



# McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

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## November Days

by David Krane, McT Principal

We have indeed been fortunate this year with inclement weather, even if we were to include this past weekend. For the last couple of years we have already had snow and not insignificant snow to greet us on a school day. But this year, we are simply experiencing the time change, where we see more of a morning and considerably less of an afternoon!

I write this as we are preparing for our Professional Learning Day, which will occur on Tuesday, November 4, Election Day. The K-2 Primary classrooms have already had two work days with our Teachers College staff developer and on our PL Day, we will be processing those days and looking ahead to the time that remains with our coaches. The processing, though, is almost as important as the presence of the coaches. This is a time for all of us, as a school, reflect on the work that we are doing in literacy. One of the goals that we are working on is the concept of metacognition, which is getting kids to employ multiple strategies as they tread: decoding, thinking about the meaning of the text, using illustration, etc. All of this is in the service of making meaning from the text.

But reading is also a wonderful, joyful activity, one that can bring kids to many places. Reading with your children, reading to your children and listening to your children read is a big part of bringing the classroom home. Newspapers, cookbooks and even the back of a cereal box are all

resources at your fingertips, too. Families who read together send the message that reading is a joyful experience and joyful learning is what school is about.

I recently had the pleasure of accompanying the Fifth Grade to a wonderful place, Merrowvista. Each October, the Fifth Grade travels to a tiny town in the hills of New Hampshire to visit an environmental teaching camp called Merrowvista. It is a remarkable adventure, one that has become part of being at school at McCarthy-Towne. As fourth graders, the kids look forward to it, and, for the rest of their time at McT, they remember it. At this incredible place, our students are encouraged to consider the challenges around them and to set new goals for themselves, goals that will push their thinking about themselves. But our kids are also encouraged to think about themselves as individuals within a community of others and how personal actions can have an impact on the group as a whole. This they can bring back to school and they do. The idea of Merrowvista stays with them for the rest of Fifth Grade and beyond.

Schools teach about the critical elements of being part of a community as well as the important academic elements across the content areas. McCarthy-Towne has always been proud of the way that we make this clear to children and of our successes in both arenas. Thanks to all of you who are part of this wonderful school community and for your support!

## Mark Your Calendar

### NOVEMBER

- 7, Friday**  
Fall Social, 6-8 PM
- 11, Tuesday**  
NO SCHOOL, Veterans Day  
Pickup Charleston Wrap Orders, 8-10 AM and 5:30-8:30 PM (see pg. 4)
- 12, Wednesday**  
Spiritwear Orders Due  
Pickup Charleston Wrap Orders, 8 AM-Noon and 4-8:30 PM  
Acton Special Town Meeting, 7 PM, ABRHS Auditorium
- 13, Thursday**  
Pickup Charleston Wrap Orders, 3-8:30 PM
- 15, Friday**  
Cradles to Crayons  
Clothing Drive Ends
- 18, Wednesday**  
Scrip Orders Due
- 20, Thursday**  
Early Dismissal (1 PM)
- 26, Wednesday**  
Early Dismissal (1 PM)
- 27-28, Thursday/Friday**  
NO SCHOOL, Thanksgiving

### DECEMBER

- 4, Thursday**  
Early Dismissal (1 PM)
- 9, Tuesday**  
PTSO Meeting
- 18, Thursday**  
Early Dismissal (1 PM)
- 24-Jan. 4**  
NO SCHOOL, Winter Recess

Cake Walk  
Crafts  
Face Painting  
Henna  
Games



**TONIGHT!**

# FALL SOCIAL

**6-8 PM**

**Admission: \$5 per child, Family Max \$20, Adults FREE**



## from Shelley Cole and Julie Weir, PTSO co-chairs

By the time you read this, your child's class will have visited the Scholastic Book Fair, but you can still check it out during tonight's Fall Social. The Fall Social is a not-to-be-missed event. Bridget Chamberas, Jen Nelson, and a large group of parent volunteers have created a fun evening for us all with lots of games, crafts, a cake walk, and a chili cook off! **Stop by tonight, Friday November 7th, from 6-8 PM tonight.** Hope to see you there!

This is also the time of year for classroom potlucks. It is a great opportunity to meet other parents outside of the school. These gatherings are just one of the many ways that we build a strong community and part of what makes McCarthy-Towne so special.

Just a quick reminder that last month we sent out the Annual PTSO Appeal. Thank you to those who have already given. We appreciate your quick response. However, it is not too late to give. While there is no official deadline or due date for your gift remember that **if you donate by December 31st you can claim it on your 2014 tax return.** There is still time! Thanks for your support!

### SCRIP Update



Thank you so much to all the new and returning families who supported the school with your Scrip purchase. The holidays are coming and gift cards are a fantastic gift idea! Visit [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com) to find Gift Cards to almost any merchant you can think of. Order online, or watch the backpacks for our November order form, which will have a large list of merchants as well. Use them for your post-Thanksgiving shopping or keep them for gifts. **November orders are due by November 18th** and the cards will go home before the long weekend. Thanks again for your support!

### Turn Your Holiday Cooking into Art Supplies for McT!



With the upcoming holiday season, most of us will be spending a lot of time and money at the supermarket, buying ingredients for delicious treats to share with friends and family. With the *Register Tapes for Education* program at Donelan's, those groceries can now also help our school! For every dollar spent, McCarthy-Towne will earn points redeemable for free educational equipment, like art supplies and books.

Every time you shop at Donelan's, save your receipts! Simply send in receipts with your child or drop them in the collection box in the office. Receipts dated **September 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015 are eligible.** Questions can be directed to Sarah Burianek ([sarahburianek@msn.com](mailto:sarahburianek@msn.com)).

### Cradles to Crayons Clothing Drive



The McCarthy-Towne Student Council is sponsoring a Winter Clothing Drive for *Cradles to Crayons* (C2C) of Massachusetts. **The collection will take place for two weeks beginning on Monday, November 3rd and end on Friday, November 15th.**

*Cradles to Crayons* is a Massachusetts charitable organization that provides basic essentials to low-income and homeless children age 0-13 throughout Massachusetts. More than ever before, communities like ours, have a vital role to play in helping children in low-income families stay safe and warm during the cold winter months. With your help, *Cradles to Crayons* can equip them with the everyday essentials they need to thrive in the coming year.

The following gently used items are desirable donations for this organization: clothing (size 0-Adult S,M,L), winter coats, jackets, sweaters, winter boots and shoes (infant sizes 0-13 and Youth/Adult sizes 1-10), gloves, mittens, hats, and scarves. All of the items should be clean, serviceable, and complete such that a child receiving the item would feel valued. C2C also appreciates new items in the original packaging such as: underwear, socks, and pajamas and is always in need of boys pants. For more information on this organization, please visit [www.cradlestocrayons.org](http://www.cradlestocrayons.org).

So please gear up for winter by "clearing out your closets" and identifying those items that you and your children can donate to *Cradles to Crayons*!



Did you know McCarthy-Towne is on Facebook? We hope this will become your “Go To” source for all school information and questions. Feel free to post pictures of artwork and grown-ups, but we are asking that you refrain from posting pictures of children.

Our McT Facebook page is open to adult members of our community. It is a “closed” group so that people from outside our community will not be able to see or post to the page. To join, search “McCarthy-Towne School” or visit [www.facebook.com/groups/1404961776417219](http://www.facebook.com/groups/1404961776417219).

### McT Spiritwear Sale!

Spiritwear order forms were sent home on Wednesday. Our goal is to have orders ready to go home before the holidays. If you are interested, **please return your completed order form to the office by no later than Wednesday, November 12th.** Please direct any questions to Tracey Smith ([tsmith@abschools.org](mailto:tsmith@abschools.org)).

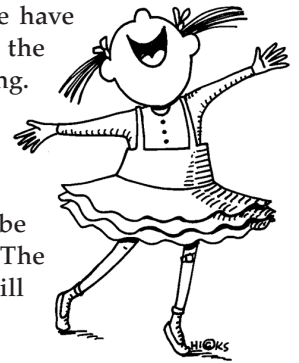


## Lip Sync Extravaganza Save the Date: March 7, 2015

**Our annual Lip Sync Extravaganza is scheduled for Saturday, March 7th from 4–6 PM.** This popular event is open to all McT students. Participants choose a song, determine if they wish to perform individually or with a group, create choreography, and perform their act on stage at McT. It’s never too early to start thinking about the Lip Sync! Introduce your kids to new musical genres: you might find they enjoy music from the 60s, 70s, and 80s, or genres such as Country, Broadway musicals or international hits. Please read the lyrics before students choose a song to make sure they are family-friendly and elementary school appropriate. Sometimes popular song lyrics are not suitable for young children. Over the past few years, we have said no to a few songs and asked the participants to choose a new song. Lyrics can be found for free at [www.metrolyrics.com](http://www.metrolyrics.com).

The Lip Sync Sign-up Form and Rules and Requirements will be sent in backpacks in late January. The form, written lyrics and music will be due in mid-February.

Hope to see you at the show!



## McT 007 Auction 2015

**Mark your calendars! The McCarthy-Towne Auction is Saturday, March 28th** at The Devens Common Center at Springhill Suites. And, if you haven’t guessed it yet, the theme for this year’s auction is 007—James Bond.

Congratulations to Carolyn Dee for being the first person to guess the theme. Each month we will test your 007 knowledge and feature a trivia question. The first person to email Christine Russell ([qofhearts@gmail.com](mailto:qofhearts@gmail.com)) with the correct answer wins an auction drink ticket.

**Here’s this month’s question:** What branch of the military did Bond serve in and what was his rank?

If you are interested in helping out with the auction in any way, please contact either Auction Co-Chair—Christine Russell ([qofhearts@gmail.com](mailto:qofhearts@gmail.com)) or Samantha Valente-Phillips ([luvbgnamom@gmail.com](mailto:luvbgnamom@gmail.com)).

### The Auction Business Donations Committee is looking for YOU!

We are a small committee whose responsibility is to secure donations from various businesses. Very few in-person meetings. No “cold-calling.” Your primary job would be to follow-up on the phone and in-person with businesses asking for (and picking up) donations. Get the first look at what is being donated! We will be the busiest in November and January. Many hands make light work and no experience is necessary! If you can help, please contact Business Committee Co-Chairs Carol Chytil ([carol.chytil@gmail.com](mailto:carol.chytil@gmail.com)) or Tracey Estrabrook ([tracey.estabrook@philips.com](mailto:tracey.estabrook@philips.com)) Thank you!



## Food Service Department Update

*from Kirsten Nelson, Food Service Director*

Are you looking for a part time job in the schools with mother's hours? We are looking for Food Service Substitutes. Please contact Kirsten Nelson (978-264-4700 x 3221) if interested.

We have had a busy start to the school year! We are happy to serve your children lunch every day! For those of you that are new to the school system we would like to take this opportunity to let you know about our Sunday evening automated calls. If your child's balance on Sunday is below zero you will receive a call letting you know the balance. If your child has a positive balance between \$.01 and \$5.00 you will receive a call letting you know you have a positive balance and it is getting low. If you do not wish to receive a call on Sunday evenings from the Food Service Department we suggest you keep more than \$5.01 on your child's lunch account.

We do not send home invoices. The automated call is our way of reaching out to you to let you know your child's balance. There are occasions when a student's account is above \$5.01 on a Sunday (you will not receive a call), the account can still go in the negative over the course of the week. If you have a ParentOnline account, you have the ability to set up a low balance alert. By setting up a low balance alert you will receive an e-mail notification if your balance is below the threshold you set up for the alert. (Example: notify me when the balance gets below \$10.) You also have the ability to set up an automatic payment once your balance gets below a certain amount. Or you can send in cash or check with your child.

If you would like to set up a low balance alert or an automatic payment for your child's lunch account visit ParentOnline at [www.parentonline.net/Public/Login](http://www.parentonline.net/Public/Login).

If you would like to pay by check or cash, please fill out the payment form. Visit [www.abschools.org/departments/food-services/lunch-prepayment](http://www.abschools.org/departments/food-services/lunch-prepayment). You can use one form for all of your children.

Additionally, if you have an account in ParentOnline please remember to update your credit card information (check expiration dates) as well as update your automatic payment settings. The automatic payment settings are valid for one year from the time you set up your payment. Automatic payment settings need to be updated each year.

## Pickup Info for Charleston Wrap Orders

Orders can be picked up at 6 Farmstead Way in Acton during these times:

**Tuesday, 11/11, 8-10 AM and 5:30-8:30 PM**

**Wednesday, 11/12, 8 AM-Noon and 4-8:30 PM**

**Thursday, 11/13, 3-8:30 PM**

All orders are in the garage. The garage door will be open during the times listed above. Please go in and find your order.

Orders will be sorted by teacher. They will come in either a box or clear plastic bag with your child's name and teacher's last name. Please double check you have the correct order before leaving.

If you have any questions or need to schedule another pickup time, contact Christine Kobelski (617 240-1683). Thank you for supporting our school!

## Thank You, Thank You!

### School Picture Day

Thanks to Debora Beatriz, Melissa Berger, Kate Hoitt, Jen Mabardy, Lara Maira, Susie Maxwell, Mariah Straayer, and Fiona Starr for helping to make picture day run smoothly.

### Family Photo Weekend

McCarthy-Towne's Family Photo Weekend was a great success! Thank you to the 13 families that helped me raise \$520 for the McT PTSO. It was great getting to know you and your families.

## 2015 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.

### English Language Arts Composition (Grade 4)

Tuesday, March 24

### English Language Arts Comprehension (Grades 5 & 6)

March 24 and 25

### English Language Arts Comprehension (Grades 3 & 4)

March 30 & 31

Math, Science, Technology & Engineering MCAS tests will be administered at the beginning of May. We should have exact dates for these tests by December.