



Douglas Digest

News of the C.T. Douglas School

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May
2009

BOWLING WITH PAPA

Douglas Digest

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“Momma, Is Maggie bowling with Papa?”

“Do you think that dogs bowl?”

“No, but maybe up in the sky they do. ‘Cuz when they’re bowling it makes thunder and ‘cuz-why, maybe dogs make thunder, too.”

This snippet of conversation between my four-year old and wife made perfect sense to me when I walked in on it. Our youngest son knew that both our dog and his grandfather died last year. During a thunderstorm, his babysitter had said that some people believe that thunder was people bowling in the sky. Milo was making perfect connections and wondering – what happens to dogs when they die? Do they bowl too?

I’ve heard children asking questions and telling stories at school when they think that no one is listening. Telling stories is another way of sharing your questions.

“I heard that they were going to live in a box.” One child said to another.

“No, they’re living on a plane while they look for a new place to live.”

“No, I was at their house. It’s really there – but it was clean, so maybe they’re selling it.”

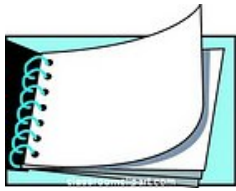
“Yeah, their house is clean, but their car is a mess, maybe they live in their car.”

I know that the children weren’t talking about my house, but do they think that I live in my car???

The wonderful thing about children is that they’re always thinking. And the frightening thing about children is that they’re always thinking! Thinking can be a secret, or it can be shared. Children are always trying to make sense of their world. They’re always thinking, but they’re not always asking questions, they’re not always sharing their thoughts.

Asking questions is good. Answering them is sometimes hard. Our answers can lead to more questions, they can satisfy, or they can build the cone of silence - a poorly handled question can be the end to an important conversation.

During this economic crisis, children hear adults talking, they hear the news, they hear their friends express their fears. There are unknowns for all of us – it’s time to pay special attention to our children. What are they worried about? If they ask tough questions, like, “Is Maggie bowling in the sky with Papa?” sometimes it’s easiest to ask what they mean. Sometimes we need to give a simple answer, “Well, Maggie did die.” If our children need more they’ll ask. We don’t need to go into a complete theological or an Economics 101 explanation. Sometimes it’s simple enough to say, “Times are hard, but we love you and we’ll always take care of you.” Sometimes that’s all any of us need.



PTO NEWS

I think that we can safely say spring is officially here and Douglas looks better than ever! The Douglas gardens are flourishing thanks to our gardening committee led by Jamie Norton and Pheobe Conant and the school is sparkling on the inside thanks to our wonderful custodians, John Pacelli and Dave Bouchard. We thank you all for your continued effort and dedication in helping to make Douglas a cheerful place for our children to learn and play.

On May 1st, several seniors from the high school, many of them Douglas alumni, helped out around Douglas during our Community Service Day. Once again, with many hands to make work light, they spread a lot of mulch and completed several small projects for our teachers. Thank you to those students for their help, providing a wonderful example of volunteerism and showing how students can make a difference in our community!

Congratulations to all of the Douglas students for meeting their individual, grade-wide and school-wide reading challenge goals as they "Read Across America" in the March reading challenge. What does Dr. Whitbeck have in store for the children this year? We will have to wait and see...

The Festival of Cultures event is almost here! Come enjoy a trip around the world with your children on Saturday, May 16th from 5:30 – 8:30 PM at the Junior High School. This event was a huge success last year and we are looking forward to another cultural excursion with food, entertainment, displays and ambassadors. Thank you to Kristan Smith-Park and her committee for organizing an event that highlights the Douglas motto of diversity, inquiry, growth, and caring. There are still some volunteer opportunities. Please contact Kristan at ksmith068@gmail.com or 978-263-3514 if you would like to help this year.

The Memorial Day Celebration is scheduled for Friday, May 22nd. This is a special occasion noted by a guest speaker, the music of the Douglas School Band, and the audience singing along with Mr. Broggi. Thank you to Mr. Broggi for coordinating this event.

We are looking forward to our Teacher's Appreciation Luncheon scheduled for May 27th and coordinated by Erica Cannarozzi, Pam Cardarelli and Candace Doncaster. Please contact Erica at ecannarozz@aol.com if you are able to help with set up or clean up, or if you can provide a dessert that day to complement the luncheon. This is a wonderful way that we as parents are able to thank our wonderful, hardworking Douglas staff.

Douglas Day 2009 is scheduled for Monday, June 1st (Rain date - June 3rd). Douglas Day is a great day of fun and games for the kids. If you would like to help out this year, please contact Erika Cormier at erika.cormier@comcast.net.

Our next General PTO Meeting will be held on Wednesday May 6th at 7:30 pm at Douglas. At this meeting, the Board nominations will be voted on and the Budget will be presented for the 2009-10 school year. Our final PTO General Meeting will be Thursday, June 11th at 7:30 pm when we will vote in the 2009-10 budget and welcome to new board members to the PTO board.

PTO co-chairs

Cassie Stewart at 978-635-1661 cassie_stewart@comcast.net and Cheryl Witty ckwitty@verizon.net

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME...

This year's Douglas School Lowell Spinners night will be held on Saturday, June 20 at 5:05 PM versus the Vermont Lake Monsters. Sit with Douglas friends and enjoy some great baseball with this Red Sox Single A farm team. Ticket order forms will be sent home via your child's backpack at the beginning of May. Mark your calendars!

Please email Julie Marvin with any questions marv711@comcast.net.



10TH ANNUAL SPRING SOCIAL AND AUCTION EXCEEDS GOALS!



On April 5th, the Wedgewood Pines Golf Club in Stow came alive with the upbeat music of the Douglas All-Star band, and more than 230 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 fund-raising goals. Together we raised more than \$35,000 which will go directly to our children's education.

Now is our chance to properly thank everyone who played a part in this success. As you can imagine, 260 auction items including contributions from parents, teachers, and local businesses; organize three different types of raffles that awarded great prizes to over 20 lucky participants; and help the classrooms make their fabulous contributions.

Thank you to this year's auction committee for their active participation, including:

Jennifer Aufiero	Valerie Bauer Gore	Karen Bockoven	Erin Boisvert
Jacqui Burak	Deborah Calderon	Maureen Cannata	Michelle Daniell
Kim Davis	Michele Ellicks	Lori Fassman	Anne Fulginiti-Davidson
Marne Geller	Linda Gower	Barbara Green	Anne Marie Hanley
Corrine Hogseth	Torri Horovitz	Jennifer Jaroch	Sara Junghans
Roseanne Keefe	Lisa Kelly	Lynne Kondracki	Naomi Martin
Terry Martins	Kathy McCullen	Deanne O'Sullivan	Sheri-Ann Palazzo
Sandra Pallozzi	Martha Papalia	Christine Phillips	Lisa Racie
Sue Rigby	Sue Ropiak	Judy Rowland	Elaine Rowles
Kim Shamah	Marj Sullivan	Melinda Vigolo	Anne Sullivan-Soydan
Michele Walsh	Tracy West	Cheryl Witty	Jill Wolf

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 Cassie Stewart and Cheryl Witty; and The Douglas All Star Band (Chris Whitbeck, Peter Broggi, Ed Yost, Bill Brandon, Andrew Meglis, Lori Fassman, Roseanne Keefe, Craig VanderAa, and Joe Carotenuto).

Thanks also to those who volunteered to help the night of the event, including: Gary Chase, Mike Clabault, Kris Ellicks, Larry Fillion, Corrine Hogseth, Stella Ko, Kathleen McDonagh, Rheta Roeber, Seth Trotz and Donna Yost. And we can't forget to thank everyone who purchased raffle tickets, auction items, or who attended the event. Finally, we would like to acknowledge the many businesses who donated auction items, floral decorations, auction booklet printing, and help with our classroom items.

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

-- Sarah Clabault and Maryanne Chase, auction Co-Chairs



DOUGLAS DAY

Remember to mark your calendars for Douglas Day, June 1st and rain date June 3rd. We have planned an assortment of wacky and wet games! You can also enjoy a great barbeque lunch with your Douglas student(s). Please consider volunteering for this wonderful event!

Thanks! Erika Cormier erika.cormier@comcast.net

FESTIVAL OF CULTURES

The **Festival of Cultures** is finally here! The event is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our rich ethnic and cultural backgrounds, socialize with friends and meet new ones, learn about various cultures and watch our talented children perform. The event, which is sponsored by Douglas and Conant PTOs, is on **Saturday, May 16 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** at the R.J. Grey Junior High School. Here are several of the evening's highlights that are in store for you and your family:



- Obtain a world map, travel to various countries, get your map stamped, and answer trivia questions. Visit all countries and win a prize!
- Visit activity tables representing *Belgium, China, England, India, Ireland, Lebanon, Mexico, and the Philippines*. Ambassadors will share with you the culture and history of their countries.
- Savor our "International Potluck Meal" (5:30-6:45) in the cafeteria. An array of mouth-watering foods contributed by attending families as well as local merchants will be served.
- Enjoy a multi-cultural show (7:15-8:30) featuring dances and music from around the world performed by our students from Conant and Douglas and friends. Douglas's Japanese classes will perform as well as a choral group led by Mr. Broggi and Dr. Whitbeck. We have a rich and full night of performances.

In an effort to defray some of the costs of running this event, a small entry fee of \$3.00 per person will be charged. As there will be many people to feed, each family is requested to bring a main dish that can feed 6-8 people (macaroni and cheese is fine). Please write down the ingredients of your meal with special attention to common allergens along with the name of your dish.

If you have any questions or are willing to help during the event, please call Kristan Smith-Park at 978-263-3514 or send an email message at ksmith068@gmail.com. We look forward to sharing a most eventful and enjoyable evening! Thank you!

PIP OFFERS SUMMERSKILLS WORKBOOKS

PIP (Parent Involvement Project) is coordinating the sales of Summerskills Sharpeners, a series of math workbooks spanning PreK-8, Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Geometry, and High School Math. The workbooks are aligned with the National Math Standards and are designed to reinforce the mathematical concepts learned in the just-completed school year; parents are generally advised to select the book grade level that corresponds with the grade their student has just finished. Summerskills Language Arts (PreK-7), Spanish (I, II), and French (I) workbooks are also available through PIP. Cost is \$17 per book - a savings of \$2 over the publisher's list price. For each book ordered, at least \$2 goes to support PIP family math and science activities. Samples of the Summerskills workbooks are on display at the Acton Memorial Library in the teen area of the Children's Department, or can be previewed at www.summerskills.com. Order forms are available online at <http://actonpip.org/pdf/2009summerskillsorderform.pdf>, and are also available with the samples at Acton Memorial Library. Place your order by Friday, May 23, for "backpack" delivery in mid-June. Contact Susan Krikorian at 978-635-0174 or actonpip@yahoo.com for more information.

Show your support for Earth Day and have your Summerskills books delivered in an "eco-friendly" PIP reusable grocery bag with an additional \$5 donation to PIP. Visit the PIP calendar, <http://actonpip.org/calendar> and learn about the **Green Acton Energy Fair** Sunday, May 17th, the **AB PIP Book Club** meeting the evening of May 28th at the Discovery Museum in Acton and the **PIP Film Fest** Tuesday evening, April 28th.

PIP is a network of parents, educators, community, and business partners supporting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education K-12. For more information about PIP visit www.actonpip.org.

John Petersen & Karen Herther
AB PIP

MARCH READING CHALLENGE



A big thank you to everyone who took part in the March Reading Challenge. Books were read, logs filled in, goals were achieved and miles were traveled. The students of Douglas School read over 10,000 miles! What wonderful stories can be told.

Also, through the kindness of the Douglas Community, over \$500 has been pledged to First Book. When contacted about the forthcoming donation, Kyle Zimmer, the founder of First Book, wrote “You are teaching your children two of the most important things in life: reading and empathy. We are deeply honored to accept your contribution to the cause of reaching other children who need our help.” The Douglas community should be proud.

However, there is one more piece to fall into place. As we more than met our Reading Challenge, I believe Dr. Whitbeck has a surprise for us. Oh, what could it be? Stay tuned!

Laurie Maylander, Reading Challenge Co-Coordinator

ACTON GREEN ENERGY FAIR Sunday May 17, 1:30-5:00pm RJ Grey Junior High School

Check out hands-on exhibits about solar power, wind power, solar cookers, LED light bulbs, Kill-a-Watts. Tour the solar panel array at the Leary Field concession stand.

1:45P.M. Low Carbon Diet Workshop learn how to shrink your energy bills!

2:30P.M. Keynote Presentation by Dr. Sajed Kamal internationally renowned renewable energy expert (Grades 5 – adult)

4:00P.M. NSTAR Energy Magic Show (limited seating, Grades K-4 with adult)

For more information, visit www.greenacton.org.



UPDATE ON THE WEST ACTON BOARDWALK PROJECT

Some of you may be wondering what is going on with the Boardwalk Project! This past fall, the Boardwalk Committee submitted an application to the Acton Community Preservation Commission (CPC) in the hopes of qualifying for CPC funds to help construct a new Boardwalk. Due to changes in Massachusetts law regarding CPC funding of open space and recreational projects, the Boardwalk does not readily qualify at this time. The Boardwalk Committee is now looking at other funding sources including, but not limited to state grants, private grants, corporate giving and community support. The Boardwalk is a great asset to our Douglas community as it is an integral part of our Nature Walk curriculum, facilitates the commuting of students to and from school and allows for easy access to our sister school, Gates. For the larger community, the Boardwalk opens up opportunities for joggers and dog walkers, families using the playgrounds and athletic fields, neighbors commuting to the West Acton markets and Idylwilde, and allows for efficient pedestrian traffic away from the busy roads of Central Street and Arlington Street. If you have walked across the Boardwalk lately, you know it is in need of repair. The Boardwalk Committee’s goal is to provide the kind of structural repair and elevation in a new design that will make a new Boardwalk last for many years to come.

At this beautiful time of year, when use of the Boardwalk is becoming more frequent again, we are looking to jump start our fundraising. The Gates community and the Douglas community will be holding a Walk-A-Thon to raise funds and awareness about the Boardwalk project. We hope that you and your family will be able to help!! Please watch for more information about the date and time of the up-coming **Boardwalk Walk-A-Thon!**

Thank you – Christine Phillips (hylandphillips@verizon.net) – representative for the Boardwalk Committee

SNACKING TIPS FOR HEALTHY KIDS

Between ages 6 and 10, both boys and girls need about 1,600 to 2,400 calories per day, although this can vary considerably for individual children and will increase as they get older.¹ Kids are active and growing and may need a snack between meals (about every 3-4 hours) if they get hungry.² Discourage kids from eating snacks before meals and eating when they are not hungry. Help kids to develop good habits by modeling healthful eating behaviors and providing opportunities for physical activity (at least 1 hour every day).

Guidelines:

- Keep beverage choices healthful. Choose low-fat milk (1 cup serving), water, and moderate amounts of 100% fruit juice (the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than a 6 oz serving of 100% fruit juice a day). Flavored low-fat milk or soymilks are also great alternatives.
- Avoid soda, sweetened juice drinks, and sports drinks!
- Look for snacks that have at least 2 grams of fiber per serving listed on the nutrition label.
- Choose whole-grain snacks as much as possible. Look for the word “whole” as one of the first ingredients on the product label.
- Keep fresh fruits and veggies readily available. Wash and prepare snacks such as carrot and celery sticks ahead of time, then keep in the refrigerator for easy snacking later.
- Choose low-fat dairy products (for children over age 2), like low-fat cheeses, cottage cheese, sour cream, yogurt, and milk.
- Aim for snacks low in fat, sugar and sodium. The Mayo Clinic recommends choosing snacks that have close to 5% of the daily value for fat, sugar, and sodium and not more than 20% (this is listed on the nutrition facts label) – except nuts and nut butters.
- Snacks that include at least two of the major food groups are best (carbohydrates, meats/beans/nuts, dairy, fruits and vegetables). For example, an apple with peanut butter or cottage cheese with peaches.
- Make it a good habit for your child to brush their teeth or at least rinse their mouth with water after they finish eating snacks. Sugary snack foods that stick in the teeth pose the greatest risk for tooth decay.

Food Allergies:

Some people have food allergies or intolerances. Food allergies or intolerances can cause reactions such as sneezing, coughing, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, hives, rapid heart rate, shortness of breath, and other rashes. People who have severe food allergies may not be able to touch or be in the same room with the food allergen. People with mild food allergies usually only need to refrain from eating the food, but can be near it. Food allergies are most often caused by proteins in milk, eggs, corn, nuts (especially peanuts), seafood, soy products, and wheat. Other foods frequently identified with bad reactions include meat and meat products, fruits, and cheese. Food intolerances are caused by an individual’s inability to digest certain foods. Intolerances have adverse reactions to food that do not involve an allergic response. Generally, larger amounts of a food are required to produce the symptoms of an intolerance than to trigger allergic symptoms.

1. American Academy of Pediatrics 2000; American Medical Association 1998

2. Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research 2004

©Tufts University, Friedman School, Economos, 2004



SUN SAFETY FOR CHILDREN

Childhood sunburns can increase your child's risk of developing skin cancer as an adult. Even a suntan can be harmful to children. Tanning is an outward sign of internal skin damage. Research shows that much of the damage to skin is done in the first 18 years of life. Protecting skin and eyes during these early years can reduce the risk of some types of skin cancer by up to 78%. Melanoma is a cancer of younger people and can start as early as adolescence.

Youth and Skin Cancer

- 50% of lifetime exposure to UV light occurs during childhood and adolescence.
- It can take less than 10 minutes for a child's skin to burn.
- Children with severe sunburns are at an increased risk for skin cancer.
- A person born today is twice as likely to develop malignant melanoma compared to someone born only a decade ago and 12 times more likely as someone born 50 years ago.
- Being sun safe is the first step to reduce the chances of getting skin cancer later in life.

Teach Children Sun Safe Habits

Children learn healthy habits best at a young age. Therefore, it is important to begin protecting your children from the beginning and teach them the importance of sun safety. With sun damage accumulating over a person's lifespan, beginning sun safety habits at a young age should be a priority.

- Maximize protection between the hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Wear sun protective, light colored clothing including long sleeved shirts and pants made of tightly woven fabric.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat that protects head, face, ears and neck. If a baseball cap is worn, make sure to use sunscreen on ears and neck.
- Wear UV-protective sunglasses with 99%-100% UV absorption.
- During peak sun hours (10-4pm) seek shade. Shadow rule-if your shadow is shorter than you, the sun's rays are at their strongest and you should seek shade.
- Encourage children to play in shaded areas, especially during peak sun hours.
- Use a sunscreen of SPF 15+ and apply a generous amount (about a palmful) 30 minutes before going outside.
- Reapply Sunscreen every 90 minutes or after swimming, towel drying or perspiring, even if the label says the product is waterproof. Don't forget the lips and ears-both areas can burn just as easily.
- Strongly discourage the use of tanning beds.

Further information can be found on the following web sites:

www.shadefoundation.org

www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/choose_yourcover/guide.htm

(Summarized by the APS/ABRHS Nurses, 5/2008)





Douglas Dates

May 6 – PTO General Meeting, 7:30 P.M., in Cafetorium

May 16 – Festival of Cultures, 5:30-8:30 P.M., in R.J. Grey Junior High School

May 21 – Acton Public Schools Committee Meeting, 7:30 P.M., at McCarthy-Towne

May 22 – Memorial Day Celebration at Douglas

May 25 – Memorial Day – NO SCHOOL

May 27 – Teacher Appreciation Luncheon

May 29 – Douglas School Volunteer Reception, 9:30-10:30 A.M., in the Art Room (Mod 2)

June 1 – Douglas Day (rain date: June 3)

June 11 – PTO General Meeting, 7:30 P.M., in Cafetorium

June 20 – Douglas Night at Lowell Spinners

June 25th Last Day of School & 6th Grade Graduation

SNACK CART DONATIONS

4/23/2009 **No School**

4/30/2009 Mrs. Hubbell Mrs. Bethel Ms. Savage Mrs. Smith (AMK)

5/7/2009 **Pretzel Day**

5/14/2009 Mrs. Rand Mrs. Simeone Ms. Hunt Ms. Fitzpatrick

5/21/2009 Mrs. Bloom Mrs. Breslin Mrs. Littlefield Mrs. Tajima

5/28/2009 Mrs. Sharp Mr. Cail Mrs. Oxnard Mrs. Kay

6/4/2009 **Pretzel Day**