



Douglas Digest

News of the C.T. Douglas School

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Douglas Digest

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Candy and Toys for Peace

by Zachary Horovitz

Welcome back to school. I hope your vacation was happy and healthy. I have a guest author in the Principal's column this month. Zachary Horovitz would like to tell us about how good things come around.

Overseas the war is harsh and unforgiving. Men and women suffer injury and possible death every day. The worst part of it is that children are forced through unforgivable circumstances every day. Some children die of starvation and others are killed during firefights. Even those not directly affected by the war suffer. Many children don't have toys to play with and candy or food to eat.

Operation Gratitude is a citizen group that is putting the word out about all the suffering children and the soldiers who help. Operation Gratitude is a non-profit organization gathering toys, candy, and other provisions for the troops and civilians in war torn Afghanistan and Iraq. Dentists play a key part in the operation. The dentists buy Halloween candy for a dollar a pound from children around America. The dentists then donate toothbrushes, floss, and toothpaste, and ship the supplies to Operation Gratitude.

Once the supplies reach Operation Gratitude they are packaged and shipped to Iraq and Afghanistan. When the supplies reach Afghanistan, they are distributed evenly to the troops. The candy and toys go to the children who begin to see the soldiers as friends rather than just scary people. These donations build trust between Iraqis, Afghanis, and American soldiers. As one soldier said "The cookies are *excellent* and the beanie babies help us a lot with the local kids."

Now, dear reader, can you see how the goodness of your heart can help save lives and build relationships? If a small act of kindness, such as giving out candy, can have a huge impact in a war, imagine the wonderful effects that your kind acts can have on people here at home.

Because now, more than ever, the world needs you and your kid.

Zachary Horovitz, Grade 6

Christopher Whitbeck

Volunteers load care packages with candy; soldiers distribute care packages:



January PTO News

As we begin the 2011 school year, we want to welcome everyone back to Douglas! We hope you had a wonderful, restful vacation.

With winter now officially here, we would like to give a special thanks to our custodians, John Pacelli and Tuey Guarnieri, who help keep the icy walkways safe for our parents, staff and students as well as for keeping the inside of the school clean. The ice, slush, snow, and mud of winter keep them extra busy, and we are grateful for their extra effort during these messy weather conditions.

At the November PTO General Meeting, Maria Albarran and Sue Cudmore explained the benefits of going green at our classroom parties. They have introduced a plastic partyware pilot program that, after a unanimous vote, will be supported financially by the PTO. Several classrooms have signed up to use the plastic ware for their parties. Thanks to Maria and Sue for helping us think of creative ways to go green.

We appreciate how much time our Book Fair coordinator, Laura Fay, spent making sure the Book Fair was up and running in time for holiday purchases. The Book Fair's team of volunteers helped to make the Scholastic Book Fair a success. It was fun to see how excited the students got when they found their favorite book at the fair. Special thanks goes to Debbie Calderon for sharing her tips on how to be a children's book illustrator and reading from the book that she illustrated, *Agnes Rose's One Song*, at the Scholastic Book Fair's Family Night.

Thanks to Debbie Maffei for distributing the Spiritwear orders and making sure that we had our Spiritwear before winter vacation. We look forward to wearing our Spiritwear on Spirit Day, January 21.

The Douglas PTO is looking forward to some great events in 2011.

The Newcomers Committee led by Kathy McCullen is planning a sledding playdate at NARA Park on Saturday, January 29. This event is sponsored by the Newcomer Committee, but all Douglas students and their families are welcome to attend! Keep an eye out for a message in the Constant Contact for further details.

The Spring Social and Auction is the PTO's largest parent social and fundraiser and is already being planned. If you would like to help with the event, please contact the Spring Social and Auction Co-Chairs, Anya Filion (anyawfillion@yahoo.com, 978.929.9376) or Naomi Martin (neasullivan@aol.com, 978.263.8352).

The Festival of Cultures is another fun event that takes place in May. If your child wants to perform that evening, please contact Maria Albarran (rivero_albarran@yahoo.com) as the performance spots fill up quickly.

Please join us for our next PTO General Meeting on Thursday, January 20, 10 AM. Dr. Mills, Superintendent of the Acton Schools, will be our guest that morning and will give an update on the school budgets. This is a great opportunity to meet Dr. Mills and ask him any questions that you may have about the budget and our schools.

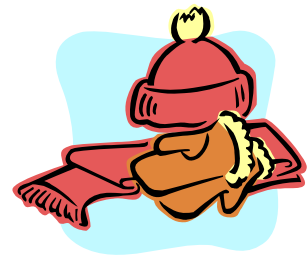
As always, please let us know if you have any comments or questions!

*Kristan Smith-Park, ksmith068@gmail.com,
Deanne O'Sullivan, deannewos@gmail.com
2010-2011 PTO Co-Chairs*

Cold Weather

It is January and along with that comes the cold, winter weather. Our elementary children go outside unless it is raining heavily or very cold. This is an important part of their day because they get the fresh air and a chance to stretch their legs. Hopefully even a little exercise is involved.

Please make sure that you dress your children appropriately. Coats, hats, and mittens are a must when the weather is cold. It may be a good idea to send in a change of clothes, just in case. The health office has a very limited supply of clothing, and we do our best to keep the students comfortable.

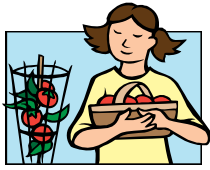


Sled Away Those Winter Blues!

Please join us at NARA Park on Saturday, January 29, 10 AM, for some serious sledding with the Douglas Newcomers group! Come with a sled and a smile and be prepared to have some fun! We hope to see our new families from Kindergarten and Grades 1-6; and as always, all Douglas families are invited. Please note that sledding at NARA is held on the hill where the amphitheatre is. Parking is typically at the soccer fields. Let's keep our fingers crossed for some snow! See you there.

*Kathy McCullen
Newcomers Coordinator
k.mccullen@comcast.net
978.264.1947*

**Do you have a green thumb?
The Douglas veggie garden needs you!**



Have you noticed the raised garden beds on the southeast side of the building? This year, we had a bumper crop of basil, tomatoes, and tomatillos! We're looking for any parents and kids willing to get their

hands dirty with spring planting, weeding, and watering the beds over the summer, even if it's only one time or one task. There are two compost bins nearby that also need some attention and the Acton Water District donated a rain barrel that needs to be hooked up.

In the past several years, we have served some of the produce in the cafeteria and we would love some help with the food prep that is required. We would also be willing to discuss other options for the produce such as donation to the Food Pantry. Please let us know if you are interested in harvesting over the summer and transporting the food to the Pantry.

To be added to the email list, please contact Sue Cudmore (susan.cudmore@gmail.com).

Walker/Bus Pass Changes

If a change needs to be made to a child's dismissal plan for that day (walker or bus pass), please note that **a parent must call the office** to make the change. This applies to **all** changes, including playdates, religious education classes, scout meetings, etc.

*Thank you,
Sharon Armistead and Sharen Crooks*

Spirit Day! Friday, January 21

It is time to celebrate Douglas! Come to school on Friday, January 21, ready to show your school spirit. Wear your Douglas Spiritwear or anything blue and/or yellow. It should be a fun day.

*Debbie Maffei,
d.maffei@verizon.net, 978.635.8396*



**This month's recipe from the National Dairy Council:
Strawberry Frozen Yogurt Squares**

Makes 9 servings; Preparation time: 10 minutes; "Cook" time, 8 hours.

- 1 cup crunchy wheat and barley cereal
- 3 cups fat-free strawberry yogurt
- 1 (10 ounce) bag frozen unsweetened strawberries (about 2 1/2 cups)
- 1 cup fat-free sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup light or fat-free whipped topping (optional)

Line an 8x8-inch baking pan with foil. Sprinkle cereal evenly on the bottom of the pan; set aside.

Place yogurt, strawberries, and condensed milk in a blender. Cover and blend until smooth. Pour the mixture over the top of the cereal, gently smoothing yogurt mixture to edges of pan. Cover with foil or plastic wrap, and freeze for 8 hours or until firm. Use edges of foil to loosen and remove from pan. Let recipe thaw for 5–10 minutes. Cut into squares, top with whipped topping (if desired), and serve.

Storage tip: Squares may be individually wrapped and frozen for single servings.

Create your own variations by using other flavor combinations of yogurt and fruit.

Recipe created by 3-Every-Day™ of Dairy

Nutrition Information per serving: calories: 200, total fat: 0g, saturated fat: 0g, cholesterol: 5mg, dietary fiber: 2g, sodium: 150mg, calcium: 20% daily value, protein: 7g, carbohydrates: 42g.



12th Annual Douglas Spring Social and Auction Kick-off

It's already time to start preparing for the 12th annual Douglas Spring Social and Auction! The auction will take place on Saturday, April 2, 6:30–11 PM, at the beautiful Wedgewood Pines Country Club in Stow. Mark your calendars for Douglas School's biggest annual fundraiser, always a fun night out for Douglas parents.

More than ever this year, we are going green. We will rely less on paper backpack communications to get you invitations, forms, and other materials. Our primary sources of updates and information will be the regular Constant Contact emails and the Auction web site, which will soon be updated.

Please note that Wedgewood Pines has a capacity limit which means that there are a finite number of tickets available. Secure your ticket early; R.S.V.P. forms will be available soon at <http://douglas.ab.mec.edu>. Once you print and submit your form and payment, you will receive email confirmation within 7 days. If you have any questions about tickets, please contact Cheryl Witty (ckwitty@verizon.net, 978.266.0177).

We still need volunteers in many areas to help make this event a success. Whether you just have a few minutes to help with a simple project, or you want to take the lead on a critical auction assignment, we would love to hear from you. Please contact auction co-chairs Anya Fillion (anyawfillion@yahoo.com, 978.929.9376) or Naomi Martin (neasullivan@aol.com, 978.263.8352) and they'll find the right job for you.

We need your help and creative donations!

This year's auction will once again feature a silent auction, a mini-live auction (Quickie Boards), and multiple raffles. *We are always looking for fresh ideas!!* If you think of an interesting auction item, or know someone who can donate a raffle item that will boost ticket sales, please let us know! Remember, no donation is ever too small. Consider pooling your resources with other Douglas parents to make a combined donation. Please contact Anya and Naomi with any questions.

Anya Fillion and Naomi Martin, Auction Co-Chairs

Save the Date for the Festival of Cultures

We have a date for this year's Festival of Cultures! It will be Saturday, May 14. This event, organized by Conant and Douglas schools, celebrates our rich ethnic and cultural diversity. We hope to recruit families or "ambassadors" who are originally from all areas of the globe as well as families who have some connection to a global community. Ambassadors set up booths, representing countries, where children can visit and learn about those countries. The booths typically have items of clothing, books, music, photographs, artwork, and games from the country being represented.

Additionally, the evening includes a program featuring children from both schools, performing music and dance from around the world. The performance spots go early so please sign up as soon as possible by contacting me at the phone number or email address below.

Finally, if you are willing to help out before or during the event, please let me know. We always need a lot of volunteers! Thanks to all who have already signed up to volunteer!

Maria Albarran, 978.263.6807, rivero_albarran@yahoo.com

February Vacation Program

Sign up now for our Second Annual February Vacation Program! The week of fun will include snow sculptures and sledding (weather permitting), hot chocolate, cooking activities, cup stacking games, foreign language activities, surprise guests, and more! You can choose the day(s) your child(ren) will attend. The program will be offered Tuesday, February 22 through Friday, February 25, 8:30 AM–5 PM. For more information, please contact Chris Borgman or Sasha DeMello at 508.596.0585.

Enrichment Classes

The Winter session of enrichment classes begins on Monday, January 10. Please visit the Douglas School website for a brochure and registration form!



Dates to Remember

- Tuesday, January 11 General information meeting for entering kindergarteners, R.J. Grey auditorium
- Monday, January 17 Martin Luther King Day: NO SCHOOL
- Wednesday, January 19 Douglas Digest deadline for February issue
- Wednesday, January 19 Kindergarten tours start
- Thursday, January 20 General PTO meeting with Dr. Mills, Superintendent of Acton-Boxborough Schools
All are welcome! 10 AM in cafetorium
- Friday, January 21 Spirit Day—Wear your Douglas colors and Spiritwear
- Monday, January 24 Kindergarten changeover
- Saturday, January 29 Newcomers playdate, NARA Park, 10 AM

Snack Cart Donations

- January 6 (Grade 5 and AMK) Mrs. Cherkerzian, Mrs. Rand, Mrs. Sharp, Mrs. Smith (fall AMK)
- January 13 **Pretzel Day**
- January 20 (Grades 4 and 6) Mrs. Bethel, Mrs. Breslin, Mrs. Nadolny, Mrs. Hubbell
- January 27 (Grades 3 and 6) Mr. Cail, Mrs. Ritter, Mrs. Simeone, Mrs. Christensen
- February 3 **Pretzel Day**

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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: March 21, 22, and 23
 May 9, 10, and 11
- Grade 4: March 21, 22, 23, and 25
 May 9, 10, and 11
- Grade 5: March 21, 22, and 23
 May 9, 10, 11, 16, and 17
- Grade 6: March 21, 22, and 23
 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