



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

October 2, 2009
Volume 39, No 2

Rolling into October

by David Krane, McT Principal

This past month has been a time of stellar weather. The days are sparkling clear and summer-like in their warmth. It has been a great way to start a new school year and to roll into our second month.

September has been a month of firsts. All of these firsts are familiar routines to the staff and students but for me they are wonderfully new and I have enjoyed every one. We have had our first day of school and our first assembly, our first Back-to-School Night, our first PTSSO meeting and the first meeting of the School Council. Each of these events has given me a chance to meet more people and to become more connected to the McCarthy-Towne School. At our first Assembly, though, I admit to being caught up in the excitement of the moment and I made what some thought a rash promise. I told the kids that I'd know each of their names by the next assembly. The kids have been great about it. They've been coming up to me and greeting me in the hallway and introducing themselves and while I have a long way to go, I will get there!

The Back-to-School Night is a nice opportunity for families to become more familiar with different teacher's classrooms, routines and ideas. The evening was hugely successful, with a wonderful turnout and terrific presentations. This is a tremendously talented and professional staff, committed to each student in their respective classrooms. I felt like a parent, new to the school, taking it all in and enjoying everything that I saw, confident in the staff as they launch their new year of teaching.

As we move into a new month I am also spending more time in each of the classrooms, not only to have the kids become more familiar with me and me with them but to also watch each of these amazing teachers as they work with the students. The kids are engaged and happy, already part of their classroom environments and already eager to contribute their thinking and their ideas to whatever is happening at the moment. From life-sized, kid-produced drawings of different turtles in the second grade to the fifth grade display of personalized New Yorker covers to the tide pool tanks in the first grade, there is something percolating in every room. It is a joy to visit all the classrooms and watch what unfolds.

We also have had our first School Council meeting. This important group will meet over the course of the year, evaluating the implementation of the School Improvement Plan and generating our next one. Our first meeting was terrific; informative and productive and I'd like to thank all of the members who generously give their time: Amy Hedison, Ann Budner, Maureen Jones, John Rowse, Robin Kynoch, Kate Fitzmaurice, Betty Johns and, as a parent and a staff member contributing both sharp insights and good chocolate, our staff psychologist Carolyn Imperato.

We are rolling into the routine of school and it has been a great transition. We are all part of a remarkable school community and I am looking forward to a remarkable year.

Mark Your Calendar

OCTOBER

- **12, Monday**
• NO SCHOOL, Columbus Day
- **14, Wednesday**
• Community Assembly
• Scrip orders due
• PTSSO Meeting, 7 PM
- **16, Friday**
• NSTAR CFL bulb orders due
- **18, Sunday**
• Fall Clean-Up at PDB,
• 10 AM-1 PM
- **26-Nov. 2**
• PDB Lost & Found Fair
- **30-Nov. 4**
• Book Fair
- **30, Friday**
• Box Tops due
• McT Fall Social, 6-8 PM

NOVEMBER

- **3, Tuesday**
• NO SCHOOL, Professional
• Development Day
- **6, Friday**
• School Picture Retake Day
- **11, Wednesday**
• NO SCHOOL, Veterans' Day
- **18, Wednesday**
• Early Dismissal (12:15 PM)
• No PM Kindergarten
• PTSSO Meeting, 7 PM
- **24, Tuesday**
• Early Dismissal (12:15 PM)
• No PM Kindergarten
- **25, Wednesday**
• Early Dismissal (12:15 PM)
• No PM Kindergarten
- **26-27, Thurs./Fri.**
• NO SCHOOL,
• Thanksgiving Recess



by Kim Clark and Tammy Sarnelli, PTSO co-chairs

We're off to a great start this year. The first Scrip order is being given out and the gift wrap/bulb fundraiser has just come to a close. School pictures went off without a problem and the Fall Family Photo Day had beautiful weather.

Thank you to all those who participated in our September fundraisers. We have many exciting events planned for October. We start the month off with a great fundraiser from NSTAR. This may be the last time we run this so remember to stock up now on these energy saving light bulbs. We will again be running the Scrip cards and the fall social and Book Fair will also be happening at the end of the month.

We are always looking for volunteers please feel free to email or call us! The next PTSO meeting is Wednesday, October 14 at 7 PM.

Change a Light, Change the world

For the second year, McCarthy-Towne will participate in "Change a Light Fundraiser" sponsored by NSTAR which benefits both our school and our environment. For this event, we will once again be selling energy-efficient Compact Fluorescent Light (CFL) bulbs which are donated by NSTAR. **All of the proceeds will go directly to our school.**

A package has been send home with the youngest child that includes information about the advantages of changing to Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFL), and the order forms. In addition, every child is bringing home a fun activity booklet about energy conservation.

Order forms are due back on Friday, October 16. Light bulbs will be delivered in November just in time for daylight time savings when it is recommended to change the light bulbs because the days are shorter.

Last year's fundraiser was a great success and we hope this year will be too! Remember that by ordering even one Compact Fluorescent Light Bulb, you will benefit the school, the environment and save money on your electrical bill. If you have any questions, please contact Maria (marilcid@gmail.com or 978-263-0723).

News from the Sloyd Studio

Be sure to stop and admire the great artwork around McT that students have created in Sloyd. All students began this year by creating work inspired by passages from the book, *Imagine a Day*, by Sarah L. Thomson and Rob Gonsalves. Displayed in the glass case outside of the office are sand castles built by 1st graders to "withstand even the highest waves"; arranged on the wall outside the Sloyd classroom is a mural created by 6th graders expressing personal ideas about what can be "explored beyond the edge of the map"; and on the shelves outside the Sloyd classroom are mixed media sculptures created by groups of 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th graders which were "built piece by piece to touch the sky".

Scrip Gift Card Program

Thank you to all the families who ordered Scrips in the month of September. We are already off to a terrific start this year, raising over \$450 for our school!

The next orders are due on Wednesday, October 14. The Scrip program is a great way for your family to help the school raise money, without doing anything additional or different from your 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 store cards.

Our new on-line ordering directly through Great Lake Scrips has been a big hit. Ordering directly through their website also allows you to order store cards for friends and family that live and shop outside of New England. **You do not have to order off our Scrip form, you can order any store card that Grate Lake Scrip offers.**

Visit www.shopwithscrip.com to order Scrips online and to set-up an account. You will need the McT enrollment code, which is AL91AAC31L565. To save sending in a check through school, you can also sign up for Presto Pay (there is just a 39¢ charge to use Presto Pay) and pay that way (comes directly out of your checking account, similar to PayPal).

The Scrip order form went home today; please note specials for the month of October are in bold. Order forms are always available on the PTSO website—<http://mctptso.org/fundraising/scrip>. Contact Lynne Densen (lynne.densen@verizon.net or 978-266-2952) or Maureen Jones (maureen.jones1@verizon.net or 978-266-2874) with any questions. The November Scrip deadline will be 11/18 and the December deadline will be 12/15.



Be Part of the Magic!

Make new friends and catch up with the old ones at **McCarthy-Towne's Fall Social on Friday, October 30 from 6–8 PM**. This year, the social will be held in both the Parker-Damon cafeteria and the gym to make room for a performance by Awesome Robb, who will entertain us with magic and juggling. We'll also have tons of fun games, crafts, and activities (and loads of prizes for all). Come in your costume, have a pizza dinner for \$2 per slice, and enjoy sweets and other treats. Tickets will be available at the door (price will be announced on upcoming posters and flyers and via McT News). Children must be accompanied by their parents; this is NOT a drop-off event.

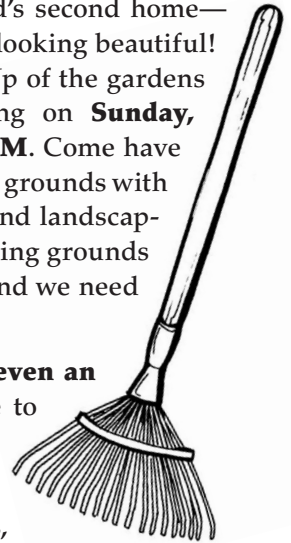
We need LOTS of volunteers for the social—sixth graders to help with setup from 5–6 PM and parents to help run games and staff pizza and other tables during the event. If you can help out (or want more info), contact Tracey Smith (tracey@gristmillmedia.com) or Sarah Auerbach (sbauerbach@gmail.com).

Family Fall Clean-Up is Here! Sunday, October 18 from 10 AM – 1 PM

McCarthy-Towne is your child's second home—your help is needed to keep it looking beautiful! Please join us for Fall Clean-Up of the gardens at the Parker-Damon Building on **Sunday, October 18 from 10 AM–1 PM**. Come have fun raking and cleaning up the grounds with other families. The clean-up and landscaping of the Parker-Damon Building grounds is done ONLY by volunteers and we need your help!

Please consider helping for even an hour. We hope you'll be able to join us this year—it's getting lonely out there!

Bring your rakes, weeding tools, wheel barrows, friends and neighbors... everyone is welcome to come help out! Contact Karen Dean (dkdean83@gmail.com or 978-274-2084) with any questions.



BOOK FAIR 2009

This year's McCarthy-Towne Book Fair will be held **Friday, October 30 through Wednesday, November 4**, in conjunction with the Fall Social. The Book Fair is great fun for the kids, a nice way to spend a couple of volunteer hours, and a wonderful fundraiser for the school.

Students will visit the Book Fair with their classes at assigned half hour slots, as determined by their teachers, on Friday (10/30), Monday (11/2), or Wednesday (11/4). **The Book Fair will also be held Friday night during the Fall Social from 6–8 PM** (see above article for more details). Families are encouraged to buy books for their children, as gifts for others, and as gifts to specific classrooms by purchasing books from the Teachers' Wish List. This is a terrific way to help the teachers build their classroom libraries.

Volunteers are warmly welcomed! Parents can choose to volunteer at times when their child/children's class attends the book fair. The more the merrier! **We also will need volunteers to set up the book fair on Thursday October 29, work the social on the evening of Friday, October 30, and break down the book fair on Wednesday afternoon, November 4.** We have a list of volunteers that Astrid has collected but it is not too late to add your name to the list. Volunteers will be contacted as soon as teachers sign up so you can be sure to be there when your child's class comes in.

More specific information regarding the Book Fair and your child/children's classroom visit will be coming via backpack mail. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer at the fair, please contact Susan Lerner (sammyabe@aol.com or 978-263-0045), Julie Jannke (julie.sweitzer@gmail.com or 978-263-1924) or Pauline Thorpe (dpthorpe@verizon.net or 978-263-4899).

The Acton Public School Committee

from John Petersen, Acton Public School Committee Member

School Committees are chartered by the General Laws of Massachusetts. As specified in the law:

“The School Committee in each city and town and each regional school district shall have the power to select and to terminate the Superintendent; shall review and approve budgets for public education in the district, and shall establish educational goals and policies for the schools in the district, consistent with the requirements of law and state-wide goals and standards established by the Board of Education.”

The Acton Public School Committee (APSC) consists of six members who are elected for three year terms. The terms are staggered so two members are elected each year. The Acton School Committee is combined with three members from the Boxborough School Committee to form the A-B Regional School Committee. Both the local and regional Committees meet monthly on Thursdays. Meetings are broadcast on Verizon FiOS and Comcast cable television (live and reruns). A list of members, meeting times and locations, agendas, budgets, and more may be found on the school committee web site—<http://ab.mec.edu/about/schoolcommittee.shtml>.

The Acton School Committee holds one of its monthly meetings in each elementary school during the course of the year. Our next meeting will be held on October 15, 7:30 PM, at Merriam School. Our November 19 meeting will be held at McCarthy-Towne School.

At our meetings, we fulfill the duties prescribed by law. Last year in addition to our important budget responsibilities, we hired a new Superintendent, Steve Mills. The Superintendent is the only school employee who reports to the Committee. The Superintendent has the responsibility for communicating and implementing the Committee decisions.

The Acton School Committee is part of our representative government. We welcome your thoughts and suggestions for schools when you meet with one of us in person, send an email or call on the phone. At the beginning of each meeting, public participation is welcomed so that important issues not on the agenda may be brought to the attention of the Committee. Acton is fortunate to have parents and guardians who are highly involved and supportive of our school system. I hope that some of you will extend that involvement to the School Committee.

MCAS Dates for Spring 2010

Students in grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 will be taking MCAS tests in the spring of 2010. Please avoid scheduling trips and appointments during the MCAS testing periods.

English Language Arts (grades 3, 4, 5, 6)

Week of March 22–26

Mathematics (grades 3, 4, 5, 6)

Week of May 10–14

Science, Technology & Engineering (grade 5)

Week of May 17–21

Food Service Recipe of the Month

Old-Fashioned Fruit Crumble

from eatingwell.com

Use whatever fresh or frozen fruit you have on hand to make this old-fashioned crumble. Typical recipes use about a half cup of butter—ours has just a tablespoon of canola oil and, for richness, chopped almonds, which are full of healthy monounsaturated fats. Makes 4 servings.

Total Prep Time: 40 minutes

Ease of Preparation: Easy

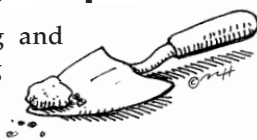
- 2 1/2 cups fresh or frozen fruit, such as blueberries, peaches, plums
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons whole-wheat or all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1/4 cup chopped almonds or pecans
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons canola oil

Preheat oven to 400°F. Combine fruit with sugar, 1 tablespoon flour and orange juice. Divide among four 6-ounce ovenproof ramekins. Combine oats, nuts, brown sugar, the remaining 2 flour and cinnamon. Drizzle with oil and stir to combine. Sprinkle over the fruit mixture. Place the ramekins on a baking sheet and bake until the fruit is bubbling and the topping is golden, 20–25 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Nutritional Information: Per serving: 252 calories; 11 g fat (1 g sat, 7 g mono); 0 mg cholesterol; 38 g carbohydrate; 4 g protein; 5 g fiber; 1 mg sodium; 179 mg potassium. 2 Carbohydrate Servings. Exchanges: 1 fruit, 1 other carbohydrate, 2 fat.

Weeding and Planting Group

Join the Thursday 10 AM Weeding and Planting Group! The PDB Landscaping Committee invites you to get out your gardening gloves and join us.



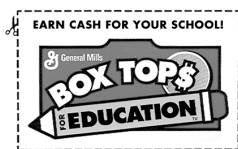
Come have some outdoor fun with Merriam and McCarthy-Towne parents; working on the gardens, plants and beds around the Parker-Damon Building. Join us for weeding days (most Thursdays at 10 AM, weather permitting). Don't know anything about gardening? No problem! Join Amanda Lye, and Karen Dean, in front of the Parker-Damon Building. You'll learn different techniques used in gardening, planting, and put them into practice here on the Parker-Damon Grounds. The clean-up and landscaping of the Parker-Damon Building grounds is done only by volunteers and we could use your help!

Lost & Found Fair

The first Lost & Found Fair will run from **Monday, October 26 through Monday, November 2**. Tables will be set up outside the Multi-Purpose Room, with items that have been found, for students/families to look through. Please ask your children to take a look on their way by to see if any items can find their way home.

Families and students can also check for lost items during this year's annual Fall Social which will take place on Friday, October 30 from 6-8 PM. Items that have been left behind after November 2 will be donated to charity, so please come and claim your missing lunchbox, sweatshirt, sweater, windbreaker etc.!

Keep Clipping for October 30th!



The first Box Tops collection is coming up. Please send in all your saved Box Tops to your child's classroom by **Friday, October 30**. This is a really easy way that we all contribute over \$1,000 per year to our school. If you have any questions about the program, please contact Julie Driscoll (bobina44@comcaset.net).

School Picture Retakes

School picture retakes are scheduled for Friday, November 6. If your child was absent on September 21, they will have their picture taken on November 6. If you are not satisfied with the original picture, send the entire package back to school on November 6 and have your child give it to the photographers to get a retake.

Tidbits from Tina

from Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor

Dangers of Cyberspace

How things have changed! A few years ago I had never heard of Instant Messaging/Facebook/texting/pictures on a phone. Today I see my sons and daughter instantly communicating at work, at home, everywhere. My daughter even texted friends while she was in labor with her first child! I guess she was bored between contractions ((-: Internet communication is a wonderful thing, but it holds dangers as well, especially for our computer-savvy yet naïve children. Not only can our children be caught off-guard by unknown computer buddies, but they may inadvertently hurt classmates/friends in their impulsive communications.

Many years ago my 6th grade son wrote a teasing note about a classmate. He and a friend were fooling around, and had no intention of anyone else seeing their writings. Alas, as you might guess, the note fell into the wrong hands and was shown to the particular classmate. Feelings were hurt. My son spent an uncomfortable evening apologizing to his classmate, feeling guilty and ever so sorry!

With today's technology a similar mistake would have much more severe consequences. Our children are fooled into thinking their high-tech communications are private and anonymous, leading them to send things that can be quite hurtful to others—rumors, mean comments, pictures. Their messages are instantly transmitted to their "buddies", and beyond. Sitting in the privacy of their homes, they don't realize that classmates across town are being hurt in a very public way.

As the counselor at McCarthy-Towne I have seen the results of high-tech communication and I ask you to beware. Please have a conversation with your children, and then keep an eye on their computer activities. This is not a question of whether you trust them or not, but rather about helping them learn to make good choices and to anticipate possible unintended consequences. Help your children be wise users of technology, and avoid trips to classmates' homes to apologize to all those they have unintentionally hurt. With internet communications you might have many homes to visit!

McCarthy-Towne School – OCTOBER 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 NO SCHOOL Columbus Day	13	14 Community Assembly Scrip orders due PTSO Meeting, 7 PM	15	16 NSTAR CFL bulb orders due	17
18 Fall Clean-Up at PDB, 10 AM–1 PM	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26 PDB Lost & Found Fair Begins (through Nov. 2)	27	28	29	30 Box Tops due Book Fair McT Fall Social, 6–8 PM	31
NOVEMBER 1	NOVEMBER 2 PDB Lost & Found Fair Ends Book Fair	NOVEMBER 3 NO SCHOOL, Professional Development Day	NOVEMBER 4 Book Fair	NOVEMBER 5	NOVEMBER 6 School Picture Retake Day November McT Bulletin is published	NOVEMBER 7

Upcoming PTSO Meetings

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

October 14th November 18th December 9th

LOOKOUT FOR LICE!

A Guide for Prevention and Treatment of Head Lice

from Betty Johns, McT School Nurse

WHAT ARE HEAD LICE?

Head lice (pediculosis) are tiny, wingless, elongated insects that are tan to grayish-white, but may take on a reddish-brown color after feeding on their host. They are about the size of a small sesame seed, and their six legs have claws for grasping hair. They cannot fly nor can they jump. Head lice, which have a life span of about 30 days on a host, are parasites that feed on human blood. The lice bites cause itching, which is often the first sign of infestation.

A female louse lays 100 or more eggs ("nits"), which hatch in 7-10 days. Nits are oval or teardrop shaped, and may be colored yellowish-brown, white, or silver. They are quite tiny, about the size of the period at the end of this sentence. Lice attach nits at an angle to the side of a hair shaft with a water-proof, cement-like substance; therefore, nits cannot be washed or brushed out of hair like dandruff or other debris.

HOW ARE HEAD LICE SPREAD?

Head lice are most often spread through close contact with an infested person or by sharing personal items such as hats, clothing, combs and hair accessories. Not surprisingly, head lice can be spread in schools among play-mates. Because head lice can survive for 24-48 hours off of a human host, they also can travel through coats and hats that are hung or piled together. Also, head lice can remain undetected on upholstered furniture, stuffed toys, pillows, and bed linens.

HOW DO I CHECK FOR HEAD LICE?

Because head lice move so quickly, they are difficult to see, so the diagnosis of infestation is usually made on the basis of finding nits. Nits are barely visible to the naked eye. It can be especially difficult to see nits in light-colored hair. It may be helpful to use a magnifying glass to search for them. It is also essential to use a bright source of light, with natural sunlight being optimal. Comb carefully through the hair, looking for nits. Pay close attention to the back of the head, nape of the neck, and behind the ears. Nits are most commonly clustered in these areas, but examine the entire scalp. In rare, severe cases, nits may be found in eyebrows and eyelashes. Nits are usually found close to the scalp, about 1/4" to 1/2" away, but they can be found at any distance along the hair shaft, attached securely.

CAN HEAD LICE CAUSE INFECTIONS?

In general, head lice do not pose a human health risk. In some severe cases, excessive scratching can cause infections in children. These infections can cause swelling of lymph glands around the head, especially behind the ears and on the neck.

TREATMENT

- Treatment must be directed toward the infested person AND his/her personal articles.
- ALL family members must be checked and, if found to be infested, also treated. Males, as well as females, can be infested. Hair length does not matter (other than for ease of nit removal).
- The environment must be decontaminated.
- Rechecks are essential to control infestation and reduce the possibility of reoccurrence.

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WHAT DO I DO WHEN I FIND LICE OR NITS?

- STAY CALM!
- Contact your child's health care provider for their treatment recommendations.
- Following the recommended treatment method, remove remaining nits with a fine-tooth comb designed for nit removal. Continue to check for and remove nits DAILY for the next two weeks.
- Wash all clothing, bed linens, and other washable articles that have been in contact with the infested person using water that is at least 130 degrees F. Use the hot dryer cycle.
- Non-washable items can be left in a sealed plastic bag for two to three weeks.
- Soak combs and brushes in hot water for 10 minutes.
- Report all cases of head lice to the school nurse. You should also notify the parents of your child's close playmates. Don't be embarrassed; head lice are NOT a sign of uncleanliness.

PREVENTION

- Warn your child not to leave clothing items in piles at school or at after-school activities.
- Instruct your child not to share clothing, hairbrushes, etc. with friends.
- Tie back or braid long hair.
- Check your child's hair and scalp WEEKLY throughout the school year. This may take up to 30-45 minutes, but it will become routine. It is much easier to treat a mild infestation than when lice have been living on your child's head for weeks!
- Check your child's hair when you receive a lice notification from his/her classroom, then return the notice to school.

WHAT CAN I DO TO AVOID REINFESTATION?

- Recheck for reinfestation 7-10 days after the initial treatment, and treat again if necessary.
- Recheck all family members whether they were infested or not during the next two to three weeks.
- Remember to treat the home environment. Vacuum rugs and upholstered furniture, mattresses and car seats as needed to remove loose hairs and nits. Clean clothing, bed linens as outlined under treatment. Be sure to clean combs and brushes.

HEAD LICE PROCEDURE OF THE ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOLS

Like many school systems, the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Schools have a "No-Nit" procedure recommending that students have no nits in their hair in order to attend school. This increases the likelihood that the child is truly rid of the infestation.

IMPORTANT!

It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to report all cases of head lice infestation and reinfestation to their child's school nurse immediately.

Only then can steps be taken to prevent increased transmission within the school environment. These steps include:

- Notification of parents/guardians of the presence of lice in the classroom.
- Individual head checks.
- Classroom decontamination following environmentally sound procedures.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Your school nurse or personal health care provider can give you more resources about head lice. There are helpful web sites, videos, articles and books that they can recommend and/or lend to you.