



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

December 4, 2009
Volume 39, No 4

December Changes

by David Krane, McT Principal

I write this during our Thanksgiving break and the weather outside doesn't seem to reflect the time of year. With temperatures in the forties, it's easier to not think about the winter and the snow and the cold. But it is December and the inevitability of the seasonal changes is well understood in New England. We will enjoy it while we can and the children can get outside more often and that is always a good thing!

We are just about one third of our way through the school year and we are noticing and tracking how the children are changing, too. Conferences are, for the most part, recently completed. Families and teachers have been able to sit down and speak to the learning that is happening in the McCarthy-Towne classrooms. One of the extraordinary parts of this school is the level of respect that develops between student and teacher. For kids to really grow as learners and citizens, the teachers must have a solid understanding of the child as both a person and a learner. Knowing and understanding where a student is as a learner is the critical on-going process towards guiding that child in sustained growth. Mutual respect between teacher and student deepens that understanding and nurtures the growth.

Families, of course, play a huge part in contributing to and sustaining that growth. What is taught in the classroom, both academically and socially, does not stop at the schoolhouse door. The partnership between and among the school, the teachers and the families provides the continuity for the learning. Here at McCarthy-Towne

there is an expectation that this continuity will occur, that the classroom teachings will be layered with the support of the families at home. This is especially important in the teaching of social, community expectations. At our school, the teaching of strategies for successful social interactions, including conflict resolution, is part of the entire classroom process. Teachers model appropriate behaviors in school and these behaviors are expected to be present outside of school, as well. Before the school day, after the school day and during the school day students often find themselves in a position to use the language and strategies taught in the classroom to defuse a potential conflict. This is only a great beginning, however. Families have to continue to be a part of this process, understanding and reinforcing what's taught in the classroom, communicating with the children and the teachers about what is happening on the playground, in the classroom and on the bus.

We encourage children to advocate for themselves and their learning. Mutual respect helps this to really occur. But we must also encourage kids to advocate for themselves and for others in the social arena, too. Sometimes the simplest thing will work, though, and that is to be nice to each other and to ask that others be nice, too. When I was a small boy my grandmother would often say that a little kindness goes a long way. That is as true today as it was then. So let's resolve to try a little kindness and model that for the children. We can all watch a little kindness go a long way.

Mark Your Calendar

DECEMBER

9, Wednesday
Community Assembly
PTSO Meeting, 7 PM

15, Tuesday
Scrip Orders Due

16-23
PDB Lost & Found Fair

24-Jan. 1
NO SCHOOL,
Winter Recess

JANUARY

4, Monday
School Reopens

18, Monday
NO SCHOOL,
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

25, Monday
Kindergarten Changeover

Save the Date!

The 19th Annual McCarthy-Towne Auction will be held the evening of
Saturday, March 13 at the Devens Common Center in Devens, MA.
See page 5 for more details and volunteer opportunities!

by Kim Clark and Tammy Sarnelli, PTSO co-chairs

What a great November we had! We met the Scrip Challenge and the children got to enjoy a PJ day. We are still about \$1,000 away from our goal of raising \$3,500 to fund the Cultural & Performing Arts Committee (CPAC). CPAC brings school-wide events for the children during school hours and they also give \$100 to each grade to use for enrichment programs on a smaller scale. **There is still time to contribute.** Forms are available on the PTSO website, www.mctptso.org, under "forms".

Also, as the holidays approach, please remember there are many ways to help our school while you are doing your regular holiday shopping:

- **Buy store cards** for your holiday purchases, or give as gifts through our SCRIP program.
- **Buy Amazon products** through our school portal (we get up to 10% of what you purchase). Simply go to our PTSO website, www.mctptso.org and click on the Amazon logo to the right.
- **Buy through Onecause.** You can reach the portal through the PTSO website, www.mctptso.org. Each order you place, a percentage goes back to McT.
- **Shop for groceries at Donelan's or Crosby's supermarkets.** For every dollar you spend, McT will earn points redeemable for free educational equipment. See page 3 for details.

December Lost & Found Fair

The next Parker Damon Building Lost and Found Fair will be held from **December 16-23**. Lost items will be set up downstairs outside the multi-purpose room. Any labeled, found items will be sent to the schools' office and teachers will be notified to send students to retrieve their items. Parents can stop by the fair and look for lost items as well. Any unclaimed clothing will be washed and given to charity after the December break. Please urge your children to claim their things this month!

Lost & Found Committee Needs Volunteers!

The Lost and Found Committee is still looking for a few people that can give just a little bit of time to help find the owners of lost and found items. There is total flexibility regarding the amount of time you take, the time of day... and even what day you will help. Even just once or twice is very helpful. For more info, please contact Shelly Jaros (shellyjaros@yahoo.com).

Save Items for the Yard Sale

Cleaning for the holidays? Save your toys, bikes, clothes, sporting equipment, furniture and household items for the annual McCarthy-Towne Yard Sale. Last year, because of your amazing donations and efforts, we were able to raise nearly \$4,000. We will be collecting donations on April 30 for the sale on Saturday, May 1. If you are interested in volunteering to help with the sale, contact Brenda Simpson (brendahsimpson@hotmail.com) or Connie Olden (theoldens@comcast.net).

Book Fair Success!

from Julie Jannke, Susan Lerner, and Pauline Thorpe

The McT/Scholastic Book Fair was a great success again this year! We give a huge thank you to the many volunteers who made it all happen. We also thank the many McT families, teachers and students who purchased so many books. We made a cash profit of \$2,462 for McT.

Once again, our McT families made the teacher WISH LIST program a priority. All teachers, specialists and the library received books for their classrooms/library as a result of your generosity. These lists were supplemented by the \$140 of books we earned based on our sales and events held from last year. This year, in addition to our cash profit, we have earned \$572 in books for the library.

Many thanks to David Krane, Jean Onorato, Robyn Winick and Astrid Trostorff for all their help and to all the teachers for bringing their classes to the book fair. Thank you to the following volunteers: Laurel Doggett, Melissa Grigsby, Mimi Kirkman, Tina Watlington, Amanda Dindal, Connie Olden, Paula Freni, Tracey Smith, Marie Clougher, Bridget Matz, Kathleen Surdan, Kim Meusel, Rena Barbieri, Lauren Richardt, Nicole Lippa, Kelly McCarthy, Michele Joyce, Suzanne Ward, Tanya Robinson, Alex Mojica, Tina Connors, Stacey Harris, Maura Callahan, Lynda Burgess, Cheryl Wooden and Julia Brown Cook.



Scrip Store Card Program

Thank you to all those families that ordered Scrip cards in the month of November and met our challenge; we greatly appreciate it. We hope that you have started using your cards to shop and have realized how easy this program is to use, while, at the same time, earning money for McT.

Now that we have cleaned up from our Thanksgiving dinners, it only means one thing; **it's time to start thinking about those holiday gifts!** As you begin holiday shopping for your children, nieces/nephews, siblings and neighbors, consider giving a Scrip store card. Don't forget about using Scrip cards also for your every day purchases.

Scrip gift cards also make great gifts for teachers, bus drivers, babysitters, co-workers and those hard-to-buy-for relatives. The gift cards are available in many denominations: \$5, \$10 and \$25 and higher. Please note that teachers' wish lists were sent home before Thanksgiving.

The December orders are due on Tuesday, December 15 by 10 AM. Sorry, we cannot accept late orders. Please understand this date is firm so we will be able to receive the Scrip cards in plenty of time for the holidays. Cards will go home on Monday, December 21.

Scrip order forms were sent home on Friday, December 4. Please note the merchants in bold are offering us additional profits. Additional Scrip forms can be found at on the PTO website at www.mctpto.org/fundraising/scrip. Please contact either Lynne Densen (978-266-2952 or lynne.densen@verizon.net) or Maureen Jones (978-266-2874 or maureen.jones1@verizon.net) with any questions. Thanks and Happy Holidays!



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Turn Your Holiday Cooking into Holiday Shopping!



Remember to save all your Donelan's and Crosby's Supermarket receipts from your holiday shopping. Bring them into the office and we'll turn them into free art supplies for McT! Receipts dated September 1, 2009–March 31, 2010 are eligible.

Thank you for your support! Questions can be directed to Wendy Schaad (ws.schaad@gmail.com).

Home Alone

from the office

Do your children know what to do if they come from school to an empty house or apartment? Would they know how to get in? How to contact you? Which neighbors to go to for help?

Sometimes, despite parents' best planning, you will not get home in time to meet your children as they come home from school. The doctor's appointment could run longer than expected, the checkout line at the store could be slow, there could be a traffic jam you can't get around. Please talk to your child(ren) about what to do if they are unexpectedly "home alone." If they are prepared, neither of you will panic.

From the PDB Landscape Committee

We wish to acknowledge the two families who joined us (Amanda Lye and Karen Dean) for this year's Fall Cleanup of the McCarthy-Townne and Merriam school grounds held on Sunday, November 8. With help of hands large and small we were able to clear most of the leaves off the garden beds lining the front of Parker Damon Building. A BIG Thank You goes out to the MacNeills (Rebecca, John, Elsa and Alex) and the Benways (Matthew, Lena and Maya). Your help is much appreciated!

As always, any and all who are interested in knowing more about the PDB Landscape Committee, please contact, Karen Dean (dkdean83@gmail.com).

Tidbits from Tina

from Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor

On Friendship

"A friend is someone who likes you."

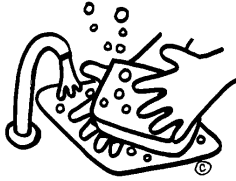
Children often lose sight of this fact, trying desperately to befriend someone who isn't a good match. Perhaps we can help them appreciate being liked for who they are rather than struggling to become something different just to please another.

Healthy Winter Advice

from the Health Office

The CDC recommends reminding children to:

1. **Cover their nose and mouth** with a tissue when they cough or sneeze, and have them throw the tissue away after they use it.
2. **Wash their hands often with soap and water**, especially after they cough or sneeze, use the bathroom, and before handling food. If water is not near, use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
3. **Not touch their eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs often spread this way.



Your child should stay home from school if he or she has a fever, vomits or has diarrhea within the past 12 hours, appears lethargic, or has a persistent cough. If your child is sick and goes to school, you place others at risk for getting sick as well.

Before returning to school after an illness, your child should be fever-free for 24 hours and have enough stamina to manage a full day of school activities including P.E. and recess. If your child is taking an antibiotic, he or she should remain at home for the first 24 hours. Please notify the health office if your child tests positive for strep infection.

All medications should be brought to the health office by a parent. Do not send in medication in your child's backpack.

Check your child for lice once a week, and contact the health office if you find lice or nits. The most effective control is careful, repeated inspection of the child's hair and scalp by parents.

Students need to get plenty of sleep and physical activity, drink water, and eat good food to help them stay healthy in the winter and all year.

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



'Tis the Season to Recycle



by Heidi Kupferman

'Twas the night before SLOYD,
And all through the house.
The children collected,
Even the mouse.

Pretty paper and ribbon,
Cardboard and wood.
"Let's make a sculpture".
The kids knew that they should.

"Thanks for the toy,
It really is great.
But so is this box,
And even the crate!"

Cut, bend and glue.
"Look, it's a creature!
And what we don't use
We'll bring to our teacher."

So, please look all around
Put together, take apart
Collect all the things
To make into art.

Here are a few collecting ideas for your list:

- Newspaper (we use TONS!)
- scrap wood pieces (even shingles)
- plastic and paper supermarket bags
- yarn, fabric, ribbon, bows
- papers: maps, greeting cards, wrapping
- cardboard: cut into manageable sizes (also, we use a lot)
- clean plastic containers, trays and juice caps
- old or broken small electronics (DVD, VHS, typewriters, etc...)
- old hand tools (files, rasps, drills)
- hardware (you know, the bits and pieces in the junk drawer)

Happy Holidays,
Heidi

Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF

Thank you to all the families from McCarthy-Towne who participated in the Student Council sponsored Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF campaign. Our school's donation to UNICEF this year was \$889.83.

Batter Up!

Mark Your Calendars! The 19th Annual McCarthy-Towne Auction will be held on Saturday, March 13, 2010 at the Devens Commons Center in Devens, Massachusetts. Our theme this year is, you guessed it—BASEBALL!



As you know, there is no “I” in T-E-A-M and there will be many volunteer opportunities for any and all who are willing to Step Up To The Plate!

Be on the lookout in your child’s backpack this December for a volunteer form full of opportunities for YOU to get involved. Volunteering is fun and easy as we have many positions with varying time commitments. Some even just one hour!

The following committees need a few more people: Business Donations, Parent Donations, Back Room and Raffle Ticket Sellers.

Business Donations requires visiting local businesses who have donated an item in the past and collecting the donation for this year. There is no cold calling. Soon, all businesses will receive a letter requesting a donation. The visits and pick ups are then made in January.

Parent Donation volunteers call parents to answer questions and to remind families to donate.

Back Room folks work the night of the auction.

Raffle Ticket Sellers work an hour time slot at a local grocery store or the post office on a weekend.

It’s never too early to start thinking about donations as well. McCarthy Towne is fortunate to have so many creative parent donations! Request forms will be sent home in early January so put your thinking caps on! If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information about the auction, please contact Heidi Dalaklis (hm.dalaklis@verizon.net) or Jill Defoe (defoe@verizon.net) or check out our web-site by visiting www.mctpto.org/fundraising/auction2010.

Are the Holidays Stressing You Out?

The Acton Boxborough Parents of Children with Challenges (ABPCC) invites you to our monthly meeting for an open discussion. Bring any suggestions you have that may help others get through this busy and often stressful holiday season. Join us on **Thursday, December 17 at 9:30 AM** at ABRHS in room 131 East.

We’re planning an evening presentation for January or early February to address ways to help our children and teenagers cope with anxiety. Check next months newsletter for details.

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 strive to form a community of parents who can provide mutual support and comfort.

For further information on our group, please contact Francesca Ricciardi (fmr08@verizon.net) or Ebit Speers (ebandmac@verizon.net).

Food Service Recipe of the Month

Gingersnap-Banana Frozen Yogurt

from eatingwell.com

Ingredients:

- 2 cups vanilla frozen yogurt, softened
- 6 gingersnap cookies, chopped
- 2 bananas, sliced
- 1/4 cup chopped toasted pecans

Directions:

Layer equal portions of frozen yogurt, chopped gingersnaps, bananas and pecans into 4 small dessert cups or glasses. Freeze until the yogurt is firm, at least 10 minutes. Makes 4 servings.

Nutrition:

Per serving: 287 calories; 12 g fat (4 g sat, 4 g mono); 15 mg cholesterol; 42 g carbohydrates; 5 g protein; 2 g fiber; 81 mg sodium; 249 mg potassium. 3 Carbohydrate Serving. Exchanges: 2 carbohydrates (other), 1 fruit, 2 fat.

McCarthy-Towne School – DECEMBER 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
6	7	8	9 Community Assembly PTSO Meeting, 7 PM	10	11	12
13	14	15 Scrip orders due	16 PDB Lost & Found Fair Begins (through 12/23)	17	18	19
20	21	22	23 PDB Lost & Found Fair Ends	24 NO SCHOOL Winter Recess	25	26
27	28 NO SCHOOL Winter Recess	29	30	31	JANUARY 1	JANUARY 2
JANUARY 3	JANUARY 4 School Reopens	JANUARY 5	JANUARY 6	JANUARY 7	JANUARY 8 February McT Bulletin is Published	JANUARY 9

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! The next meeting is **December 9th** at 7PM.