to Roche Bros, Stop and Shop, Starbucks, Staples, TJ Maxx or CVS, or before you place your next on-line order at LL Bean, Land’s End, The Gap, or Amazon; consider buying a gift card through McT to use on your next purchase. As always, you receive the full value of the gift cards, and McT earns a percentage of each gift card you buy. It is that easy! Gift cards also make excellent birthday gifts, especially for loved ones out of state. Attached is the order form with all of the participating vendors.

The March orders are due on Wednesday, March 19th. Please contact Lynne Densen at [lynne.densen@verizon.net](mailto:lynne.densen@verizon.net) or 978.266.2952 or Maureen Jones at [maureen.jones1@verizon.net](mailto:maureen.jones1@verizon.net) or 978.266.2874 with any questions.

## International Night

Save the Date for the Second Parker Damon International Night! **Friday, April 11th**, 6:30 in the Cafeteria. Please join families from McCarthy Towne and Merriam to celebrate our diverse culture at the Parker Damon Building. Families will make and display a flag, dress in costume (optional) and bring a food item from their country of origin to share. Students will also have an opportunity to share a poem, song, dance, story etc. from their country of origin. Look for more details after vacation.

Volunteers are needed for set up, clean up, supervising children, cueing performers, coordinating AV equipment, videography and photography. Please contact McCarthy Towne parent Jane Ceraso at [jane.ceraso@paragon-c.com](mailto:jane.ceraso@paragon-c.com).

## Need a gift? Need birthday gift wrap?

Don’t forget that you can order from Innisbrook at any time during the year and McT receives 50% of the profit.

Go online at [www.innisbrook.com](http://www.innisbrook.com) and use the following school code (105125) and place your order. Items will come directly to you.



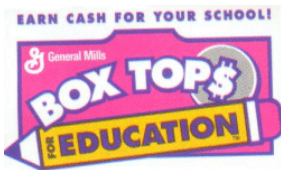
## Last Month to Collect Donelan’s Receipts

March is the last month to collect receipts from Donelan’s Supermarkets that can be turned into free educational equipment, including art supplies and books, for McT.

Remember, all you have to do is save your receipts and send them in with your child or drop them in the collection box in the McCarthy-Towne office yourself. Please do NOT cut your receipts. In order to submit them, we must have the entire receipt, showing the store name and location, as well as the items purchased.

Receipts dated September 1, 2007 through March 31, 2008 are eligible.

Thank you for your support! If you have any questions, please contact Wendy Schaad at [ws.schaad@gmail.com](mailto:ws.schaad@gmail.com).



## Box Tops For Education

Send in your box tops by March 12th! We have to have them all counted, bagged and sent to General Mills by March 31st. The class that collects the most Box Tops will win a Friday afternoon ice cream treat. We have raised \$1000 per year just with Box Tops!

### School Council Minutes of Jan. 30, 2008

Present: M. FitzGerald, chair; S. Ryan, J. Sampathkumaran, S. Silverberg, C. Imperato, B. Gitelman, J. Chinitz, R. Kynoch, J. Rowse. Guest: S. Szwarczewicz, ELL Program

#### I. Revised dates of future meetings:

- Feb. 27: Goal 2a Art Integration
- March 26: Sloyd Program
- April 30: Report and new goals
- May 15: School Committee presentation

2. Goal 3: English Language Learning. Ms. Szwarczewicz divides her time among four schools including Merriam and MCT. At McCarthy-Towne, she coordinates with S. Ryan, Reading Specialist, and with the classroom teachers. There are as yet comparatively few (16 at MCT) ELL students spread out in a couple of grade levels, so there are no separate ESL classes within any of the four schools. Resources include :Books on CD; books on-line for different skill levels available from Reading A to Z.com; specialized MCAS tests in foreign languages; translators available through PPS for parent-teacher conferences, etc.; School Handbooks translated in Korean, Chinese, Portuguese thus far for parents. One "Buddy Family" has volunteered thus far to support one ELL family. One more resource that is needed is a set of guidelines for the classroom teachers to go over with the families about expectations and methods of the ELL teaching and about use of resources at home including videos in English. We need to validate the value of the family's native language so that the student remains fluent in that as well when speaking at home.

3. Information on Writing Literacy at MCT: Six Traits of Writing: this information was written as a two page article by B. Gitelman and previously sent to members of the School Council. It will also be sent out to parents.

Respectfully submitted, J. Rowse, Community Member.

### Dates To Remember

- Friday, March 21.....NO SCHOOL - Good Friday
- Monday, March 24..... Gr. 3, 4, 5, and 6 Eng. Language Arts MCAS begin
- Tuesday, April 1.....Acton Town Elections
- Wednesday, April 2.....PIP 3rd gr. Market Math 4:30 - 7:30 PM
- Monday, April 7..... Acton Town Meeting begins
- Thursday, April 10..... "JHS & What to Expect" for 6th gr. parents - 7 PM
- Friday, April 11 ..... PD Building International Pot Luck - 6:30 PM
- April 21 - 25..... NO SCHOOL - Spring Recess
- Tuesday/Wednesday, May 13/14.....Gr. 3, 4, 5, and 6 Math MCAS
- Saturday, May 17 .....McT Yard Sale
- Tuesday/Wednesday, May 20/21.....Gr. 5 Sci. & Tech. /Engineering MCAS
- Thursday /Friday, May 22/23. .... Gr. 5 Social Studies MCAS
- Monday, May 26.....NO SCHOOL - Memorial Day
- Wednesday, June 25..... Last Day of School (with 5 snow days)

Notification to Parents and Guardians: The district will be using Connect-ED to notify families of weather-related closures and emergencies. Calls will be made to AB homes @6:15 AM and to APS homes @7:30 AM with weather-related information. Connect-ED will not be used if school is cancelled the night before.

