



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

December 3, 2010
Volume 40, No 4

December Changes

by David Krane, McT Principal

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect. The school year has begun, and for many of us there are new teachers and new classmates to meet. For teachers, there are new students to get to know and understand. The first third of the school year can be intense for students, families and teachers. So it's important to use Thanksgiving to take a breath, re-connect with family and prepare for the next four weeks leading up to winter recess.

School should be and usually is a joyful time for students. At McCarthy-Towne, the idea of guided exploration and discovery in the classrooms is one of the many ways that learning happens for students. Children need to learn at their own pace, at their own rate of discovery, in order to really have access to all the content. Learning cannot be forced. But elementary students can sometimes put a lot of pressure on themselves, sometimes feeling as though they may be falling a little short of our expectations, or even expectations that they may have set for themselves. And while it is our role as teachers to create great learning environments in the classroom, we also need to make sure that children are not putting undue demands on themselves.

Being an elementary school student means beginning to understand who you are as a learner. There will be natural stumbles and stubbed toes as kids move through this process. But they should be able to pick themselves up, dust off, and get right back to the task at hand. Taking chances and taking risks need to be encouraged and celebrated. Making mistakes in the process of this risk taking needs to be equally celebrated, too. Stumbles and mistakes are a big part of the learning that takes place at our school, both in the academic arena and the social arena.

As a school we encourage students to advocate for themselves as learners and as friends. Sometimes this advocacy may mean understanding when to take a break, too. We all have high expectations for ourselves and for our children. But, as teachers and as parents, we also need to effectively model stepping back and enjoying the life that surrounds us. That is also an integral and essential part of what happens at school.

"The aim of education should be to teach the child to think, not what to think."

-John Dewey

Mark Your Calendar

DECEMBER

7, Tuesday

Principal's Coffee,
9:30-10:30 AM

8, Wednesday

PTSO Meeting, 7PM

14, Tuesday

Scrip Orders due

15, Wednesday

Geography T-shirt Day

Taste of Italy Menu

Community Assembly

24-Jan. 2

NO SCHOOL, Winter Recess

JANUARY

3, Monday

School Reopens

12, Wednesday

PTSO Meeting, 7PM

17, Monday

NO SCHOOL,
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

24, Monday

Kindergarten Changeover



Geography T-Shirt Day

Be Geographic! McCarthy-Towne will celebrate **Geography T-Shirt Day on Wednesday, December 15.** Everyone is encouraged to wear a T-shirt or sweatshirt with a name of a place on it. It can be from someplace close (Acton, Cape Cod or New Hampshire) or someplace faraway (China, Paris or Iceland), and it doesn't matter if you've been there or not!





from Tammy Sarnelli, PTSO chair

Thank you to Kate Crosby who joined the PTSO discussion in November. Kate gave a great presentation regarding the "Power Down Project" and how we can all conserve energy in our lives.

A HUGE welcome to Michele Caterina, our new PTSO Junior Chair! Michele joins us as a mom of three young children and is a great addition to the PTSO. We still need to fill a few open positions on the PTSO. Please let Michele or Tammy know if you are interested:

- CPAC (1-2 people): To work with our outgoing Chair, Francesca
- Basketball Snack Sales (1 person)
- Family Photo Day (2 people)

Many thanks to all parents for participating in the October Fall Social and Scholastic Book Fair. A great time was had by all. The book fair did **AMAZINGLY** well under the watchful eye of Susan Lerner and Mimi Kirkman. I also hope everyone used Game Night as an opportunity to shop for the holiday season.

Our Scrip program continues to do well, and because of your purchases, our children earned a PJ day on Friday December 3rd. Remember, for every card you purchase, the school receives additional funds.

If you would like to become involved in PTSO, but are worried about the time commitment, I can assure you there are jobs for everyone, even with limited time. **The next PTSO meeting will take place on Wednesday December 8, 2010 at 7 PM.** Please come and join the discussion. Hope to see you there.

Remember, you can always find PTSO information on our website—www.mctptso.org.

Enter to Win an iPod® Shuffle and \$500 in Free Groceries!



McCarthy-Towne School is once again participating in the *Register Tapes for Education Program*. This incredible program allows us to earn FREE school equipment just by doing our grocery shopping.

Simply save your receipts every time you shop at Donelan's Supermarkets! Then send them in with your child to give to their teacher, or drop them in the collection box in the office. **Receipts dated September 1, 2010–March 31, 2011 are eligible.** In past years, this program has generated over a thousand dollars worth of school supplies that didn't cost our school a penny!

Also, don't forget to fill out the entry form below and send it into school with your receipts by **January 15, 2011** to get a chance to win a \$500 grocery gift certificate plus an iPod Shuffle. Please leave the "school code" section of the entry form blank.

For complete contest rules, visit www.registertapesforeducation.com/shoppercontest. If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Lippa (lippanicole2008@comcast.net).



Please enter me for a chance to win a \$500 grocery gift certificate plus an iPod Shuffle.

Name _____ School Code _____

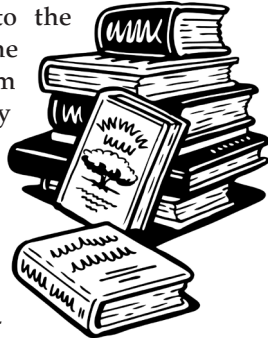
Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____

Book Gifting Program

Please consider donating a book to the Parker Damon Building Library. The McT PTSO Book Gifting Program makes it easy to give high quality library bound books that will provide enjoyment for our students for many years to come. These books have special library binding to hold up to years of use by our readers.



The 2010–11 Gift Book list is available for review on the McT PTSO website (www.mctptso.org/bookgifting). The books will be donated on a first come, first serve basis, so make your selection early if you see “the perfect book” you’d like to purchase. If you can’t decide, you can send in a check and let our librarian, Julia Milley, decide which book(s) to purchase.

Order forms will be going home shortly, or you can send in a check payable to McT PTSO with your name, email address, and the title of the book you wish to purchase. You also have the option to decorate a label to be placed in the book. If you have any questions about the program, contact Joanie Davis (davisjecd@verizon.net).

UNICEF Update

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 \$746.07.**

Scrip Store Card Program

Thank you to all the families who 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 realize how easy this program is to use, while, at the same time, earning money for our school.

Now that we have cleaned up from our Thanksgiving dinners, it only means one thing; it is 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 just before Thanksgiving.

The December orders are due on Tuesday, December 14 (10 AM). PLEASE NOTE—WE CANNOT ACCEPT LATE ORDERS. (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 20.

Please note the merchants in bold are offering us additional profits. Additional Scrip forms can be found at www.mctptso.org/fundraising/scrip. Please contact either Lynne Densen (lynne.densen@verizon.net or 978-266-2952) or Maureen Jones (maureen.jones1@verizon.net or 978-266-2874) with any questions.

Thanks and Happy Holidays!

News from the Sloyd Studio

If you’ve passed by the Sloyd room lately you may have heard the sounds of wood being sawed, nails being hammered and sandpaper smoothing rough edges. This cacophony comes from 3rd graders busy sculpting owls and 2nd graders building wooden house facades.

Be sure to take a good look at the 6th grade wood landscape puzzles in the glass cases; you’ll be amazed at the variety of compositions and the attention paid to craftsmanship. And don’t forget to look up and admire the hanging wire leaf sculptures created by 4th grade students.

Innisbrook Order Reminder

Please stop by Suzi Yarin’s home (248 Central St.) to pick up your Innisbrook order. Use the side door to her garage (on Church St). Please come during daylight hours. Thank you!

Save the Date for A Big Night Out

A Big Night Out is back: Saturday, January 29, 2011 at the spacious and unique Clock Tower Place in Maynard. Please save the date for an evening of fun, live music, catered food, and fundraising (proceeds to benefit RJ Grey’s Project Wellness Day and A-B High’s Project Graduation). Stay tuned for exciting details about this winter’s biggest adult-only event, *A Big Night Out*.



Parker Damon International Night 2011

The McCarthy-Towne International Committee celebrates International Night in May every year, to highlight its commitment to cultural awareness and ethnic heritage in the community. The event jointly held by the McCarthy-Towne and Merriam schools, is sponsored by the PTSO (and Merriam PTO), the Acton Cultural Committee and other community endorsements. It is held in the school cafeteria and is attended by over 350 guests, students and their families from both schools.

Last year, the International Night had over 17 countries represented at the event (featuring 5 continents of the world!). The highlights of the evening included:

- An enriching display of authentic costumes worn by many attendees.
- Artistic expressions from different parts of the globe including short stories, instruments, poetry, song and dance.
- A delightful buffet of National and International flavors brought in by each family attending the event (The menu included anything from everyday eats like Pizza, Fruit Platters, Mac n Cheese to International flavors such as Dumplings from China, Cheese balls from Brazil, Kaju Barfi, a dessert from India, Chicken Schintzel from Germany and a Lebanese Lamb to name a few!)
- Global Village: an educational exhibition in the form of "booths" from various countries. Each "booth" had an array of display items ranging from artifacts, poster board exhibits with fascinating facts about the country, audio-visual displays to interesting activities for kids to know more about that country.
- Passports: Each child was given a passport, with the names of the countries printed on it. The children had their passports stamped as they visited each booth in the Global Village.

It truly is a wondrous experience that can transport you to all corners of the world, just by visiting the school! In a world that's increasingly connected and competitive and shrunk in size owing to technological advancements and global dependence, we believe that students, who foster an awareness and sensitivity to all cultural backgrounds, make more successful citizens going forward; and it is our commitment to bring that awareness to our children through this experience.

Your participation is needed for another great International Night to be held on May 6, 2011. What would you like to see at International Night? Please contact either Olyvia Sharan (olyvia_sharan@yahoo.com) or Kim Larsson (katharinelarsson@yahoo.com) with your input or if you would like more information about International Night. We hope to hear from you!

Tidbits from Tina

from Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor

Do You Have Fun with Your Child?

"Of course I do!", you might say, but I ask you to think about the last time you and your son/daughter had fun together. Helping him/her with math homework doesn't count. Teaching her/him how to improve a soccer throw-in technique doesn't count. Showing your child how to bake brownies without burning them doesn't count. While these are all wonderful ways to build competence and confidence, that's not what I'm talking about. I want you to spend time simply being with your child because he/she is a magnificent person who you just like to be around. The goal is to simply enjoy being together. Here are the rules:

- You may not accomplish any task (no raking or cleaning).
- You may not improve any particular skill (no reading or practicing a sport).
- Both of you must have fun, as in smiling and laughing. (This isn't about doing something to make your child happy. It's about both of you.)

If you do this, not only will you enjoy your child, but you will be laying a positive foundation for those times when you need to be the not-so-much-fun parent who sets limits and provides consequences.

Enjoy each other!

MCAS Dates for Spring 2011

Students in grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 will be taking MCAS tests in the spring of 2011. Please avoid scheduling trips and appointments during the MCAS testing periods.

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

Week of March 21

ELA Composition (grade 4)

Tuesday, March 22

Make-up date—Thursday, March 31

Mathematics (grades 3, 4, 5, 6)

Week of May 9

Science, Technology & Engineering (grade 5)

Week of May 16

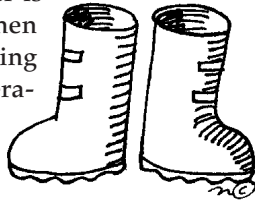
Save Items for Yard Sale

Cleaning up 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 Friday, May 20 for the sale on Saturday, May 21.** If you are interested in volunteering to help with the sale, please contact either Carol Watson (978-635-9463) or Suzy Epling (978-929-9298).

Dressing For Winter

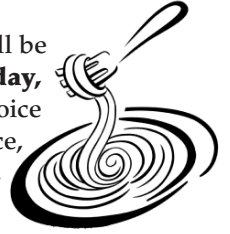
The cold weather has arrived! Our students will continue to go outside for recess unless it is extremely cold or raining. Recess is a very important part of their day, and gives them a chance to exercise, socialize, and get some fresh air.

Please make sure that your children are dressed appropriately for outdoor activity. Coats, hats, mittens, and boots are a must when the weather is cold, and don't forget snow pants when there is snow on the ground. Dressing appropriately for the winter temperatures will keep the children not only warm and comfortable, but healthy as well.



A "Taste of Italy"

The McCarthy-Towne School cafeteria will be serving a special **Italian menu on Wednesday, December 15.** Students will have their choice of pasta with either meat or marinara sauce, fresh garden salad, crusty Italian bread, fruit, and Italian ice. Mangia Mangia!



Food Service Recipe of the Month

Banana in a Blanket

From "Cool Fuel Kids Cookbook"

Ingredients:

- 1 whole wheat tortilla
- 1 tablespoon reduced-fat peanut butter
- 1 medium banana
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup or honey
- 1 tablespoon crunchy, nutty nugget cereal

Directions: Spread peanut butter evenly on the tortilla. Sprinkle cereal over peanut butter. Peel and place banana on the tortilla and roll it up. Drizzle maple syrup or honey on top. Garnish with more cereal on top if desired. Makes 1 serving.

Nutrition: Calories: 303, total fat: 6.4g, saturated fat: 1.2g, % calories from fat: 17%, % calories from saturated fat: 3%, protein: 9g, carbohydrates: 63g, cholesterol: 0mg, dietary fiber: 7g, sodium: 306mg.

CPAC User Fee

There is still time to contribute. If you haven't done so already, please take the time to read through the letter sent home (or at www.mctptso.org/forms) about the PTSO's Cultural & Performing Arts Committee (CPAC). CPAC brings performances and presentations to the school community as well as pays for the art supplies used by classrooms in the Art Integration program (paint, paper, brushes, oil pastels). We rely solely on parents' donations to fund these programs.

Please give what you can. The suggested donation is \$8 per child. You may give more or less. Of course, all students will have access to all performances and supplies regardless of their family's ability to contribute. Thank you in advance for whatever amount you can give.



CPAC User Fee

Family Name _____

Donation per child x # of children = \$ _____

Additional donation \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Checks should be made payable to the "McCarthy-Towne PTSO." Please return this form with donation to your child's classroom teacher in an envelope marked, "PTSO User Fee."

McCarthy-Towne School – DECEMBER 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5	6	7 Principal's Coffee, 9:30–10:30 AM	8 PTSO Meeting, 7 PM	9	10	11
12	13	14 Scrip orders due	15 Geography T-shirt Day Taste of Italy Menu Community Assembly	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 NO SCHOOL Winter Recess	25
26	27 NO SCHOOL Winter Recess	28	29	30	31	JANUARY 1
JANUARY 2	JANUARY 3 School Reopens	JANUARY 4	JANUARY 5	JANUARY 6	JANUARY 7 February McT Bulletin is Published	JANUARY 8

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!

December 8 January 12 February 16