

McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

April 4, 2014
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Springing into April

by David Krane, McT Principal

Although at this point in the year, we still have one fewer snow day than last year, I am still waiting. Outside my office window, there still remains an immense mound of snow, unquestionably attractive to the kids at our school and yet forbidden because of its height. While this Acton version of Mount Everest has diminished considerably after the rains of this past weekend, it still hangs on... possibly until May. My only hope is that it doesn't grow any more!

The McCarthy-Towne Auction took place on a recent weekend and it could not have been more successful, in my view. The dedication of the parent community to the school is nothing short of remarkable and the generosity allows us, as a school, to make many different choices in terms of classroom support. But the Auction evening itself is also fun; it is a celebration of our community and of the students and teachers and staff that make up our school. Thank you to all of the people who worked so hard to make this event the huge success that it always is. Thanks to the PTSO Co-Chairs Tracey Smith and Shelly Drouin, the Auction Co-Chairs Jen Mabardy and Michele Caterina, who did an absolutely amazing job! Thank you, thank you, too, to the many, many people who worked behind the scenes making this work. Bravo to everyone! I'm also delighted to have won the centerpiece for the third time and to have been a successful bidder on the Cape home of the Jaros family. Amy and I are very much looking forward to visiting a part of the Cape that we don't often see. Thanks for that opportunity, too!

Placement conversation will soon be taking place and I thought I'd repeat what was said last year at this time. As always, our goal is to make the best possible placements for our students. We believe that the best way to do this is to create heterogeneous and balanced classes. Creating these groupings

for each grade level is a complex process. Our entire professional staff spends a great deal of time carefully weighing each student's academic, social, and emotional needs as well as more individual issues such as those regarding particular peer relationships, neighborhood situations, or siblings' experiences. The sending and receiving teachers and the special education specialists meet as a team to create three balanced classes. The last part of the process is to assign a teacher to each of the classes that has been created. That is something that I do, late in the summer, after the spate of new families moving in and some current families moving out has ended. It is a numbers game, too, as we seek relative balance in this arena. Each teacher brings a unique style to the classroom, thus ensuring a variety of teaching strategies within the framework of the curriculum and the philosophy of the school. But in recent years a number of parents have chosen to write letters requesting their child be placed or not placed in a specific teacher's room or with or not with particular children. We cannot honor these requests. Families should be also be aware that your letters are always shown to the teachers at both the sending and receiving grade levels. In today's world, it is important that our students learn to relate to many different people. We hope that you will support your child as they discover how to work, and work well, with a broad range of students and teaching styles. We believe that this is an important part of your child's education. If you do choose to write me a letter, please do so by Thursday, April 17, right before we go on vacation.

Please remember, the next time the Bulletin comes out, there will flowers blooming, the air will be warm and filled with the sound of the peepers! Spring always does arrive, even if it feels unlikely right now...

Mark Your Calendar

APRIL

5, Saturday

Lip-Sync Extravaganza,
4:30-6:15 PM

7-8, Monday/Tuesday

Town Meeting, 7 PM

9, Wednesday

PTSO Meeting, 7 PM

11, Friday

Donelan's Receipts Due
Family Game Night, 6-8 PM

17, Thursday

Auction Memories
Order Forms Due
Scrip Orders Due

18, Friday

NO SCHOOL, Good Friday

21-25

NO SCHOOL, Spring Recess

28, Monday

Merrowvista Information
Meeting for Fourth Grade
Parents, 7PM

MAY

6-7, Tuesday/Wednesday

MCAS Testing, Gr. 3, 4, and 5

9, Friday

Yard Sale Drop-Off, 4-8 PM

10, Saturday

McT Yard Sale, 7-11 AM

12-13, Monday/Tuesday

MCAS Testing, Gr. 5 and 6

22, Thursday

Family Field Day,
5:30-7:30 PM

26, Monday

NO SCHOOL, Memorial Day



from Tracey Smith and Shelley Cole, PTSO Co-chairs

Welcome to April and another busy month at McT. Before we get to upcoming events we want to warmly thank all the parents, students, teachers and staff who helped to make our 2014 Auction such a success. It was a fabulous, fun-filled evening and it absolutely could not be done without our cast of many. It was exciting to see the older students so involved this year; we had many in the upper grades who donated services and handmade items that were a big hit. Thanks to all of you and especially to Jen Mabardy and Michele Caterina for chairing this year's event.

And now full steam ahead into April when we have two big events in the next two weeks. **Tomorrow (Saturday, April 5th) is our annual LipSync.** With over 100 children participating, chances are good that you have a child performing in the show, but even if you don't, come on out and have your kids cheer on their friends. We even have a secret teacher group this year that students won't want to miss!

We are also very excited to bring back **Family Game Night on Friday, April 11th, from 6-8 PM.** This is a FREE event for all families (kids must be accompanied by an adult). It's a great chance to come out and discover some new games for your family. You can play as many games as you like and games will also be available to purchase if you find some that you like. All games are from Gamewright and most fall in the \$8-15 range.

Finally, we would like to remind everyone about **Town Meeting on Monday, April 7th at 7 PM** (and most likely will continue into a second night on Tuesday, April 8th). Acton residents will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed 2014-2015 School Budget, as well as other school and municipal issues. We urge you to review your Town Warrant, and to attend Acton Town Meeting on April 7th and 8th and vote!

And, of course, our regularly scheduled **PTSO meeting will happen on Wednesday, April 9th at 7 PM** in the Faculty Lounge. Hope to see you there!

Turn in Donelan's Receipts by April 11



The Register Tapes for Education Program with Donelan's Supermarkets has ended. If you have any Donelan's receipts dated **September 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014** please bring them into to the McT office by **Friday, April 11th.** Thank you!

2014 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 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. **NOTE: Some dates have recently changed.**

Mathematics (Grades 3 & 4)

Tuesday, May 6 and Wednesday, May 7

Mathematics (Grades 5 & 6)

Monday, May 12 and Tuesday, May 13

Science, Technology & Engineering (Grade 5)

Tuesday, May 6 and Wednesday, May 7

Coming in May- McCarthy-Towne Family Field Day!

Back by popular demand is the McT Family Field Day. Lots of fun and exciting games—3 legged races, plunger relays, jump ropes, ring tosses and more! Tie on your sneakers (both kids and parents) and come join us on **Thursday, May 22 from 5:30-7:30 PM** behind the Parker-Damon Building.

Kids are \$5 and adults are FREE! Kid's admission includes a bowl of yummy Kimball's ice cream! Pizza sold separately for \$10/pizza or \$2/slice. Extra ice cream available for \$2/bowl. All money raised will go to McT PTSO.

We need volunteers to help make this a wonderful community event! If you have questions or want to volunteer contact Liz (lizsarawalker@gmail.com) or Maya (mayaminkin@gmail.com).

Merrowvista 2014 News

A reminder to all fourth grade parents to attend the Merrowvista Information Night on **Monday, April 28th at 7 PM** in Caitlin Walsh's room. The fifth grade teachers will be giving an overview of the trip and answering all of your questions about this great program.

The Lip-Sync Extravaganza is TOMORROW!

125 Performers! 50 Fantastic Songs!

A SURPRISE Opening Number Everyone will Love!

Don't miss the most popular McT Lip-Sync ever on **Saturday, April 5th at 4-7 PM** in the McT Cafeteria. Admission is \$5 per person. This is not a drop-off event. All students must be chaperoned. Intermission with light snacks for sale. Take-home baked goods will be for sale at the end of the show for \$5-10. DVDs of the event can be ordered for \$10 each.

If you have questions about this event, please contact: Deb Verner (debverner@gmail.com, 978.263.6794), Bridget Matz (bmkmatz@yahoo.com, 978.897.3453), or Margaret Busse (bussehome@comcast.net, 978.274.2620)

Safe Arrival Reminder—April Vacation

If you are traveling for an extended period over April vacation, please remember to contact the Safe Arrival hotline—978-264-4098. Even if you have emailed your child's teacher, you still need to call Safe Arrival. The hotline is on 24 hours a day so you can leave a message at any time. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

The Yard Sale is Coming!

We need your used household goods, clothing, books, toys, bikes, furniture, baby equipment, gardening tools, sporting equipment and more to sell at our annual yard sale. **Drop off items in GOOD CONDITION on Friday, May 9 from 4-8 PM.** Unsold items will be donated to local charities. **All donations are tax deductible** and tax forms will be available. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Weir (julieannweir@yahoo.com).

Want to Help?

Volunteers are what make our yard sale successful. We need help setting up the sale on Friday evening, working the sale on Saturday morning, and cleaning up after the sale on Saturday afternoon. Even if you can only spare an hour, we can use your help. To volunteer, please contact Julie Weir (julieannweir@yahoo.com).

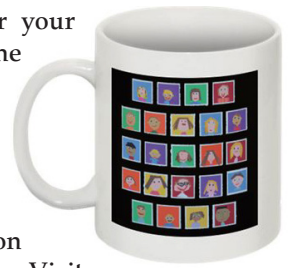
Shop the Sale— Saturday May 10th

Need a new bike for spring? Looking for some beach reads? How about some new games for the kids? **Come shop the McT Yard Sale on Saturday, May 10th from 7-11 AM.** More details to come soon.



Auction Classroom Artwork Memories

Did you miss out on bidding for your child's classroom artwork at the auction? If so, you can order some beautiful products to help you remember those penguins, owls or portraits for years to come! Note cards, notebooks and coffee mugs are available featuring the auction classroom artwork of your choice. Visit www.mctptso.org to see all the projects.



Please send in your order form for Auction Memories by Thursday, April 17. The order form is also available for download at www.mctptso.org/auction. Contact Rebecca MacNeill (rebeccamacneill@gmail.com) with any questions.

Family Game Night

Parents from this year's 4th grade class are working on some great events to help fund next year's field trip to Merrowvista. Many thanks to Kathleen Casey and Dani Feng who are organizing the first two events.

The first is sure to be loads of fun for the entire family. Mark your calendar for **Friday, April 11th from 6-8 PM for Family Game Night** for kids in all grades and their families.



Also, save your returnable bottles for the Bottle Drive on May 9th and 10th (coinciding with the Yard Sale). More details to come.

Scrip Update

March was a great month for the Scrip Shopping Card program! We want to give a huge shout out to all you wonderful parents who participated and made this a stellar month for our school. Thanks to all our returning parents and especially to two new families who placed first time orders. Welcome to the club, and we hope you continue to use this great tool to earn money for our fantastic school.

Keep up the great work McT! **The next Scrip order deadline is Thursday, April 17.**

Celebrate National Youth Art Month!

There is still time to enjoy the hundreds of K-12 student art works on display at the State Transportation building in Boston. **The exhibit runs until April 25** and is open to the public M-F, 9-5. Thank you to McT students: Calista Barnett, Olivia Beilman, Christopher Berger, Elsa MacNeill and Emily Stimac, for allowing their artwork to be included in the show.

The "New Math"

Plastic caps + cardboard =
MASK

Paper tubes + egg cartons + drinking straws =
CONTRAPTION

Take-out food containers + corks =
CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE

Please become a creative collector and donate your
"artistic" recyclables to the art studio!

Box Tops Update

We earned over \$300 from our February collection of Box Tops For Education® for a grand total of over \$1,000. Congratulations, once again, to David's 4th grade class for collecting the most Box Tops! They are enjoying a bagful of classroom supplies!

Keep clipping Box Tops and send them in a Ziploc bag or envelope. Please label your child's collection with their name, grade, and teacher name. Send them to school with your child or drop them in the collection box inside the office.

Visit www.btf.com for a list of participating products. Remember, shopping online at your favorite stores through the Box Tops Marketplace® can earn McT even more rewards. Up to 20% of your purchase will be donated to McT, with no additional cost to you. Visit www.boxtops4education.com/marketplace.

If you have any questions about the Box Top program, contact Melissa Kaplan Morse (mkmorse1@msn.com).

JOIN US: Ceramic Workshop with Heidi

Ever feel jealous that your kids get to do all the fun art projects? Here's your chance to get in on the action! There are a few open spots in the Ceramic Workshop offered at the Auction. For just \$45, you can spend two Friday evenings in the Visual Arts room, creating your own masterpiece with guidance from Heidi Kupferman, our Visual Arts teacher. You could build a vase, shape a bowl, make a relief tile, or create a unique sculpture using clay! **We'll meet on Friday, May 2nd and Friday, May 16th from 6:30-8:30 PM.** During the first evening, we'll learn hand-building techniques. The pieces we make will be dried and fired in the kiln before the second session when we'll have a glazing party. Refreshments will also be provided.

If you are interested in joining us, please email Carol Chytil (carol.chytil@gmail.com) as soon as possible.

Last and First Day of School

The last day of school will be Wednesday, June 18th. This is an early release day and elementary schools will follow the Thursday dismissal schedule, 12:15 PM dismissal for McT.

Wednesday, September 3rd will be the first day of school for 2014-15. McCarthy-Towne will be on the late elementary schedule from 9:15 AM - 3:30 PM (Thursday 1 PM).

The school calendar is available on the ABRSD website: www.ab.mec.edu/about/aboutpdf/2014-2015calendar-holidays.pdf

Fifth Disease

Spring usually brings about a few cases of fifth disease. What is it? It is a mild childhood illness that causes a rash. It is called "Fifth disease" because it was the fifth of a group of similar rash illnesses to be described. (Rubella, measles and scarlet fever are also in this group).

It is caused by a parvovirus that lives in the nose and throat and can be spread from person to person. The virus usually occurs in 3 stages:

- The first stage consists of mild headache, body ache, sore throat, and low-grade fever. This stage lasts 2-3 days. During this stage the virus may be spread to others. The symptoms are often very mild and may not be noticed at all.
- The second stage last about a week and most children have no symptoms at all during this time.
- The third stage involves a bright red rash on the cheeks, which gives a "slapped cheek" appearance. This is followed by a "lacy" rash on the chest, back and arms. The rash may appear on and off for several weeks with changes in temperature, sunlight, and emotional stress. The appearance of this rash is how Fifth Disease is diagnosed. By the time the rash appears and the diagnosis is made, children are no longer contagious so there is no need to exclude them from school. Adults may not develop the third-stage rash but may experience joint pain, particularly in the hands and feet.

The disease is usually mild, and both children and adults recover without problems. There is no specific treatment for Fifth Disease. Health care providers may suggest treatment to relieve some symptoms. There is no vaccine to prevent Fifth Disease. In rare situations some people, especially those with blood disorders or weakened immune systems or women who are pregnant, may be at risk for complications and should notify their health care providers about possible exposure to the virus.

Please contact your primary care provider if you have any questions or concerns. Two good sources for information are The CDC (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention) at www.cdc.gov and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at www.mass.gov/dph.