



# Douglas Digest

News of the C.T. Douglas School

978.266.2560

<http://douglas.ab.mec.edu>

Principal: Dr. Christopher Whitbeck

April 2011

Douglas Digest

Editors:

Sharon Kautz

Lori Fassman

Publisher:

Sharon Metzger

Printer:

Allen Nitschelm

The Homesteader

Distributors:

Jill Maxwell

Michele Walsh

The Digest is published monthly during the school year by the Douglas School PTO.

Submissions are welcome and may be sent via email to Sharon Kautz at [sharon\\_douglas\\_digest@yahoo.com](mailto:sharon_douglas_digest@yahoo.com).

Deadline for submissions for May 2011 Digest: Friday, April 15

## Contents

PTO News	2
Spring social	3
Festival of cultures	3
March reading challenge	4
Spring clean-up	4
Douglas playdate	4
Douglas Day	4
School store	5
April vacation program	5
Baby news	5
Recipe	5
PIP	6
Donelan's tapes	6
Cultural enrichment	6
Important dates	7

## Happiness is... Warm Socks

We all know that socks are a covering for the foot. You might not have known that the foot is among the heaviest producers of sweat in the body. It is able to produce over a pint of perspiration per day. That's enough to fill one of our school milk containers!

Socks help to absorb and evaporate this sweat. You might have also been unaware that the word *socks* is derived from the loose-fitting slipper, called a *soccus* in Latin, worn by Roman comic actors.

Most people in the world don't have new socks, or any reason to wear socks. I have ten pair of dress socks that I rotate through each week. Many spring days, I wear no socks at all. No reason to. Not much sweat. Some say that wearing no socks at all is a sign of simplicity or poverty or cool. I like to think that it's about happiness.

There are many simple things that make us happy—small, private pleasures that make the day go better: opening a new bar of soap just before you shower, jeans fresh from the dryer, the cool side of a pillow on a warm evening. These all have something to do with happiness.

Happiness is more often than not made of small moments that don't last. It's as transient, momentary, and evanescent as the warmth of the jeans from the dryer. And it's most likely private and personal. However, every now and then, happiness is interpersonal. Going out and about in the world in an upbeat mood can contribute to the overall social atmosphere. We each decide what we bring to our community. At our worst, when we are angriest, maybe at our boss, child, teacher, or spouse, can we summon the happiness of our warm socks? Believe it or not, each situation is what we make it. We can be angry, unpleasant, and discouraging, creating chaos in our wake, or we can bring more happiness to each situation. It's our decision.

Sometimes all it takes is a new pair of socks, or maybe daring not to wear socks at all puts you into a groovy mood. If that helps, then socks are what's called for! Keep them warm and use them freely!

## **April PTO News**

Is it actually Spring? Have the snowstorms ended? Was Punxutawney Phil right? Think a positive yes! Ignore the last few snowfalls...get ready for spring!

Speaking of spring, this month started off with our wonderful annual Spring Social and Auction on April 2. A huge thank you goes out to Anya Fillion and Naomi Martin and their hard working auction committee who planned every detail to create a successful evening of fun and fundraising! The Acton Music Project (formerly known as the Douglas All-Star Band) headed up the entertainment for the night. Thank you to all of the teachers, staff, and Douglas families for their ongoing support of the auction and for the time and effort spent working on the classroom items and other donations gifted to the auction. There were many new and creative ideas donated this year from families and teachers, as well as solicited by our solicitation team. Thanks to the funds raised through our auction, our children continue to benefit from the wonderful programs and support achieved from PTO funds.

Douglas parents and children were able to enjoy the many talents of our students during the annual Talent Shows. On March 31, the younger grades displayed their skills in the K-3 Talent Show, and Grades 4-6 performed on March 24. Thank you to our music teacher Mr. Broggi and Douglas parent Terri Carotenuto for organizing the shows again this year.

With the arrival of spring, the Douglas Gardening committee will be preparing to work on our beautiful Douglas grounds and gardens. Gardening Committee Chair Phoebe Conant will be looking for helping hands in her effort to get the job done. More information about this will be available soon.

The Festivals of Cultures is scheduled for Saturday night, May 14. This event is sponsored by the Douglas and Conant PTOs and is coordinated by Douglas parent Maria Albarran. It is a very exciting event for both parents and children and has grown significantly each year because of its popularity! Please watch for more information about the Festival of Cultures as the date nears. If you would like to help with the event or have any questions, please contact Maria at [rivero\\_albarran@yahoo.com](mailto:rivero_albarran@yahoo.com). Your shift can be as short as 30 minutes!

The grade-wide movie night socials proved to be a hit again this year. Special thanks to Jennifer Aufiero and Bridget Steinkrauss for coordinating the movie nights and to all of the parents who volunteered to help at each movie night.

Thank you to all the parents and teachers who supported the Douglas students in our "Reading to Kenya, Africa" March Reading Challenge. Special thanks to the Reading Challenge Coordinators, Stacey Smith, LeeAnn Layton, Kim Shamah, Sasha DeMello, and Sue Stewart for their hard work putting together this event. We look forward to seeing if we made it to Kenya, as well as seeing our fundraising progress toward building a school in Kenya. Everyone seemed to enjoy the electronic logging of his/her reading! We will have to wait to see what challenge is in store for Dr. Whitbeck!

To close out the March Reading Challenge, community leaders participated in our Read Aloud Program on March 30.

We had a fun and informative Douglas and Gates PTO Speakers Series on March 22. Thank you to all of the parents who attended and to our guest speakers, Todd Chicko (ABRHS Counselor), June Montepeluso (Gates 6th Grade teacher), Katie Oxnard (Douglas 6th Grade teacher), Diane Spring (Gates Nurse), Diann Oster (Douglas nurse), Dr. Chris Whitbeck (Douglas Principal), and Lynne Newman (Gates Principal) for sharing their knowledge with our parents.

Finally, Acton's Town Meeting is on Monday, April 4, 7 PM, in the AB Regional High School auditorium. Many important town and school decisions are made at Town Meeting, including approval of the town and school budgets. We encourage you to attend the Town Meeting to share in this important process.

Our next PTO meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 10, 7:30 PM, at Douglas. At this meeting, we will be presenting and voting in the nominees for the 2011-2012 PTO Board. The PTO Budget Committee will also be presenting the proposed PTO budget for the 2011-2012 school year. We look forward to seeing you there!

*Kristan Smith-Park, [ksmith068@gmail.com](mailto:ksmith068@gmail.com),  
Deanne O'Sullivan, [deannewos@gmail.com](mailto:deannewos@gmail.com)  
2010-2011 PTO Co-Chairs*

## **12th Annual Douglas Spring Social and Auction Exceeds Goals**

On April 2, the Wedgewood Pines Country Club in Stow came alive with the upbeat music of the Acton Music Project and more than 175 Douglas parents and staff socializing, dining on great food, milling around the silent auction bidding tables, and taking in the beautiful display of classroom auction items. It was a wonderful night, not only because the party itself was such a fun adults-only night out for busy Douglas parents and staff, but because as a result of the help and participation of the ultra-supportive Douglas community, we exceeded our fundraising goals. Together, we raised funds which will go directly to our children's education.

Now is our chance to properly thank everyone who played a part. Thank you to this year's auction committee for their active participation, and beyond that, to everyone who contributed their time to make this year's event such a success. As you can imagine, it takes a lot of volunteers to round up approximately 200 auction items including contributions from parents, teachers, and local businesses, organize three different types of raffles that awarded great prizes to more than two dozen lucky participants, and help the classrooms make their fabulous contributions.

Special thanks to the Douglas School staff for their ongoing support and participation, including Chris Whitbeck, Sharon Armistead, and Sharen Crooks; Douglas School teachers and staff; PTO Co-Chairs Kristan Smith-Park and Deanne O'Sullivan; and The Acton Music Project (Chris Whitbeck, Peter Broggi, Joe Carotenuto, Andrew Meglis, Ed Yost, Lori Fassman, Roseanne Keefe, Craig VanderAa, and Meghan Giannetto).

And we can't forget to thank everyone who made item donations, purchased raffle tickets, bid on auction items, or attended the event. Finally, we would like to thank the many businesses that generously contributed to the fundraiser's success.

Together, we've proven how much the Douglas community cares! Congratulations all!

*Anya Fillion and Naomi Martin, Auction Co-Chairs*

## **Douglas Around the World—Festival of Cultures**

Get your passports ready to travel around the world! In just a few weeks we will visit many countries in one evening! All Douglas families are invited to attend the Festival of Cultures on **Saturday, May 14**, 5:30–8:30 PM, at RJ Grey Junior High. The Festival of Cultures celebrates our student population's rich ethnic and cultural diversity. Our ambassadors, who are volunteer parents, set up booths that children can visit and learn from. The booths typically have items of clothing, books, music, photographs, artwork, and games from the country being represented. This year we already have ambassadors representing Argentina, China, England, El Salvador, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Korea, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico, and Russia.



We also have a program featuring children performing music and dance from around the world. The program for this year is quickly filling up, so please contact us if you know of a student or group of students who would like to perform.

As this event has become more popular every year for its cultural flair, we need *a lot* of volunteers to help with planning, set up, clean up, etc. Please consider helping so we can all enjoy this great evening!

Please contact Maria Albarran to sign up as an ambassador, performer, or volunteer. Thanks to all of you who have already contacted me!

*Maria Albarran, 978.263.6807, rivero\_albarran@yahoo.com*

## **March Reading Challenge—an Incredible Success!**

The theme this year was “Reading to Kenya, Africa” and students read above and beyond their assigned school work to make their way to Kenya, where the Douglas community hopes to build a school. The large map in the lobby displayed the progress of the students. Animal markers on the map showed how far the students traveled each week based on their number of minutes read. This year’s March Reading Challenge continued the Douglas tradition of reading toward a school-wide goal to help others outside the Douglas community. We celebrated a fabulous “Read In” on March 10. Over 100 people participated. They brought their blankets, a pillow, and a good book. Popcorn and hot chocolate were served and Ms. Stewart read aloud.

Now, what do you think Dr. Whitbeck will do this year now that we have read all the way to Kenya? He already kissed a pig, rode in a hot air balloon, and raced an Olympic athlete. What could he possibly do next? **April 14** is the day—stay tuned!

*Sasha Demello, Sue Stewart, Stacey Smith, LeeAnn Layton, Kim Shamah*

### **Read Aloud Day**

Read Aloud Day took place on Wednesday, March 30. Readers from the Acton community came in to read their favorite children’s books to students and were greeted with great enthusiasm. This year’s readers included Alixe Callen, Principal of Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, JD Head, who is in charge of the Facilities and Transportation Department, Superintendent Dr. Stephen Mills, and Gardena Abramowitz, Acton police officer and mom to two Douglas students, to name a few.

Read Aloud Day is designed to motivate children to read by bringing together community members and kids. What better way to celebrate a successful March Reading Challenge!



### **Spring Cleaning—Help Needed**

It’s time for the Annual Spring Clean-up of the Douglas grounds. This year’s clean-up is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 12**, 8:45 AM–12:45 PM. (Rain date: Friday, April 15.)

The Garden Committee would love to have anyone with an extra hour or two help us trim, rake, sweep, prune, and otherwise prepare the gardens for Spring. We have some wonderful outdoor events coming up (Douglas Day, Memorial Day, Sixth Grade Graduation) when students and guests will have a chance to enjoy the grounds; please help us get everything ready! Coffee and snacks will be served. Bring work gloves if you have them. Preschoolers and half day kindergarteners are always welcome. No green thumb required! Contact Phoebe or Lisa with any questions.

*Phoebe Conant, pmconant@bluelink.andover.edu*

*Lisa Munson, mgmunsonfamily@verizon.net*

### **Douglas Playdate**

On **Thursday, April 28**, 12:30 PM, join fellow Douglas families at the Douglas School Playground! Have a picnic lunch, let the kids play, and let the parents mingle. We will provide hula hoops, jump ropes, and playground balls. It will be a great way to begin spring at Douglas! All Douglas families are invited. We especially hope to see our new families from kindergarten and grades 1–6! Let’s keep our fingers crossed for some nice weather! See you there.

*Kathy McCullen, Newcomer Coordinator*

*k.mccullen@comcast.net, 978.264.1947*

### **Douglas Day**

Douglas Day will be held on **Monday, June 6**, with a rain date of Wednesday, June 8! As always, we have a day of fun, challenging, and wet events. More information will follow after the break along with volunteer forms. Many parents are needed to run events, and siblings are invited to join us. Mark your calendar now!

*Erika Cormier, Douglas Day Chair, erika.cormier@comcast.net*

### **Spring Raffle at Eagle's Nest School Store**

Calling all Lego and Pillow Pet fans to the school store's spring raffle! The Pillow Pet/Lego challenge consists of two separate raffles, one for an 11 inch monkey Pee Wee Pillow Pet and one for a Lego City police kit. The prizes are on display at the school store. A chance for either prize is 50 cents, so come buy more than one. We are tracking our sales progress for each prize on the poster beside the store; come support your favorite raffle. The drawing will be held on **Friday, April 15**, for both prizes. There will also be two chances to win consolation prizes of our best school store supplies. Don't miss out on this exciting event!



Our staff of 4th Graders and their parents are working very hard to meet your shopping expectations. A portion of the proceeds from the store help defray the cost of a 4th Grade field trip. The remainder of the funds is given to Douglas and/or a local charity.

April will also bring a fresh supply of cool new items to the school store and restocking of sold out merchandise like the popular smiley face stress balls. So keep stopping by every Tuesday and Friday morning!

Special thanks to our 2010–2011 school store team for their continued hard work: Cheryl Witty (Purchaser), Shana Brown (Treasurer), and Ann Marie Hanley (Scheduler).

### **April Vacation Program**

Sign up now for our fourth annual April Vacation Program at Douglas School. Our week of fun will include surprise guests, a field trip on foot, story-time, fun foods...and much more! You pick and choose the day(s) your child(ren) will attend. The program will run Tuesday, April 19 through Friday, April 22. Regular hours are 8:30 AM–3:30 PM with extended hours available from 7:30 AM–6 PM.

Please contact Mrs. Borgman or Mrs. DeMello for more information.

*Chris Borgman, cborgman@mail.ab.mec.edu*

*Sasha DeMello, sdemello@mail.ab.mec.edu*



### **Congratulations!**

Congratulations to the newest Douglas community arrival! Mrs. Tajima gave birth to her first daughter, Maggie, this January. Mom, Dad, baby, and grandparents (Mrs. Tajima's mom is Gail Dow, one of our Special Education assistants) are enjoying their new arrival. Stephanie and Maggie will be taking a leave of absence next year and we look forward to their return in September 2012.

### **This month's recipe from Eating Well Magazine: Pineapple-Raspberry Parfaits**

You won't mind serving dessert on a busy weeknight after assembling these quick parfaits.

4 parfaits. Active time: 5 minutes; Total time: 5 minutes

- 2 8-ounce containers (2 cups) nonfat peach yogurt
- 1/2 pint fresh raspberries (about 1 1/4 cups)
- 1 1/2 cups fresh, frozen, or canned pineapple chunks

Divide and layer yogurt, raspberries, and pineapple into four glasses.

Nutrition information per serving: 109 calories; 0 g fat (0 g sat, 0 g mono); 2 mg cholesterol; 23 g carbohydrates; 5 g protein; 58 mg sodium; 3 g fiber; 113 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: vitamin C (60% daily value), calcium (15% daily value). 1 1/2 carbohydrate serving. Exchanges: 1/2 reduced-fat milk, 1 fruit



## Save the Date—PIP Events

PIP stands for “Parent Involvement Project,” and is run by parents who wish to encourage our children to explore science, technology, engineering, and math education activities outside of the classroom.

**Third Grade Market Math Mania: Wednesday, April 13**, open house 4:30–7:30 PM at Roche Bros of Acton. All AB third graders and parents are invited to join us for “hands on” grocery math including M&M Math, grocery scanning and estimation, thermometry, and more. It takes approximately an hour to enjoy all six stations. Fun, learning, samples, and giveaways!

**Summerskills Workbooks Fundraiser, May–June:** Help your student keep math and reading skills fresh all summer long! The books feature engaging and fun critical thinking activities for reviewing material that your child just completed, so he or she is ready for new skills in September. Look for order forms in April.

Volunteers are always welcome and needed.

Check out Acton-Boxborough PIP’s website at [www.actonpip.org](http://www.actonpip.org) for more information about these and other PIP events.

Sue Cudmore, [susan.cudmore@gmail.com](mailto:susan.cudmore@gmail.com)

## Tapes for Education—Final Collection

The Donelan’s Supermarket “Tapes for Education” fundraiser is coming to an end. If you have any receipts from Donelan’s Supermarkets (any of their stores) dated September 1, 2010–March 31, 2011, please send them in! Douglas has been fortunate enough to order some great equipment for the school with the proceeds from this free fundraiser. If you are stopping by the school, you can put your receipts in the brown wicker basket by the door, or you can send them in your child’s backpack in an envelope marked “Tapes for Education”. **All eligible tapes must be submitted by April 10.** Any questions, please contact Phoebe.

Phoebe Conant, 978-263-0054,  
[pconant@bluelink.andover.edu](mailto:pconant@bluelink.andover.edu)

## Fifth Grade Cultural Enrichment Program

*Made possible by your Snack Cart donations*

On March 18, the 5th graders enjoyed a Cultural Enrichment program by David Coffin. He performed his “Life at Sea” program about the early American whaling industry based out of Nantucket. The music-oriented “Life at Sea” fills in the gap, enhancing students’ appreciation and understanding by engaging them directly in the experience of learning.

With his harpoon, concertina, his larger-than-life singing voice, and of course, Pierre, his trusty limberjack, David transported the kids, his “crew,” back to 18th century Nantucket, to the days of his ancestors who settled there in 1659. The students traveled “around the Horn” to the Pacific whaling grounds through lively anecdotes and participatory songs, all the while experiencing the history that can be learned from traditional songs the whaler-men sang as they sought to make their fortune. From the singing of traditional sea chanteys to hoist the anchor and set the sails to the dance songs sailors sang in the doldrums, we experienced the life of a whaler on his three to five-year epic voyage hunting the magnificent whales of the ocean for their precious whale-oil.

To learn more about David Coffin and his enrichment programs go to [www.davidcoffin.com](http://www.davidcoffin.com). If you would like to simulate the voyage your children took, please see the interactive chart at: [www.davidcoffin.com/index.php?page=life-at-sea-interactive-map](http://www.davidcoffin.com/index.php?page=life-at-sea-interactive-map)

This program was paid for by money raised through the Snack Cart program. Thank you for supporting Snack Cart and Cultural Enrichment at Douglas!



**Dates to Remember**

Saturday, April 2	Spring Social and Auction, Wedgewood Pines Country Club
Monday, April 4	Possible AB and APS School Committee meeting, ABRHS rooms 102/104E, 6 PM
Tuesday, April 12	Annual Spring Garden Clean-up (rain date April 15)
Wednesday, April 13	Third Grade Market Math at Roche Bros, 4:30–7:30 PM
Friday, April 15	Deadline for submissions to May Digest
April 18–22	Spring Recess: NO SCHOOL
April 26–28	Sixth Grade Nature’s Classroom
Thursday, April 28	Douglas playdate at Douglas primary grades’ playground, 12:30 PM
Tuesday, May 10	PTO General Meeting at Douglas, 7:30 pm
Saturday, May 14	Festival of Cultures
Thursday, May 19	APS School Committee meeting at Conant, 7:30 pm
Monday, May 23	Deadline for submissions to June Digest
Friday, May 27	Memorial Day program
Monday, May 30	Memorial Day: NO SCHOOL

**Snack Cart Donations**

April 7	Pretzel Day
April 14	(Grade 1 and AMK) Mrs. Browne, Miss Hunt, Mrs. Ingraham, Mrs. Smith (spring AMK)
April 21	No School
April 28	(Grade 5 and ADK) Mrs. Cherkerzian, Mrs. Rand, Mrs. Sharp, Miss Fitzpatrick

.....

**MCAS Dates—2011**

Dear Parents of 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students:

Your children will be taking the MCAS tests on the following dates:

- Grade 3: May 9, 10, and 11
- Grade 4: May 9, 10, and 11
- Grade 5: May 9, 10, 11, 16, and 17
- Grade 6: May 9, 10, and 11

Please make every effort to have your children attend school on these dates and arrive promptly by 8:30 AM; tests will begin shortly after the start of school.

Your support is appreciated.

Dr. Christopher Whitbeck