



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

May 6, 2011
Volume 40, No 9

May Flowers

by David Krane, McT Principal

Although it hasn't been that warm recently, it seems to have been warm enough. After this past winter, any sign of temperatures getting remotely near sixty degrees is cause for celebration. There are bits of color growing around the school that signal a definite change. The kids have certainly celebrated, too. The morning recess in the circle is filled with raucous, joyous noise during play and the kids are wearing clothes that are appropriate for the season, although not necessarily the weather! For me, this is a surer sign of seasonal change than the appearance of the first robin. Spring is here when children play like it is here: with an outside excitement that celebrates the seasonal precursor to summer.

With this seasonal change comes the conversation around placement for next year. Many of you have communicated with me your feelings and concerns about next year. This is information we will certainly use as we build the new classroom sections for next year. This is a significant process as we construct three balanced sections at each grade level for next year. It is also a process that has started to ensure that every piece of information, academic and social, is considered as we do this work.

Some great news! Abby Johnson and her husband, Clayton, are looking forward to a baby arriving in late summer. Congratulations to Abby and her husband! Abby will be taking a child rearing leave for next school year and we are assembling a hiring committee for a one-year leave replacement teacher. We will need a parent member for the committee so please contact Astrid if you are interested.

The Kindergarten process has been completed, too. We had many families choose McCarthy-Towne as their first choice school and who wanted All Day Kindergarten. We even thought that there might be a possibility for two sections of ADK here, but the numbers ended up not supporting that idea. We would have been hard pressed to cre-

ate a classroom space, too. It still remains something that we think about, though, as we look to the future.

As mentioned before, the weather is changing as we move deeper into spring. Something the warmer weather affects is the kind of clothing that children wear to school. As it becomes warmer, children wear clothing that is lighter and more comfortable. This is a natural response and completely appropriate. In the past, though, we have noticed that sometimes children choose outfits that are more appropriate to the beach than to school. This is another time when adult guidance is invaluable. A reasonable guideline is for children to wear clothing that allows them to perform all school activities comfortably without drawing undue attention to themselves and also that the torso is covered.

Some of the apparel that we feel should not be worn to school include:

- Shirts or tops with spaghetti straps
- Shirts or tops that leave the midriff exposed
- Shirts or tops that have very large armholes
- Halter tops
- Very short shorts
- Any clothing that would cause discomfort to the child or others

In order to prevent possible injuries, we are discouraging children from wearing flip-flops to school. They can be unsafe for children running or climbing on the structures on the playground.

Thank you for your help. I appreciate your support and interest in what happens at school and knows that this creates a positive and supportive environment for all children.

We are looking forward to a great finish to what has been a wonderful year!

Mark Your Calendar

MAY

- **6, Friday, TONIGHT!**
International Night, 6 PM
- **9, Monday**
Literacy Seminar for parents of current Kindergarten students, 7-8 PM
- **10-11 Tuesday/Wednesday**
MCAS Testing, Gr. 3, 4, 5 & 6
- **11, Wednesday**
PTSO Meeting, 7 PM
- **12, Thursday**
CPAC Performance
- **13, Friday**
6th Grade Photo Day
- **15, Sunday**
PDB Cleanup Day, 1-4 PM
- **17-18 Tuesday/Wednesday**
MCAS Testing, Gr. 5
- **18, Wednesday**
Community Assembly
Scrip orders due
- **20, Friday**
Yard Sale Drop-off, 4-7:30 PM
- **21, Saturday**
McT Yard Sale, 8 AM-Noon
- **23, Monday**
Literacy Seminar for parents of students entering Kindergarten, 7-8 PM
- **30, Monday**
NO SCHOOL, Memorial Day

JUNE

- **8, Wednesday**
PTSO Meeting, 7PM
- **9, Thursday**
Parent Appreciation Reception
- **16, Thursday**
Ice Cream Social
- **21, Tuesday**
Last Day of School,
Early Dismissal (1 PM),
No PM Kindergarten



from Tammy Sarnelli and Michele Caterina, PTSO co-chairs

It's spring at last and those vigorous spring breezes always bring to our minds thoughts of throwing open the windows, scrubbing down, and cleaning out. If you do a spring cleanout in the next few weeks, consider saving your items for the annual **McCarthy-Towne Yard Sale to be held on May 21 from 8 AM to noon**. The yard sale is a great way to raise money for the school while also doing some spring cleaning—it's a win/win! New this year is the \$5 "Stuff-a-Bag" at 11 AM, one hour before the close of the sale. Come find some treasures while supporting our PTSO. More details of the Yard Sale, including opportunities to help out, are found on page 3 of this bulletin.

Helping out is an essential part of our lives here at McCarthy-Towne. In order to run well, the school needs our assistance in the classrooms, around the school, and at the various events and gatherings that make McT such an interesting community. **We are looking for new volunteers next year to chair the committees that work hard make those gatherings happen.** Can you spare some time to help us? Our lives are all busy, but if we each give a small amount of time, we can make great things happen! If you are interested in volunteering or chairing a committee, please contact Stacy Harris, the PTSO Nominations Chair (askquixote@verizon.net), Tammy Sarnelli (tammy.sarnelli@biogenidec.com) or Michele Caterina (michelecaterina1@gmail.com). We will gladly explain any position you might be interested in and we'd love your help! **See page 7 for descriptions of open positions.**

Whether you are chairing a committee or considering doing so, thinking about a new party or event that you'd like to see at McT, or just wanting to know where funds are allocated, we will begin planning and discussing events and budget items for the 2011-12 school year at the May PTSO meeting. This is an important time for the PTSO and your input is essential. **Please join us on May 11 at 7 PM in the Teacher's Room on the 2nd Floor of the Parker Damon building.**

Tonight we will commemorate International Night—our annual celebration of the amazing, diverse, and culturally enriching international community we have at McCarthy-Towne. At International Night, you can sample international foods, visit educational exhibitions in the "Global Village," enjoy performances by students, and artistic expressions from different parts of the globe. It surely will be a fun, interesting, and educational evening for parents and kids alike!

Finally, save the date for the Ice Cream Social to be held on June 16 this year. We all look forward to this enjoyable community time together for McT parents and kids. This year, there will be a few surprises! Be sure to mark your calendar for this fun activity!

We look forward to seeing you at any and all of the school and PTSO events this month.

Art Exhibit at Acton Senior Center

Congratulations to kindergartener Lexa Champoux, 4th grader Victor Sun, and 6th grader Avery Durrant. Heidi selected artwork they created in the sloyd studio to be part of a show currently up at the Acton Senior Center through the end of May. Included in the show, "Students Make Their Mark", is representative work from grades K-12 from the Acton Public Schools and Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools. **Please join us to celebrate at the gallery reception on Monday, May 16, from 3:30-5 PM.** The Senior Center is located at 50 Audubon Drive off of High Street.

Last and First Day of School

from the office

The last day of this school year will be Tuesday, June 21st. Please note that it is a ½ day and all elementary schools will follow the regular Thursday dismissal schedule. Dismissal time for McCarthy-Towne on June 21st will be at 1 PM.

The first day of school for the 2011-12 school year will be Tuesday, August 30th. McCarthy-Towne School will be on the early school schedule: 8:30 AM-2:45 PM (Thursday, 12:15 PM).

The 2011-12 school calendar is available on the APS/AB website at: <http://ab.mec.edu/about/aboutpdf/schcalendar11.pdf>

Spring Yard Sale—May 21st!

The Yard Sale is fast approaching! **Mark your calendars to donate stuff in the cafetorium from 4–7:30 PM on Friday, May 20 and to shop the sale on Saturday, May 21 from 8–Noon.**

New this year! Starting at 11 AM shopping bags can be stuffed for just \$5. This will enable us to sell more stuff and reduce the amount of unwanted goods.

Volunteers! We need you starting at 3:45 PM on Friday May 20th to collect donations, sort them, and price them.

Those who help out for at least 2 hours get first dibs on donated items.

We also need help starting at 7:45 AM on Saturday morning May 21 to work as cashiers, sell baked goods, reorganize tables, assist with bagging of items, cleaning up... Trucks and minivans and their drivers are needed at noon to deliver unsold items to charities.

Please contact Lara Maira (laramaira@yahoo.com) to volunteer. Please let Lara know what times you are available and what tasks you are willing to help out with. Please also provide your phone number and she will be in touch as soon as possible. Thank you for volunteering. All profits go towards supporting our students.



News from the Sloyd Studio

There has been a major “changing of the guard” on the gallery walls and in the display cases downstairs. Please take some time to stop, look, and admire the amazing work your kids create in Sloyd.

As part of a unit on Japanese art, 1st graders designed and painted paper kimonos and have already taken home their ceramic Ikebana pots and clay Furin wind bells. 3rd graders were inspired by the paintings of Georgia O’Keefe and celebrated the arrival of spring by making large pastel drawings of flowers (check out the detail!). There is also a display of 3rd grade ceramic gargoyles, part of their Paris unit, by the office and downstairs. Yes, they really spout water! As part of a unit on Ghana, 2nd grade students explored art from Africa and made papier-mache masks. Students were involved in this multi-media process for 8 Sloyd classes; the developed and practiced craftsmanship really shines. And finally, 5th graders sculpted ceramic portrait busts inspired by ancient Greek and Roman sculpture. Each head was skillfully carved over many weeks, fired and glazed, and descriptive inscriptions were written. Stand back and admire the parade of characters in the glass case.



“Tidbits from Tina” Now Available for Sale!

from Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor

Encouraged by some McT parents, I have published a book of my favorite “Tidbits from Tina” that have been written for the McT Bulletin over the past 10 years. For those who haven’t heard, I am retiring in June and thought this would be a great way to leave a “tidbit” of myself behind.

I will send *Tidbits from Tina* home to you for just \$10! **Plus, all proceeds go to the McT PTSO!** You can even have the author autograph yours, if you like. A copy is available in the office if you would like to take a look before making a purchase.

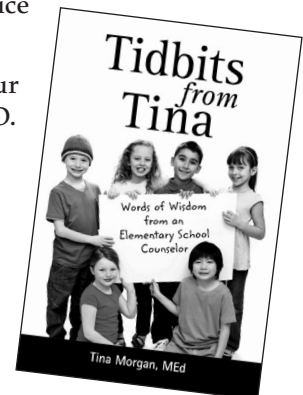
To purchase the book, please fill out this order form and return with payment to your child’s classroom teacher. Checks should be made payable to McCarthy-Towne PTSO. Thanks for your support!

Name _____

Please send me _____ copies of *Tidbits from Tina*. I am enclosing \$10 for each book.

_____ I would like my book(s) signed by the author

_____ No thanks, I would not like them signed by the author



Remember, all proceeds from the sale of the books will go directly to the McT PTSO!

Early Literacy Workshops

Sharon Ryan, McT Reading Specialist, will be hosting two Early Literacy evening seminars this spring. These seminars will provide parents with resources and skills to use over the summer to nurture literacy in our youngest learners.

Monday, May 9, 7–8 PM Designed for parents of current Kindergarten students transitioning to first grade in Fall 2011

Monday, May 23, 7–8 PM Designed especially for parents of incoming Kindergarten students in Fall 2011

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

Placement for Next Year

from the office

Parents/guardians of students in K–5th grade will be receiving a letter at spring parent-teacher conferences with the child’s user name and password for access to the on-line emergency card. You will need this information to access class placement information, which will be posted on **Friday, August 19 at 3 PM**. Class lists will be available the following Friday, August 26.

User names and passwords cannot be given over the phone or email, please remember to take them with you on vacation if you plan to check placement away from home. Please keep this letter in a safe place where you can find it. Your child’s user name and password stays the same through high school graduation and you will need to update the emergency card information, medical authorization and permissions page every year until your child graduates from high school.

Also remember to update the card any time your address or contact information changes, or if your child’s health information changes.

Notice to 6th Grade Parents

from the office

Before the sixth grade students’ files go to the junior high school, Principal David Krane will go through and purge them of extraneous papers. These papers are destroyed unless parents would like to have them. For some students, there will not be any extraneous papers.

If you would like to have the papers from your child’s file, please notify the office in writing by the last day of school, June 21st. The school office will let you know when you can come in to pick up the papers.

Tidbits from Tina

from Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor

The Purpose of Parenting

For a number of years I taught an evening parenting course. One of the first activities was to figure out the purpose of parenting. As young parents, who had time to think about that? We were all too busy with the day-to-day tasks of actually doing the parenting to think about the more global question. But, after the initial blank stares, we talked about our own values and we found answers. Most parents quickly agreed on the goal of keeping our children safe. We enforce seat belt rules; we take our children to the doctor when they are ill; we hold our toddler’s hand in the parking lot. After the safety topic, however, parent views differed.

So, I ask you, what do you see as the purpose of parenting? Think about the following questions and see if your answers can lead to your own purpose. Having that purpose in mind will help guide you as your children grow and you are faced with parenting “opportunities” (or challenges).

- How important is it that you children succeed in what they do? What does it mean to be successful? What if your child doesn’t succeed?
- If your child is having fun, is that really enough?
- Is it important to teach your child to be independent?
- How important is it for your child to learn to help others?
- What role should the parent play in a child’s friendships?
- Is it your job to teach responsibility to your child?
- How important is it that your child play sports/play an instrument?
- Is it your job as a parent to push your child when he/she struggles? (As the Tiger Mom debate rages on, many are wondering how to help their child conquer a challenge?)

P.S. In my parenting classes most parents came to some agreement that their purpose of parenting included some combination of raising responsible, caring, and independent adults. How to do that? Parents will approach it in different ways, but keeping their purpose in mind will certainly provide a guide!

*You're Invited—
Parent Appreciation Reception*

*All parents are invited to attend the annual
McT Parent Appreciation Reception*

Mark your calendars for the **Parent Appreciation Reception on Thursday, June 9th from 9:30–11:30 AM in the McT Lobby**. As a thank you to all parents for your support, we invite you to come and enjoy some breakfast goodies prepared by the teachers and staff.

No need to RSVP, just stop by the lobby anytime between **9:30 and 11:30 AM**. More details to follow as the date gets closer.

Lip Sync Thank You

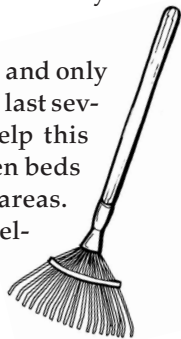
from Lynne Densen and Karen Anderson

Thank you to everyone who helped make the Lip Sync Extravaganza a wonderful success. We had 25 wonderful performances, with both students and teachers performing. We also had over 225 people in the audience; it just keeps getting bigger and more fun each year! Thank you also to all the bakers and to all the volunteers who worked the event. We could not have done it without you. And a BIG, thank you to Tony Dolan and his crew for taping the show and burning it to DVD.

Time for Spring Garden Clean-Up!

Make a difference to the outdoor gardens and grounds your children enjoy EVERYDAY! The landscaping of the grounds is done only by volunteers and we need you on **Sunday, May 15 from 1–4 PM**.

McT Families are important to this effort, and only a few steadfast families have attended the last several clean-ups. We would love YOUR help this year! We need help cleaning up the garden beds and grounds around the school and play areas. Bring your rakes, weeding tools and wheelbarrows—the whole family is welcome! Only with your help can we make our school grounds look beautiful!



Can't help Sunday? Contact Karen Dean (dkdean83@gmail.com or 978-274-2084) to find out what other days we will be out there weeding or planting.

SCRIP Card Program— we need your help!



Once again, thank you to all the families who ordered Scrips in April. SCRIP is a fabulous program as it allows you to earn money for McT from stores you shop on a regular basis, simply by pre-buying store shopping cards through McT. We typically raise close to \$4,000 on this program each year. But to make that happen this year—**WE NEED YOUR HELP!** Unfortunately, we are looking at raising 20% less than last year. **Many fundraisers have been down this year, this will directly affect assistant hours for next year.**

We understand money is tight all around. But with the SCRIP program, **you don't have to "buy" anything additional to support McT**. Purchase store shopping cards to stores you expect to shop at in May, including Target, CVS, Kmart, Roche Bros, T.J. Maxx, Sears, Stop & Shop, just to name a few. Buy the store shopping cards from McT and then that store makes a donation to McT; you simply pay at the register with the cards just like you would with your ATM or credit card. It is really that easy.

If you have been thinking about trying this program, we urge you to try it this month! Purchase just 2 cards for \$50 each month, you don't have to spend hundreds each month to help. **Did you know**—If each of the 365 families at McT bought just one \$25 CVS card each of the 10 school months, CVS would be donating \$5,430 a year to McT to help pay for our teaching assistants. That is CRAZY money! You buy a \$25 CVS store card each month, you get the full \$25 value and CVS gives us \$5,430 a year!

These shopping cards also make great gifts for birthday parties and graduations. Also, don't be left scrambling to thank all the wonderful people in your children's lives: teachers, assistants, bus drivers, coaches, and assistant coaches, just to name a few. Order Script cards in May and have them in plenty of time for June gift-giving.

The deadline to turn in your May scrip orders is Wednesday, May 18. And our last order for the year will be due on Tuesday, June 14 at 10 AM. Please 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.

Sun Safety for Children

Summarized by the APS/ABRHS Nurses

Childhood sunburns can increase your child's risk of developing skin cancer as an adult. Even a suntan can be harmful to children. Tanning is an outward sign of internal skin damage. Research shows that much of the damage to skin is done in the first 18 years of life. Protecting skin and eyes during these early years can reduce the risk of some types of skin cancer by up to 78%. Melanoma is a cancer of younger people and can start as early as adolescence.

Youth and Skin Cancer

- 50% of lifetime exposure to UV light occurs during childhood and adolescence.
- It can take less than 10 minutes for a child's skin to burn.
- Children with severe sunburns are at an increased risk for skin cancer.
- A person born today is twice as likely to develop malignant melanoma compared to someone born only a decade ago and 12 times more likely as someone born 50 years ago.
- Being sun safe is the first step to reduce the chances of getting skin cancer later in life.



Teach Children Sun Safe Habits

Children learn healthy habits best at a young age. Therefore, it is important to begin protecting your children from the beginning and teach them the importance of sun safety. With sun damage accumulating over a person's lifespan, beginning sun safety habits at a young age should be a priority.

Be sure to follow these sun safety tips:

- Maximize protection between the hours of 10 AM–4 PM.
- Wear sun protective, light colored clothing including long sleeved shirts and pants made of tightly woven fabric.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat that protects head, face, ears and neck. If a baseball cap is worn, make sure to use sunscreen on ears and neck.
- Wear UV-protective sunglasses with 99%–100% UV absorption.
- During peak sun hours (10 AM–4 PM) seek shade. Shadow rule—if your shadow is shorter than you, the sun's rays are at their strongest and you should seek shade.
- Encourage children to play in shaded areas, especially during peak sun hours.
- Use a sunscreen of SPF 15+ and apply a generous amount (about a palmful) 30 minutes before going outside.
- Reapply Sunscreen every 90 minutes or after swimming, towel drying or perspiring, even if the label says the product is waterproof. Don't forget lips and ears—both can burn easily.
- Strongly discourage the use of tanning beds.

For further information, visit the following web sites:

www.shadefoundation.org

www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/chooseyourcover/guide.htm

Remaining MCAS Dates

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. Testing begins at the beginning of the school day, so students should avoid late arrival to school. If they arrive after their class begins the test, they will not be able to take the test that day.

Mathematics (grades 3, 4, 5, 6)

Tuesday, May 10 and Wednesday, May 11

Science, Technology & Engineering (grade 5)

Tuesday, May 17 and Wednesday, May 18

Ice Cream Social: Save the Date!

Come top off the school year at McT's annual Ice Cream Social, **Thursday June 16 from 5:30–7:30 PM**. There will be tons of fun activities and crafts, carnival games, face painting, tattoos and more at the back playground of the Parker-Damon Building (inside if it rains). Don't miss the end-of-the-year fun with family and friends!



Enjoy tasty pizza slices, and scrumptious Kimball's ice cream sundaes with your favorite toppings! Watch the McT News email newsletter in mid-May for more details about how and when to buy tickets.

We can ALWAYS use volunteers for this event—for planning, setup, during, and after—so please email Sarah Auerbach (sbauerbach@gmail.com) if you're interested in volunteering. You can also contact Tracey Smith (tracey@gristmillmedia.com) with any questions.

PTSO OPEN POSITIONS

Now is your chance to get involved! The PTSO is looking for people to fill the following positions for the 2011–2012 school year. If you are interested in any of these positions, or if you want to be involved but are not sure which position would be the best fit for you, please contact Stacy Harris (askquixote@verizon.net).

Junior Chair: (2 year commitment) Learn the co-chair job by shadowing the senior co-chair for a year and assisting as needed. Move on to senior co-chair the following year.

Treasurer Shadow: (2 year commitment) Learn the treasurer job by shadowing the treasurer for a year and assisting as needed. Move on to treasurer the following year.

Buddy Family: Coordinate volunteers to welcome new families to McCarthy Towne.

CPAC (Cultural and Performing Arts Committee) (1 position): Help the existing co-chair reserve or contract performances at McCarthy Towne (3 or 4/year). Meet with CPAC representatives from the other elementary schools, and occasionally preview performances at other area schools and venues. Apply for grant funding of performances through the Acton Boxborough Cultural Council. Must be available during the school day.

Grant Writing: Do you have grant writing experience? The McT staff occasionally needs assistance with writing grants.

International Liaison (2 positions): Serve as a liaison to the international community. Plan and execute International Night with Merriam School.

Parker Damon Building Lost and Found: Work with Merriam Lost and Found chair to organize the building's lost and found items.

Basketball Snack Sale Coordinator (1 or 2 positions): Coordinate volunteers who shop for snack sales and/or sell drinks and snacks at Community Education basketball games and other events on Saturday mornings in the Parker Damon Building. Great for second- and third-grade parents involved in basketball.

Family Photo Day: Organize the annual Family Photo Day.

General Mills Box Tops (2 positions): Coordinate publicity of GM Box Tops for Education program in school community, collection of Box Tops from classrooms, and submission of Box Tops to General Mills.

Scrip: Work with current chair starting Spring 2012 to take over program the following Fall 2013. Send out monthly order forms for Scrip cards, collect orders, enter them into database, and then distribute Scrip cards ordered. Position requires attention to detail and working with database entry.

Book Gifting: Coordinate with McT librarian in the fall on book list for Book Gifting Program, send out flyer with book list and update list on McT PTSO website, collect donations and coordinate with McT librarian on purchase of books.

Publicity: Share information regarding McT events—e.g., Yard Sale, PDB International Night, community outreach programs: Cradles to Crayons—with broader community through publicity or articles to the Beacon.

Yard Sale (1 position): Plan, publicize, and execute the annual yard sale in the spring with help from parent volunteers.

McCarthy-Towne School – MAY 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6 International Night, 6 PM	7
8	9 Literacy Seminar for parents of current Kindergarten students, 7–8 PM	10 MCAS Testing, Gr. 3, 4, 5 & 6	11 MCAS Testing, Gr. 3, 4, 5 & 6 PTSO Meeting, 7 PM	12 CPAC Performance	13 6th Grade Photo Day	14
15 PDB Spring Cleanup Day, 1–4 PM	16 Gallery Reception for Student Artwork at Acton Senior Center, 3:30–5 PM	17 MCAS Testing, Gr. 5	18 MCAS Testing, Gr. 5 Community Assembly Scrip orders due	19	20 Yard Sale Drop-off, 4–7:30 PM	21 McT Yard Sale, 8 AM–Noon
22	23 Literacy Seminar for parents of students entering Kindergarten, 7–8 PM	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 NO SCHOOL Memorial Day	31	JUNE 1	JUNE 2	JUNE 3	JUNE 4