



# McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

September 5, 2008  
Volume 38, No 1

## Welcome Back

by Nancy Kolb, McT Interim Principal

Greetings to you and welcome to the new school year at McCarthy-Towne. This is a very special year for me. I am excited and grateful to be able to partner with you as parents, the staff and the students for our upcoming year. McCarthy-Towne is an integral part of who I am as a professional, parent and community member. I taught at McT for 15 years as a classroom teacher and a special educator before joining the administrative team as Director of Pupil Services. I credit McT as the place where I became a "real" (as they say in the Velveteen Rabbit) professional. My two daughters attended McT and graduated from Acton-Boxborough. Please stop in my office and see some of their art projects dating back to 1978. I feel very lucky to be able to use the administrative and educational skills that McCarthy-Towne and Acton have taught me and to bring these skills home to the school I dearly love. So you will see me smiling all year because this year with you is a gift I will always treasure.

We've been busy this summer. Once again McT housed the CASE Collaborative summer programs. We are happy to share our space with CASE and to welcome home some of our CASE Acton students who attend CASE programs in other districts during the school year.

Because we house programs for most of the summer our custodial staff must work night and day (literally) to complete the building cleaning for the start of school. This year we had an additional challenge. Mold appeared on our carpets in the 6 first floor classrooms. We cleaned the

carpets according to recommendations and the air quality tests came back with no significant findings of mold; however, we decided to replace the carpet with tile to avoid any recurrence of the problem in the future. We are grateful to Bill Ryan and the support of the central office for helping us take this proactive measure. And the tile looks fantastic!

We are pleased to welcome three new staff members. Isabel O'Connor, our new special educator supporting students in grades 5 and 6, comes to us with 9 years experience and has taught at Blanchard School in Boxborough. Caitlin Walsh, our new 5th grade teacher, has just completed a MEd at Lesley University. Her undergraduate degree is in the visual and performing arts and we feel she is a perfect match for McT. Hanna Melnyczuk will join us as the new Arts Integration Specialist. She teaches at UMass Lowell in the art department and has taught art to elementary age children. Kim Brayton, a new music teacher with a wealth of teaching experience, will be teaching one section of music for us this year. We welcome back Jen Pratt from a leave of absence. Jen will be teaching second grade. David Rachlin has moved from fifth grade to fourth grade, a grade he has taught before. Jean Oviatt has moved from fourth grade to third. They both look forward to teaching new curriculum units. We are always happy to see teachers bring their expertise to new grade levels.

I want to thank our office staff, Astrid, Jean and Robyn, for guiding me through

*continued on page 2*

## Mark Your Calendar

### SEPTEMBER

- 10, Wednesday**  
PTSO Meeting, 7:00 PM
- 12, Friday**  
School Picture Day
- 17, Wednesday**  
McT Back-to-School Night  
6:45-8:00 PM  
Scrip order deadline
- 19, Friday**  
T-shirt order deadline  
Directory Change/Delete  
Form deadline
- 26, Friday**  
Fall Fundraiser deadline
- 28, Sunday**  
Family Photo Day  
8:30 AM-3:00 PM
- 30, Tuesday**  
NO SCHOOL,  
Rosh Hashanah

### OCTOBER

- 9, Thursday**  
NO SCHOOL, Yom Kippur
- 13, Monday**  
NO SCHOOL, Columbus Day
- 15, Wednesday**  
PTSO Meeting, 7:00 PM
- 19, Sunday**  
Fall Clean-Up at PDB
- 21, Tuesday**  
Early Dismissal, 1:00 PM  
No PM Kindergarten
- 29, Wednesday**  
Early Dismissal, 1:00 PM  
No PM Kindergarten

Welcome Back, continued from page 1

all the details of daily life at McT. Their patience, endless good humor and amazing attention to detail keep us all afloat.

An important part of my work this year is to facilitate staff discussions and to build consensus about what's most important here at McT. We need to articulate carefully our values, goals and the essence of what makes McT unique so that who we are is clear during the principal search. I have been meeting with teachers individually this summer to put together our thoughts. I am so impressed with the deep level of commitment, the care and thoughtfulness that each teacher puts into all she/he does. This work will

take time and energy this fall but I am confident that it will be well worth the effort.

Please note the notice in this bulletin about the PTSO meeting on September 10. We will be discussing the parents' role in the principal search. We definitely want and need to hear from all of you.

Welcome, welcome to our new and returning students and to you the parents/guardians. We are honored to partner with you in educating your children. We are excited to begin the year. Enjoy this year with your child; celebrate her/his discoveries, interests and growth. Let us know if there are any bumps in the road and please know you are always welcome here at McT.



## by Lynne Densen and Kim Clark, PTSO co-chairs

**Welcome back!** It is another year and we have a lot of fun-packed socials and fundraisers in store for you. As in years past, the PTSO needs to raise funds in order to underwrite the majority of the teaching assistants' salaries, the salaries of our Parent Involvement Coordinator and Arts Integration Coordinator, and additional library hours. The PTSO also sponsors the Cultural & Performing Arts Committee and provides art supplies for both Sloyd and the Art Integration program. This year the needed funds total approximately **\$102,500**.

### September fundraisers:

- Innisbrook giftwrap and Colorblends bulbs, deadline is 9/26.
- SCRIP store cards, deadline is 9/17
- School Photos are scheduled for 9/12
- Family Photo Day, 9/28

Check out our website—[www.mctptso.org](http://www.mctptso.org) for details about individual fundraisers and socials.  
Thank you in advance for participating!

### We also have many on-going fundraisers:

- Recycle paper in the green bin in the parking lot
- Shop online at Schoolpop.com
- Register your Target credit card and support McT
- Recycle cell phones, ink cartridges, etc.
- Save and submit General Mills Box Tops
- Save and submit Donelan's receipts

## PTSO Meetings 2008-2009

Mark your calendar now! PTSO meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month at 7 PM in the Faculty Lounge (top floor). Everyone is welcome to attend!

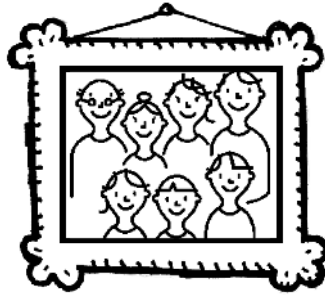
<b>September 10th</b>	<b>October 15th</b>	<b>November 12th</b>	<b>December 10th</b>	<b>January 14th</b>
<b>February 11th</b>	<b>March 11th</b>	<b>April 15th</b>	<b>May 13th</b>	<b>June 10th</b>

## Family Photo Day—Don't Miss Out!

Another year gone by... do you have a good family photo for the holiday card, scrapbook update, or grandma's refrigerator?

Make it happen AND help the school out. ...

Our annual Family Photo Day fundraiser has been set for **Sunday, September 28, 2008**. Julie L'Heureux (McT Mom!) will be taking photos at the Acton Arboretum from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Sittings are scheduled every 10 minutes and cost \$40 per family grouping (\$35 goes directly to McT!). The sitting fee includes one 8 x 10 photo. You can see examples of Julie's wonderful photographs at [www.sunlightphotography.net](http://www.sunlightphotography.net).



Appointments can be scheduled by contacting Sandy Billings—[SandyBillings@verizon.net](mailto:SandyBillings@verizon.net). Please include your name, phone, 3 time choices, and number of adults/children/pets to be photographed.

Send payment to Sandy at 33 Mohegan Rd, Acton, MA 01720. Make checks payable to McT PTSTO. Don't Delay... book today!

## First PTSTO meeting AND Principal Hiring Process

Please join us for our first PTSTO meeting of the year on Wednesday, September 10th at 7 PM, upstairs in the Faculty Lounge. We will have a short business meeting to outline the goals for the PTSTO for the upcoming year and get a status report on the September and October fundraisers.

At 7:45 PM Marie Altieri of Central Office will be talking about the process for hiring a new principal and speaking to what is required if you would like to be on the screening committee. Both staff and parents will participate on the screening committee. If you are at all interested or even thinking about being on the screening committee for our new principal, we urge you to attend this meeting. There will also be opportunities for parents to give input in upcoming months and we will be contacting you with information about these opportunities.

We have a jam-packed meeting so we will be starting promptly at 7 PM. Our goal is to adjourn the business meeting a little before 7:45 PM so those who would like to leave may. Those wishing to just hear about the hiring process can come around 7:45 PM.

If you have any questions, please contact Lynne Densen at 978.266.2952 or [lynne.densen@verizon.net](mailto:lynne.densen@verizon.net).

---

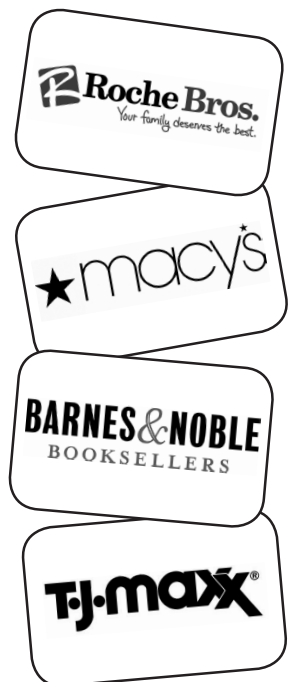
## Scrip Store Card Program

We will once again be running the Scrip Store Card Program on a monthly basis. With this program, McT families are able to help raise money needed for the PTSTO, which pays for our assistant teachers, without having to purchase anything in addition to their usual shopping.

Just shop as you normally would on a regular basis, but instead of paying with cash or credit card at checkout, pay with your gift cards. Do you shop at Roche Bros. or Stop & Shop weekly? Do you pick up your pharmaceutical needs at CVS? Do you stop at Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks, The Gap, Land's End or TJ Maxx? Sure you do! Why not let McT earn a percentage of what you spend?

If each of our 300 families purchased just \$100 in gift cards a month (for example \$50 a month to Roche Bros. and \$50 a month to CVS) we would bring in \$750 a month, which would be \$7,500 a year! Yes, \$7,500 a year in additional funds to McT, just from our families shopping and dining as usual. Do you know how many more assistants' hours we could get a week for that?

Attached is a list of participating merchants. Order forms are also available on our website—[www.mctptsto.org/fundraising/scrip](http://www.mctptsto.org/fundraising/scrip). Please note the specials for the month in bold. **The next order deadline is Wednesday, September 17th**. Typically, your store cards will be in your hands one week after the deadline. 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. The following order will be due on October 15th.



## Recycling Fundraiser

When you walk into McCarthy-Towne, near the plants is a silver-colored plastic bin. If you already know it's where we collect laserjet and inkjet cartridges and cell phones, give yourself a pat on the back. If not, hear ye—the PTSO receives money for cartridges, cell phones, used Apple I-pods, digital cameras and video cameras and laptops 750mHZ or greater. **If you have any used cartridges or cell phones or any of the other items, please drop them off.**

If you are dropping off cell phones, please note that we don't return the chargers or manuals, so need to drop it off. And for toner, we can't use toner tanks (the containers that used toner goes into).

If you have any questions or you would like to be an occasional helper to either 1) pickup cartridges/cell phones at the library or water district or 2) pack up the contents of the bin for shipping or 3) have a bin for recycling at your office/office building, please contact Debbie Simon at [deb.simon@comcast.net](mailto:deb.simon@comcast.net) or (978) 263-5322.



## Fall Fundraiser



It's that time of year. The McCarthy-Towne PTSO is holding its Annual Fall Fundraiser. The fundraiser includes sale of gifts, candy and flower bulbs. The money raised helps fund items such as classroom teaching assistants and cultural programs. Additionally, if you are looking for ways to help the school, order some bulbs and donate them to the Parker Damon Landscape Committee!

You should know the following before you start:

- There are two forms included [1 for bulb orders and 1 for gifts and candy]. Make sure that you fill in the forms following the instructions.
- The fundraiser runs from September 8–September 26th. All forms **MUST** be delivered to the school by September 26th.
- All checks **MUST** be made out to McCarthy-Towne PTSO.
- Bulbs will be delivered in October in time for fall planting. Gifts/candy will be delivered in November. You will be notified about distribution

Contact Tammy Sarnelli if you have any questions—[tammy.sarnelli@biogenidec.com](mailto:tammy.sarnelli@biogenidec.com) or 978-266-1422.

## Start Collecting Your Donelan's Supermarket Receipts!



The Register Tapes for Education Program was so successful last year that Donelan's Supermarkets will be participating in it again this year! With this program, your grocery receipts help our school! For every dollar spent, McCarthy-Towne will earn points redeemable for free educational equipment, including art supplies and books.

Last year, McCarthy-Towne collected over \$121,000 in receipts which translated into over 121,000 points. Those points were redeemed for approximately \$1200 worth of art supplies including a laminator, modeling clay, wiggly eyes, and much more. These supplies didn't cost McT or the PTSO a cent!

So every time you shop at Donelan's Supermarkets, save your receipts! Simply send in your receipts in with your child or drop them in the collection box in the McCarthy-Towne office. **Receipts dated September 1, 2008–March 31, 2009 are eligible.**

Even if you aren't a regular shopper at Donelan's consider either shopping there during the promotional period or asking your friends and neighbors to give you their Donelan's receipts.

**Remember... The more you spend, the more we earn!** If you have any questions, please contact Wendy Schaad at [ws.schaad@gmail.com](mailto:ws.schaad@gmail.com). Thank you for your support!

## Stay Up-to-date with the McT PTSO website

The PTSO website can be found at [www.mctptso.org](http://www.mctptso.org); please add it to your favorites/bookmark it. The website is updated weekly and has information about volunteer opportunities as well as details and forms on all the PTSO fundraisers and socials.

Can't remember when school photos are, or when the next PTSO meeting is? Check out the calendar on the home page. Lost your Scrip form and would like another, or not sure when the gift wrap forms are due? Check out the fundraising tab.

Questions? Please contact the webmaster, Maria Greene, at [maria@justmagicdesign.com](mailto:maria@justmagicdesign.com) or the web-updater, Lynne Densen, at [lynnedensen@verizon.net](mailto:lynnedensen@verizon.net).

# Don't Miss an Opportunity to Volunteer in Sloyd

The Sloyd studio is an active classroom buzzing with creative energy. Join Heidi and McT students while they build, carve and sculpt wondrous things.

Volunteers help with a variety of studio tasks and are needed on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday for 2 1/2 hours in the morning or in the afternoon. Please e-mail Heidi at [hkupferman@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:hkupferman@mail.ab.mec.edu).

**P.S.** Please be a CREATIVE COLLECTOR for Sloyd. Many items that end up in your recycling bin can be transformed into art. A few suggestions are: plastic containers, juice caps, packing materials, cardboard tubes, newspaper, plastic bottles, greeting cards and wrapping paper. Please make sure food and liquid containers are thoroughly washed and do not include anything that contained nuts. Drop off creative junk anytime to the Sloyd studio.



---

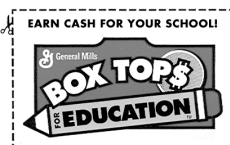
## McT Email List—Subscribe Today!

Are you getting PTSO and school-related email reminders? Did you know that we send out reminders for fundraiser deadlines and upcoming socials, as well as volunteer opportunities? If you answered NO then you need to join the McTNews email list. This is a moderated Yahoo! group, so only school and PTSO-related information is sent out.

In an effort to reduce paper, instead of using the Friday backpack system, we are going to try to use this medium for some of our communication regarding fundraisers and reminders—so don't miss out. Nancy Kolb, our new interim Principal will also be utilizing this medium to communicate with families. **To join, simply visit our website—[www.mctptso.org](http://www.mctptso.org)** and sign up for the email list (far right side of the website). If you have questions, please contact Lynne Densen at [lynne.densen@verizon.net](mailto:lynne.densen@verizon.net).

## Betty Crocker, Cheerios, Bisquick, Pillsbury, Gogurt, Ziploc, Hefty!

In the midst of all of the excitement and change of starting a new school year, please remember to keep clipping your BOX TOPS 4 EDUCATION! This year we will have two big collections: October 15, 2008 and February 15, 2009. The class prizes will go for much needed playground equipment. Please ask your grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles and any other willing party to clip Box Tops for McCarthy-Towne. This is a really easy way that we all contribute over \$1,000 per year to our school. Questions? Please contact co-chairs Joanie Davis or Maureen Ryan-Friend ([friendz@verizon.net](mailto:friendz@verizon.net)).



## New Benches

*by Astrid Trostorff, PI/COC*

You may notice three new benches outside the Parker Damon Building. Last year's 6th grade class raised money by hosting six Thursday Snack Sales. The money they raised, plus funds leftover from previous 6th grades' gift to the school, was donated to purchase these three benches. The slats are made from recycled milk bottles by a company in Maine, and should be maintenance-free.

Thank you to our former students and their families for this great addition to our campus. And thank you to Guy Dushanek, McT's lead custodian, for assembling and installing these benches.

## Support Group Meets

Acton Boxborough Support Group for Parents of Children with Challenges (ABPCC) will also have our opening morning meeting at 9:30 AM on September 24th at ABRHS room 131E. We will discuss transitioning into a new grade and whatever concerns people may have during the beginning of the school year.

Parenting a child with challenges, be they learning, language, motor, sensory or behavioral, can be, as the name implies, quite difficult. The primary goal of our support group is to connect parents with others confronting similar issues. By sharing concerns, experiences, resources and ideas with each other, we will strive to form a community of parents who can provide mutual support and comfort. Please join us! For further information on our group, contact Francesca Ricciardi at [fmr08@verizon.net](mailto:fmr08@verizon.net) or Lynn Armstrong at [lynn.armstrong2@verizon.net](mailto:lynn.armstrong2@verizon.net).

## New Directory Information Procedure from the PTSO and McT Office

The McCarthy-Towne School Directory is produced by the PTSO in conjunction with the school. The directory is distributed to each family and staff member to facilitate communication.

**NEW THIS YEAR:** Every child will be included in the directory—name, grade and teacher, address, phone number, parent/guardian names and email address as submitted to the on-line emergency card—UNLESS a parent/guardian submits a “CHANGE/DELETE” form to the office by Friday, September 19. This form is attached to this Bulletin, and will also be available on the McCarthy-Towne PTSO website: [www.mctptso.org](http://www.mctptso.org).

Please contact Astrid Trostorff, Parent Involvement/Community Outreach Coordinator, if you have any questions. (phone: 978-264-4700 ext. 3703 or email: [astrostorff@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:astrostorff@mail.ab.mec.edu))

## The Parker Damon Building Landscaping Committee Needs You!

Cleaning up the garden beds is ALL done by volunteers **so we need all the help we can get!**

Come have some outdoor fun with Merriam and McCarthy-Towne parents; working on the plants and beds around the Parker Damon Building, with an occasional planning meeting. Join us for occasional (dates TBA) weeding days, **Earth Week** (Spring), or for the **Fall Clean-Up October 19**, and **Spring Clean-up, May 3**.

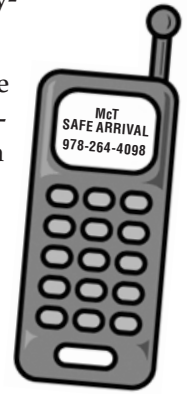
All you need to do is bring your energy, enthusiasm and garden gloves!

**Don't know anything about gardening?** No problem! Join Amanda Lye, **September 18th, at 10 AM** in front of the Parker Damon Building, for an informal and hands-on demonstration of different techniques used in gardening, planting, and how we hope to use them here on the Parker Damon Grounds. Come learn a little about gardening, weeding and get a little practice for your own gardens! There will be a handout to take home to help you plan your own garden ideas.

## Safe Arrival Explained

Did you ever wonder how the McCarthy-Towne Safe Arrival system works?

Every morning after the start of the school day (9:15 AM this year), teachers take attendance and send an attendance list to the school office. A parent volunteer goes through the attendance lists, notes the absences, and then listens to the Safe Arrival answer machine messages. The volunteer reconciles the absentee list, the answer machine list and any late arrival check-ins. Then the volunteer tries to reconcile any students who are unaccounted for.



First the classroom teacher is called to confirm the absence; then parents are called (at home/work/cellphone) in the order specified on the Emergency Cards filled out at the beginning of the year; and then emergency contacts (relatives/neighbors/friends) as specified on the card are called.

Most of the time, all of the students are quickly accounted for. Occasionally the Safe Arrival volunteer has to do some extensive calling to determine that a family has forgotten to inform the school of an absence or late arrival. On very rare occasions, a child does not make it to school without the parent's knowledge. Luckily, these incidents have always had happy endings and have reinforced the importance and effectiveness of the Safe Arrival program.

The PTSO sponsors the Safe Arrival program by paying for a special phone line and scheduling volunteers to run it. Please help it function smoothly by remembering to call - day or night - when you know your child will be absent from school or late arriving in school. **The McT Safe Arrival number is 978-264-4098.**

### Bulletin Deadline

The McCarthy-Towne Bulletin is published monthly by the McT PTSO. Each family will receive a copy of the Bulletin on the first Friday of each month and during the last week of school in June. Articles should be submitted by email to Rebecca MacNeill at [rebeccamacneill@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccamacneill@gmail.com).

# Tidbits from Tina



As we begin the school year I am exploring new and different ways to support parents in the adventure of raising our children. In years past I have offered an evening course in parenting, have run parenting discussion groups both in the evening and during the school day, have written parenting articles for the Bulletin, have presented workshops on particular topics, have collected articles on parenting and displayed them in the lobby. I need to know what works for you. Please answer the following questions and return this form to me so that I can best meet your needs when it comes to helping you be the best parent you can be.

1. How are you getting support in parenting your child? (circle all that apply)
  - a. Through family and friends
  - b. Through books and other resources
  - c. Through the school
  - d. Through your religious organization
  - e. Other \_\_\_\_\_
2. Would you like more parenting education from the school?
  - a. Yes, I would like overall guidance in parenting skills
  - b. Yes, I would like more information on particular topics, including the following  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - c. No
  - d. Not right now
3. If you would like more parenting education from McCarthy-Towne, what is the best way(s) I can help you? Please check those that you would use.

\_\_\_ An evening parenting course, 6 consecutive weeks—includes workbook

\_\_\_ Parenting articles in the Bulletin

\_\_\_ Occasional evening workshops on particular parenting topics

\_\_\_ Parenting discussion group run during the school day

\_\_\_ Parenting discussion group run in the evening

\_\_\_ Parenting articles placed in the lobby of McT

Thanks for your help!!

Tina Morgan, School Counselor

# McCarthy-Towne School – SEPTEMBER 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
7	8	9	10 PTSO Meeting, PDB Faculty Room 7 PM	11	12 School Picture Day	13
14	15	16	17 Community Assembly Scrip orders due McT Back-to-School Night 6:45–8 PM	18 Gardening Demonstration, Outside PDB 10 AM	19 T-shirt orders due Directory Change/ Delete forms due	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 Fall Fundraiser order forms due	27
28 Family Photo Day, Acton Arboretum 8:30 AM–3 PM	29	30 NO SCHOOL Rosh Hashanah	OCTOBER 1	OCTOBER 2	OCTOBER 3 October McT Bulletin in backpacks	OCTOBER 4