

McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

March 4, 2016
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Back into the Groove

by David Krane, McT Principal

I write this as we all get ready to start our second week back from the February break. The weather marks an almost surreal contrast to this time last year. With recent temperatures ranging into the 50's and even 60's, it is a very different March than last year when we had 100 feet of snow on the ground and sub-zero temperatures. I'll take March coming in like a relative lamb...

March is indeed a busy time of the year for schools. While busy can be a relative term in an elementary school, there is much that marks the upcoming month that is different from past busy-ness: MCAS is coming up, our famous McCarthy-Towne Auction is winding up to bring more intrigue into our world, and some of the annual classroom events, unique to individual grade levels are also coming up. Among the events that I always look forward to each year is the Collection Museum, coming from Robin's Third Grade classroom. It is an eclectic exhibit that gives us all a little peek into each of these Third Graders and what may interest them in a very individual way. As is true of a lot of things at our school, individual teachers may make individual classroom decisions about what to share. For example, many of the classrooms have chosen to share with our school examples of curriculum, art, or song during our monthly Community Assemblies. Whatever form these take, they also all have the individual stamp of the classroom, the teacher or teachers, or the Grade Level Team. It is, in the end, about community, and about sharing with the community at large.

Since we were the first school to hold our Kindergarten Night last year, this year we were the last. So, our Kindergarten Night was on March 1 this year. Although late in the year, we were all looking forward to it, because it is always fun for us to show off our unique and remarkable school. This year, we had the most well attended tours we've had in my tenure here so far. People are excited about our school and what we do here and so the information night was a lot of fun. Our students were excited about it, as well. They are also justifiably proud of what we do here and they are as anxious and happy to share all the great things that happen here as all of our educators are, too. Children are, after all, why we are here, and their opinions and experiences speak volumes about our success.

As we have just returned from a school vacation, I'd like to speak briefly, yet again, about recreational absences when school is in session. I have written about this often this past year, too, but it still bears repeating. With MCAS looming this month and again in May, this is an important reminder. 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. Thanks...

Mark Your Calendar

MARCH

- 15, Tuesday**
PTSO Meeting, 7 PM
- 17, Thursday**
Early Dismissal (12:20 PM)
- 19, Saturday**
Lip Sync Extravaganza, 4 PM
- 25, Friday**
NO SCHOOL, Good Friday
- 29, Tuesday**
MCAS: English Language Arts Comprehension (Grades 5 & 6)
- 30, Wednesday**
MCAS: English Language Arts Comprehension (Grades 5 & 6)
- 31, Thursday**
Willow Books Literacy Fundraiser, 6-8 PM

APRIL

- 4, Monday**
MCAS: English Language Arts Comprehension (Grades 3 & 4)
- 5, Tuesday**
MCAS: English Language Arts Comprehension (Grades 3 & 4)
- 7, Thursday**
Early Dismissal (12:20 PM)
- 9, Saturday**
McT Auction, 5:30 PM
SpringHill Suites, Devens
- 18-22**
NO SCHOOL, Spring Recess

Volunteer Needed to Video the Lip Sync Show Next Year

Do you have knowledge of taking videos, or enjoy the hobby of taking video of your family? This is the last year our current videographer, Wade Callison, will video the Lip Sync. We need a dependable volunteer to video and create DVDs for the show next year in 2017. Wade is available this year as a mentor to explain the process. You don't need fancy equipment—most DSLR cameras or video cameras work well. If interested, please contact Deb Verner (debverner@gmail.com or 978-263-6794).



from Julie Weir and Julie Hobbs, PTSO co-chairs

Spring is in the air and to kick it off our hugely popular **Lip Sync Extravaganza** will take place on **Saturday, March 19 at 4 PM**. Over 90 students (and 1 teacher act!) from across the grades will perform. Please note that we are looking for a videographer for the 2017 Lip sync concert. Do you or someone you know love being behind the camera? Please let us know.

The evening of Thursday, March 31st has been reserved for our popular Willow Books Literacy Fundraiser so stay tuned for a schedule of readers.

On April 9th at 5:30 PM (only 1 month away!) the McT Auction will be held at the Devens Common Center. This ever popular and biggest fundraiser of the year earned the school over \$50K last year! This year's theme is "Roaring 20's" and auction committees are busy planning fun decor, thematic games and, of course, great auction items to make this another successful event! Come to mingle with friends, meet new people in our McT community, and bring home some great items for the family while helping to support our school. If you just can't wait to know what will be up for auction visit www.mctptso.org and view the Auction Catalog under the "Auction 2015-2016" tab.

Did you know that www.mctptso.org is full of PTSO event, calendar, and fundraising information? Check out our current fundraising level, get questions answered about the details of your favorite event or catch up on past Bulletins, Howlers and PTSO meeting minutes. The 2016-2017 district calendar has been released so head over to the website and subscribe to the Google calendar to stay informed about half days, holidays and events important to our McT community.

We are still looking for volunteers to run our Spring Tag sale on April 30th. McT families and the Acton community have always loved the Tag sale. It would be sad to see this popular event cancelled. All documents and blurbs are available from past years and finding "day of" volunteers is easy. If you are interested or even a bit curious about the job description please contact Julie Weir (julieannweir@yahoo.com).

Finally, as always please join us for our next **PTSO meeting on Tuesday March 15th at 7 PM** in the faculty lounge when we will welcome the Acton Finance Committee as our special guest. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join us.

First McT Book Swap Huge Success!

by Carol Chytil, Tracey Smith, and Astrid Trostorff

The First McCarthy-Towne Book Swap was held on Wednesday, February 26. The multi-purpose room was filled with excitement as students and their families perused the large selection of books, from board books to chapter books, fiction and non-fiction. Many children went home with shopping bags filled with new books to read.

Thank you to all the families who donated books, as well as the Friends of Acton Libraries, who donated books left over from their book sale. Thank you to Donna Kaufmann, McT library/media specialist, for her help and expert advice in sorting through books.

We hope to hold another Book Swap in June so families can stock up on summer reading. Please continue to save used children's books and look for announcements in May about when to send in donations, the date for the June Book Swap, and how parents can help on the night of the swap.

Spring 2016 MCAS Dates

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. The schedule is as follows:

English Language Arts Comprehension (Grades 5 & 6)

Tuesday, March 29 and Wednesday, March 30

English Language Arts Comprehension (Grades 3 & 4)

Monday, April 4 and Tuesday, April 5

Math (Grades 3 and 4)

Tuesday, May 10 and Wednesday, May 11

Math (Grades 5 and 6)

Monday, May 16 and Tuesday, May 17

Science, Technology & Engineering (Grade 5 only)

Tuesday, May 10 and Wednesday, May 11

McT Roaring 20s Auction 2016!

Our Auction is right around the corner on April 9th... just a short month away! Visit the "Auction" tab at www.mctptso.org to check out items to bid on this year and keep your eyes peeled for ticket order forms that will be making their way into your child's backpack soon.



We have gathered more than 150 items (with more to come) for you to bid. There is something for everyone! Whether you are looking to relax with a massage or a getaway or looking for excitement like a ride to school in a fire truck or skydiving. Items at all price ranges are available and there is no pressure to buy. The auction is also a great place to get items you purchase anyway. Are you or your student starting an orthodontics procedure in the near future? Bid on \$1,000 in orthodontia from *Sven Supplies, DMD*. Plan that summer trip with tickets to *Storyland* and *Santa's Village*, or plan for the future with \$1,250 in estate planning from *The Parents Estate Planning Law Firm*.

Be sure to look over the auction catalog for any items you may be interested in. The printed catalog will be sent home in backpacks the week of the auction. In the meantime visit www.mctptso.org to stay informed about all of the exiting products being added everyday.

Trivia Question:

Last month's trivia question was very popular and thank you to all who answered! Congratulations to Shelley Cole who was first to answer correctly that *The Great Gatsby* was the novel written in 1925 by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

This months question: Which president who served in the 20s had pet racoons, a bobcat, and a pygmy hippo? Be the first person to email Julie Weir (julieannweir@yahoo.com) with the correct answer! Good luck!

Volunteers Needed:

Are you still wondering how you can help out with planning or set-up of the auction? Contact either Auction Co-Chair—Christine Russell (qofhearts@gmail.com) or Samantha Valente-Phillips (luvbgnamom@gmail.com) with any questions you might have.

Auction Raffle Update!

As we gear up for another amazing Auction, we have some fabulous raffle prizes to win this year!

1st Prize: Xbox One 1TB Console - Limited Edition

2nd Prize: QuietComfort® 25 Acoustic Noise Cancelling® headphones

3rd Prize: \$100 Woods Hill Table gift certificate

Look for raffle envelopes to come home in backpacks on Friday, March 4. We will also be selling raffle tickets outside of Donelan's and Roche Bros. the weekends of March 12 and 19. Tell your friends and neighbors to stop by!

Our Auction raffle committee needs you! Volunteers are needed to sell raffle tickets outside of Donelans and Roche Bros. This is a fun activity to do with your children (shoppers have a hard time saying no to cute kids!) If you can help out, even for an hour or two, please visit our SignUpGenius page at www.SignUpGenius.com/go/30E0C45AAAE2CA3F49-mctauction.

Help is needed during any of the following times:

March 12, 2-5 PM (outside of Donelans)

March 19, 10 AM - Noon (outside of Roche Bros.)

March 13, 2-5 PM (outside of Donelans)

March 20, 10 AM - Noon (outside of Roche Bros.)

If you have any questions, please contact either Judy (judyandroland@gmail.com) or Alyssa (lyssanr@yahoo.com). Thank you in advance for your continued support or our school!

The 9th Annual McT Lip Sync Extravaganza

Join us for one of the most highly anticipated McT community events! We have over 95 students performing the hottest songs from yesterday and today! All grades are represented, with teachers performing, too!

When: Saturday, March 19 from 4–6 PM

Where: McCarthy-Towne Cafeteria

Cost: \$5 per person.

DVDs of the event can be ordered the night of the show for \$10. There will also be take home baked goods for sale for \$5–\$10.

This is not a drop-off event. All students must be chaperoned. If you have any questions about the Lip Sync, please contact Deb Verner (debverner@gmail.com), Bridget Matz (bmkmatz@yahoo.com), or Lisa Thermidor (lthermidor@verizon.net).



Calling All 4th, 5th and 6th Graders!

McT needs your donations for the Auction! Here are a few examples you can donate: babysitting, pet sitting, dog walking, weeding, raking or mowing, organize a sports clinic for younger students... any talent you have would be a great donation! Get a group of students together and make it a fun experience!

If you are interested, fill out the “Student Donation Form” sent home a few weeks ago and bring your donations to the school before March 18th! If you don’t have the form, contact Bibiana (bibianaknell@gmail.com) and she will provide one.

Willow Books Literacy Fundraiser

Mark your calendars for Thursday, March 31, 6–8 PM for the annual *Willow Books Literacy Fundraiser*! Many of our wonderful McT teachers will be reading to the children and there will be plenty of time to shop (15% of all purchases made during the evening will be donated to McT). This event is designed to benefit the *Teachers and Families as Literacy Partners Program*! More information to arrive later this month with plenty of details about the evening. Thank you in advance for your support.

Incoming Kindergarten Registration

Siblings of current McCarthy-Towne students who are entering kindergarten in the fall of 2016 can be registered on-line beginning on March 9 until March 16. You do not need to attend in-person registration on March 16 and 17. For more information about the new on-line registration process, visit www.abschools.org/home/kindergarten-registration.

Immunization Requirements:

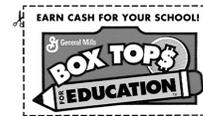
Important Notice to Parent/Guardians of 6th Graders

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has the following requirements for all students entering Grade 7 in September 2016:

- MMR: 2 doses
- Varicella: A physician-certified history of chicken pox disease or 2 doses of varicella vaccine
- Hepatitis B: 3 doses
- Tdap: A single dose of Tetanus, Diphtheria and acellular Pertussis vaccine
- A copy of an up-to-date physical examination will also be 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 Health Care 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 31, 2016.

Call for all Box Tops!



Great Job, McT! Our winter collection earned over \$300 from *Box Tops For Education*®. Congrats to Kate’s 3rd grade class for collecting the most Box Tops! Remember, the classroom that brings in the most Box Tops wins a prize (playground toys or supplies for their classroom).

Although this was our last official collection for this school year, we collect Box Tops all year. Just clip and send them in a Ziploc bag or envelope. Please label your child’s collection with their name, grade, and teacher’s name. Send them to school with your child or drop them off in the large collection box just inside the main office.

I’m always looking for new ways to collect Box Tops. I recently made drop-off containers for work and now I’m collecting Box Tops from my colleagues! Around town you and your neighbors can drop Box Tops in the blue box labeled “McCarthy-Towne Box Tops” at Roche Bros.

Visit www.btfe.com for a complete list of participating products. If you have any questions about the Box Top program, please contact Melissa Kaplan Morse (mkmorse1@msn.com).