



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

March 5, 2010
Volume 39, No 7

March Quasi-Madness

by David Krane, McT Principal

Each year in college basketball, teams from many colleges and universities around the country compete to be part of a huge national tournament. Although the traditional powerhouse schools and teams generally prevail, there seems to always be a team that emerges, against all odds, to exceed all expectations and somehow succeed. There is a pervasive excitement around the tournament for this reason, even for people who may not be fans of college basketball. This is March Madness.

Here at McCarthy-Towne, the excitement level is building, too, but around something completely different. March is auction time and the hard work that it takes to make it so successful is apparent everywhere around the school. The various grade level art projects, which are being donated to the auction, are beginning to be framed and displayed in the office and they are absolutely beautiful. From the fourth grade's color-rich depictions of planets to sixth grade name glyphs to the wonderful fifth grade representation of an Old World map, there is hard, creative work here, unusual and fun. This seems to be typical of this time, as we count down the days to the actual event only one week from the time you read this. People are incredibly generous with their donations, both of material goods and of time. Teachers have come up with the most amazingly creative offers, all structured around their donations of time and their clear affection for the children of our school community. And time is the most precious donation that a teacher can offer, too! Of course, the children are a huge part

of this, too, with all the remarkable art that they have produced and are offering for bid. I've really enjoyed watching the process unfold and I am very impressed with the clear loving commitment to the school, the teachers and the children that all this generosity represents. Everyone has a role in this because everyone has a stake in the school. This is our version of the excitement and anticipation of March Madness, McT-style.

Last month I spoke about recreational absences when school is in session. With MCAS testing looming this month and next, it bears repeating. Teachers work hard to prepare instruction that is sequential. Missing substantial chunks of school time due to family vacations sends the wrong message to students and, it's important to add, to teachers, too. Children deserve to be part of every classroom endeavor and it puts kids at a disadvantage by being deliberately out of school for reasons of vacation. Please try and keep this in mind as you make family plans.

Recently, a student who was not known to have an allergy to peanuts suffered a strong and frightening allergic reaction to a snack containing peanuts that was served in the classroom. We are now strongly discouraging any peanut use, in any capacity, in any classroom at McCarthy-Towne. Peanut butter lunches are still permitted in the Cafetorium. We are asking your help in keeping everyone safe. Thanks in advance for your cooperation on every front.

See you at the Auction!

Mark Your Calendar

MARCH

8, Monday
Auction Raffle Tickets due

10, Wednesday
PTSO Meeting, 7 PM

13, Saturday
McT Auction, 5:30 PM

17, Wednesday
Scrip orders due

22, Monday
Butterbraid and Cookie
Dough orders due

23, Tuesday
MCAS Testing, Gr. 3, 4, & 5

24, Wednesday
MCAS Testing, Gr. 3, 4, & 5

APRIL

2, Friday
NO SCHOOL, Good Friday

7, Wednesday
Donelan's and Crosby's
Receipts for Education
due to the office

PTSO Meeting, 7 PM

10, Saturday
Lip-Sync Extravaganza,
4:30-6 PM

19-23
NO SCHOOL, Spring Recess

30, Friday
Yard Sale Drop-off



by Kim Clark and Tammy Sarnelli, PTSO co-chairs

Now that February has come and gone, there are a few Spring events that are just around the corner. If you are not sure about the date or details of an event or fundraiser, please visit our website at www.mctptso.org; it is frequently updated.

Here's what's coming up:

- **The very popular and fun McT Auction is on Saturday, March 13.** All the details on the auction, how to get tickets, additional raffle tickets, and to preview some of the classroom projects, they can be found at the PTSO website(www.mctptso.org/fundraising/auction2010). There is still time! We hope to see you all there!
- We have our tasty **Butterbraid and Cookie Dough** order form that just went out. The deadline to submit orders has been extended to Monday, March 22.
- **The 3rd Annual Lip Sync Extravaganza** is scheduled for Saturday, April 10.

Donelan's and/or Crosby's Receipts for Education Ends March 31st!



As you shop at Donelan's and/or Crosby's Supermarkets over the next couple weeks, please remember to save your receipts! Send the receipts in with your child or drop them off at the McT office yourself. They'll be redeemed for free educational equipment including art supplies and books.

All receipts must be dropped off at the McT office by Wednesday, April 7, 2010. If you've been stockpiling receipts, please send them in as soon as possible!

Receipts dated September 1, 2009 through March 31, 2010 are eligible. If you have any questions, please contact Wendy Schaad (ws.schaad@gmail.com).

2010 MCAS Schedule

Students in grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 will be taking MCAS tests this spring. Please avoid scheduling trips and appointments during the testing periods. Testing begins at the beginning of the school day, so students should avoid late arrival to school. If students after their class begins the test, they will not be able to take the test that day.

English Language Arts Reading Comprehension (grades 3, 5, 6)
Tuesday, March 23 and Wednesday, March 24

English Language Arts Composition (grade 4)
Tuesday, March 23

Mathematics (grades 3, 4, 5, 6)
Tuesday, May 11 and Wednesday, May 12

Science, Technology & Engineering (grade 5)
Tuesday, May 18

McT Student Art Included in Exhibit at the Worcester Art Museum

Congratulations to Jake Puff, Stetson Doggett, Lizzie Kirkman, Gretel Busse and Alex L'Heureux. Heidi has chosen artwork they created in Sloyd class to be displayed at the **Worcester Art Museum during the month of March.** This multi-media exhibit is sponsored by the Massachusetts Art Education Association as part of Youth Art Month, a national celebration to emphasize the value of art education for all children and to encourage support for the quality art programs in Massachusetts' schools. **An artist reception will be held on Sunday, March 14, from 1-4 PM.** Be sure to stop by to see all the great art. For more information, hours and directions, visit www.worcesterart.org.

Lip-Sync Extravaganza

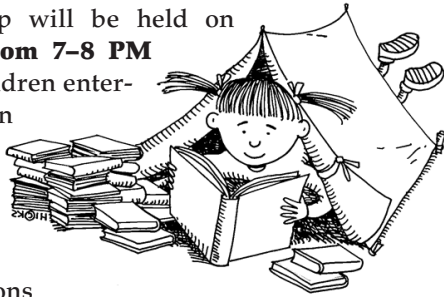
Our 3rd Annual Lip-Sync Extravaganza is scheduled for Saturday, April 10 from 4:30-6 PM. This has been a huge hit with 25 performances last year by both McT students and staff. Don't miss out this year! We have had a lot of people already express interest in performing and we have to limit the number of performances. Information about how to sign up will be coming soon. It isn't too early to start thinking about what song you would like to perform, if you would like to do it individually or in a group, and to start practicing.

Like last year, each song is limited to a maximum of 2.5 minutes. Also, each group is limited to one song, although individuals may perform both solo and in a group or in two different groups. Children need to be 2nd grade or higher to perform a song individually. The full list of guidelines (dress rehearsal and such) can be found on the PTSO website—www.mctptso.org/fundraising/lip-sync. If you have any questions, please contact Lynne Densen (lynne.densen@verizon.net or 978-266-2952) or Karen Anderson (cander67@aol.com or 978.274.2012).

Save the Date for Early Literacy Workshops

Sharon Ryan, McT Reading Specialist, will be hosting two parent evening workshops. First, parents of McT children transitioning from Kindergarten to Grade 1 in the Fall of 2010 are invited to "Teachers and Families as Literacy Partners", to be held on **Monday, May 3, from 7-8 PM** in the McCarthy-Towne Library. Sharon will share research-based ideas and engaging activities to maintain the literacy skills your kindergartener has developed throughout the year as well as share some wonderful children's literature to nurture and develop a love of reading! Each family will receive a collection of literacy materials and resources to take home and enjoy with his/her child!

The second workshop will be held on **Monday, May 24, from 7-8 PM** for parents of McT children entering Kindergarten in the Fall of 2010. This workshop will also be held in the McCarthy-Towne Library.



If you have any questions about these workshops, please contact Sharon (sryan@mail.ab.mec.edu).

Butter Braid Breads and Cookie Dough

Are you looking for a fun, easy cooking project to do with the kids? Do you have kids coming over for a play-date, or weekend guests coming? Wouldn't it be great to be able to make a few cookies in just 10 minutes or a delicious pastry breakfast that can be prepared overnight?

McT is holding this great food fundraiser to be delivered before the Easter holiday! Make some warm, tasty treats in under 30 minutes to bring with you or serve at home! **The deadline to order has been extended to Monday, March 22.**

Cookie Dough: Frozen in squares so you can make as few or as many as you like. Cookies bake in 10 minutes. Dough can be thawed for up to 8 hours and then refrozen if not used.

Pastry: Keep it frozen until you need it. Bakes in 20-25 minutes. Pastry can be thawed for up to 4 hours and then refrozen if not used.

Orders can be picked up on Monday, March 29, 4-7 PM at 103 Central Street. **It is very important that you pick up your order on March 29** as the food must be refrigerated or frozen. Please mark your calendar. If you cannot pick up on this date or have any questions please contact Jill DeFoe (978-263-4848 or defoe@verizon.net).

Scrip Gift Card Program



Thanks to all the families that ordered Scrips in the month of February. Scrips continues to be a great way to help the school raise money without having to "buy" anything in addition to your usual purchases, so we will continue to offer the Scrip program on a monthly basis until the end of the school year. **We have raised over \$3,400 YTD!**

The order form is attached with all the participating vendors. If you need an additional form (for a family member or friend would like to place an order), you can find them online at www.mctpto.org/fundraising/scrip.

The March orders are due on Wednesday, March 17th. If you have any questions, contact either Lynne Densen (lynne.densen@verizon.net or 978-266-2952 or Maureen Jones (maureen.jones1@verizon.net or 978-266-2874).

Tidbits from Tina

from Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor

On Friendship

"Sometimes you don't know who are your friends.
Sometimes they are there all the time,
but you walk right past them
and don't notice that they like you in a special way.
And then you think you don't have any friends.
Then you must stop hurrying and rushing so fast. . .
And move very slowly,
And look around carefully,
To see someone who smiles at you
In a special way. . .
Sometimes you have to find your friend."

—Joan Walsh Anglund

Sometimes our children feel lonely and have to work at finding a friend. Maybe if they just look around, they might find someone who may become a friend for life (or at least for 3rd grade!).

Come One Come All! The Auction is Coming—Saturday, March 13

Spring training may have just begun for the pros, but your McT auction team has been hard at work to make this auction the best one yet! Tickets are on sale NOW. Reservations must be made by Monday, March 8. Forms can be found on the McCarthy-Towne PTSO website (www.mctptso.org/fundraising/auction2010). If you've already purchased tickets, they will be going home with your child on Friday, March 5. Don't miss this opportunity to come join in the fun!

Raffle Details

You can't always help your child brush their teeth, clean their room, or eat ALL their vegetables, but you can help them sell raffle tickets! **This year, the prizes are cold, hard cash—1st prize is \$250.00, 2nd prize is \$150.00 and 3rd prize is \$100.00.** Please return raffle tickets to school by Monday, March 8. If you have any questions about the auction raffle, please contact Tammy Sarnelli (tammy.sarnelli@biogenidec.com).

What If I Can't Get to the Auction? Bid by proxy!

Can't make it to the auction, but you saw something listed you'd like to bid on? Place a bid by proxy using our proxy bid forms. Forms should be in your child's backpack, along with the Auction Booklet, on Friday, March 5 (instructions for filling out the form are included). Bidding forms will also be available on the PTSO website (www.mctptso.org/fundraising/auction2010).

For a complete listing of all the amazing items that are going to be auctioned, please visit the PTSO website (www.mctptso.org/fundraising/auction2010). Be sure to check back often because new items are being added all the time!

Here's just a sample of some auction items this year:

- Spring Break at the Cypress Pointe Villas resort in Orlando Florida (minutes from Disney!)
- A week-long vacation in a house in Wellfleet, MA
- Spring Break in Williamsburg, VA. Spend this spring break at the Greensprings Vacation Resort
- Weekend vacation in a house in Harwich, MA
- 4 tickets to Bon Jovi at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough on Sat, Jul 24, 2010, 7 PM
- Lunch with Principal David Krane and 3 friends (provided by David). Top 2 bidders each win a lunch (2 different sets of 4 students).
- Patriots Game Day Experience—Enjoy the luxury of the Patriot Clubhouse at Gillette Stadium for the 2010 Inaugural Pre-Season game
- Breakfast with Abby for you and 3 friends
- The MCats band to play at your next business, social, or charity event
- Pizza and games with 2nd grade teachers, Jen, Noreen, and Heather
- A ride for two to school in an Acton fire truck
- A ride for two to school in an Acton police cruiser
- One year membership to Worcester Art Museum
- Pizza and bowling with Heather, Nancy, and Vin
- Principal for a morning
- A Nintendo DSi
- Rebecca Rubin, the latest American Girl Doll
- A tour of the statehouse and lunch with State Senator Jamie Eldridge

Immunization Requirements: Important Notice to Parents/Guardians of 6th Graders

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has the following requirements for all students entering Grade 7 in September 2010:

- **MMR** 2 doses or 2 doses of measles and one dose of mumps and rubella
- **Varicella** A physician-certified history of chicken pox disease or one dose of vaccine for students under 13 years old or two doses of vaccine for students over 13 years old.
- **Hepatitis B** 3 doses
- **Td/Tdap** one booster dose of Td (tetanus/diphtheria and acellular pertussis) if it has been more than five years since the last dose
- **A copy of an up-to-date physical examination** is required for all students before entering Grade 7.

Many of the above vaccines may have been administered while your child was in elementary school. Please check with your Healthcare Provider to be certain that your child's immunizations are up-to-date and documented in his/her record. Send a copy of the exam and updated information record to your elementary school health office and the information will be included in your child's health record when it is transferred to the Junior High School in June. If you do not have the necessary paperwork completed before the end of school, send it to the school nurse at the Junior High School by August 27, 2010.

Spring Clean for McT!

Get a head start on your spring cleaning! **The annual McT Yard Sale is Saturday, May 1.** Planning is already underway. You can help by saving clothing, sporting equipment, household goods, garden supplies, bikes, baby equipment, furniture, and books to donate. **All your tax deductible donations can be dropped off on Friday, April 30.** If you would like to volunteer at the sale or have questions, please contact either Brenda Simpson (brendahsimpson@hotmail.com) or Connie Olden (theoldens@comcast.net).

Food Service Recipe of the Month

Dessert Tortillas

Set out the ingredients buffet style for kids to serve up their own after-dinner treat.

Ingredients:

- 3 tortillas, 6" round
- cooking Spray
- 1½ tablespoons sugar
- 1½ cups fresh strawberries cleaned and hulled.
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- 8 ounces vanilla yogurt
- 1 cup chopped strawberries
- ½ cup shredded coconut or white chocolate shavings

Directions:

Heat oven to 350°. Cut each tortilla into triangles. Lay tortillas on a baking sheet and spritz with the cooking spray. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of sugar over the tops of tortillas and bake for 12 minutes or until they are crisp.

Combine strawberries, orange juice, and remaining ½ tablespoon of sugar in a blender. Puree until the mixture is smooth.

Once the chips have cooled, set them on a plate. To complete the buffet, set out separate bowls containing the strawberry sauce, yogurt, chopped strawberries and coconut or chocolate shavings. Serves 4 to 6.

Students can Sample New Food Offerings at Lunch Time

from Food Service

Food service has planned two tasting dates of new foods currently offered on the lunch menu. The tastings will take place during student's lunch time in the cafeteria.

On March 9, the tasting will be hummus and pita bread. On April 6, there will be samples of the veggie wrap. These samples are not meant to take the place of your child's regular lunch.

Thank You

by Astrid Trostorff,

Parent Involvement/Community Outreach Coordinator

Thank you to all the members of our community who volunteer in so many ways. During the past couple of months, there have been many projects and tasks where volunteers came forward to help our school, including (but not limited to):

- ★ Patty Lee, Marie Clougher, Susan Lerner, Ann Budner, Nicole Lippa, Maureen Jones, Wendy Schaad and Julie Greenspan for being school tour guides for prospective kindergarten parents;
- ★ Lynne Densen and the Hospitality Committee for providing food, drinks and flowers for McT's Parent Information Night for prospective kindergarten parents;
- ★ Student Council members Olivia Blaufuss, Gus Teran, Erin Smith, Becky Wolf, Sam Mayer, Leanna Marden, Bridget Griffen, Josh Hollenberg, Alvaro Chavez, Jose Hercules, Navaneeth Pandian, Claire Chang, Mason Kolb and Jordan Galletta for doing a wonderful job showing McT to prospective kindergarten parents on McT's Parent Information Night;
- ★ Patty Lee, Susan Lerner and Wendy Schaad for also helping McT's Parent Information Night for prospective kindergarten parents;
- ★ Ana Kerr, Maureen Jones, Nicole Lippa, Rebecca MacNeill, Jennifer Mabardy, Lena Saetre-Grant, Nisreen Harianawala, Eve Aronoff and Carol Blanco for responding to a Pinch Hitter request and stapling, envelopes and labelling auction raffle tickets;
- ★ Amanda Dindal, Sorrel Sammons and Lena Saetre-Grant for responding to a Pinch Hitter request for lamination cutting for the reading program;
- ★ Lauren Richardt for responding to a Pinch Hitter request for supervising the voting table on McT Read Across America Day.

Special Tidbit from Tina

from Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor

It has become painfully clear to me that many of us are struggling with how to keep our children safe when it comes to the internet. The attraction of the web is undeniable, but our children do not have the maturity or experience they need to avoid the pitfalls of this technology. Too often they find themselves hurting or being hurt, and they don't really understand how it all happened. The following safety plan is designed for you to use with your child, so you can be clear about your family values and expectations around the use of the computer. I hope this will help guide your conversation about using the internet, so your child can be a responsible citizen when it comes to internet safety.

My Family's Internet Safety Plan

The internet is a wonderful tool, offering lots of opportunities for learning, fun and socializing. It can also be a place where people can get hurt, so it needs to be used wisely.

1. What are the positive and negative aspects of using the internet?

Positive: _____

Negative: _____

2. What rules do we want to have in our family around the use of the internet?

Time limits? _____

Location of the computer (where a parent can notice...) _____

How will parents monitor activities on the computer? _____

What personal information can/can't be shared online? _____

3. What ifs:

If I'm feeling uncomfortable with something on line I will, _____

If pop-ups come on the screen offering special deals, I will _____

If a stranger tries to contact me, I will _____

_____ (Discuss: What is a stranger?)

4. Remember: Stop and Think before sending any message over the internet

Ask yourself—Is it kind? Is it true? Is it necessary?

Ask yourself—Would I say this to my grandmother? If not, then perhaps you shouldn't press the "send" button.

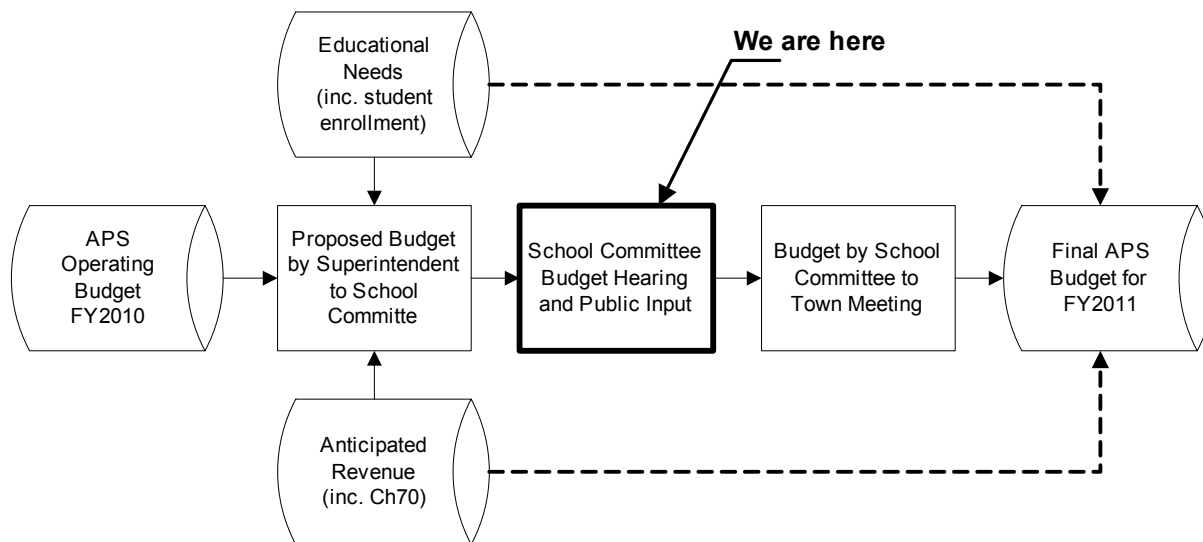
Internet Pledge: Using the internet is a privilege and I will use it responsibly. I will "stop and think" before sending or forwarding messages, so that I never hurt anyone. I will also "stop, save and share", should I receive any hurtful messages myself. I will let a trusted adult know if I ever feel uncomfortable with anything related to the internet (or the phone).

Name: _____ Date: _____

Acton Public School Committee Report

from Xuan Kong, Chair

During the last two months, the school committee and administration have been busy preparing FY 2011 budgets for Acton town meeting approval in April. The flowchart below outlines the budget processes for Acton Public Schools.



Major revenue sources to fund Acton Schools (including junior and high schools) and municipal services include:

- Local Revenues (property tax and fees) which account for about 80% of total revenue
- State Aid (primarily chapter 70 fund) [about 15%]
- One-time Revenue (reserve and federal stimulus money) [about 5%]


For FY 2010 (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010), Acton and Acton-Boxborough School Districts received about \$11.8M in Chapter 70 state aid. Projections for FY 2011 Chapter 70 range widely from \$10.7M to \$12.8M with the most recent “whisper” number being \$12.4M. In consultation with other town officials, School Committees and administration are vigilant in updating our budget assumptions with various state budget proposals from the Governor and Legislators.

The School Committee has discussed and you may have heard the proposals to reduce services at APS. Under the most pessimistic assumption for Chapter 70 state aid, many APS service cuts have been considered. However, we may be able to protect some services if Chapter 70 state aid is higher than \$10.7 million. Superintendent Mills has proposed and the School Committee supports the following priority list of service to protect:

1. Classroom Assistants (\$46,000) [Highest Priority]
2. Technology Support Specialists (\$30,000)
3. Curriculum Specialist (\$134,000)
4. SPED Assistants (\$70,000)
5. Technology Equipment Budget (\$20,000) [Lower Priority]

We welcome your input. You may send comments to the school committee (apsc@acton-ma.gov). We hope you will attend town meeting in April to vote on our budget proposal.

McCarthy-Towne School – MARCH 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
7	8 Auction Raffle Tickets due	9	10 PTSO Meeting, 7 PM	11	12	13  McT Auction, 5:30 PM
14	15	16	17 Scrip Orders due	18	19	20
21	22 Butterbraid and Cookie Dough orders due	23 MCAS Testing, Gr. 3, 4, & 5	24 MCAS Testing, Gr. 3, 4, & 5	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	APRIL 1 April McT Bulletin is published	APRIL 2 NO SCHOOL, Good Friday	APRIL 3

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!

March 10th April 7th May 12th June 9th