



Douglas Digest

News of the C.T. Douglas School

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Douglas Digest

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Gilligan's Island Redux

Just sit right back and you'll hear a tale, a tale of a fateful trip...

And so begins the theme song burned into the recessed memory of all of us who grew up in the late sixties watching "Gilligan's Island." Who among us does not remember the escapades of the Skipper, Mary Ann, Ginger, the Howells, the Professor, and the title character, Gilligan? I loved their cups made of coconuts, their weatherproof huts and the plays that they put on to amuse themselves and the viewers. I also remember the inventions that the brilliant Professor was able to make: a car or a radio or a submarine out of coconuts, shells, and bamboo. All designed to rescue the crew from their extended three-hour tour.

So there we were, Mr. Cail, Mrs. Sullivan, Dr. Whitbeck, thirty-two third graders and five parents stranded on a coach bus on a Rt. 24 off-ramp in Taunton, Massachusetts, on our way to Plimoth Plantation. The bus ran out of gas! Cue the theme music...The weather started getting rough, the tiny ship was tossed, if not for the courage of the fearless crew, the Minnow would be lost.

Where was our professor? No matter how many times the bus driver tried to turn the bus engine over, it would not start. The bus was filling up with fumes. We had no coconuts to build a new bus—and remember that all of the Professor's inventions on the TV show had to rely on Gilligan to power them (they too had no gas) and because he was...Gilligan...he always ended up "driving the same way that Woodstock flies" and the car invariably ended up sinking in the lagoon.

Cue the Macarena dance music! What did the third graders from Douglas School do? They danced the Macarena!

Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena

Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena

Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena

Heeeeey Macarena!

Roughly translated this means

Dance your body happily Macarena

because your body is for receiving joy and good stuff

Heeeeey Macarena. They were awesome! In some cases this would have turned into a scene from *Alive* or *Lost* or *Lord of The Flies*, but the Douglas third graders were calm, cool, collected. They never whined or asked, "When will we be there?" They sang "Happy Birthday" and "The Wheels on the Bus" and danced their blues away.

As the State police closed the highway and escorted the single file line of thirty-two students, five parents, and three staff members to McDonalds, we were all silent. But in our heads we sang...Heeeeey Macarena.

C. Whitbeck

November 2009 PTO News

November is upon us, the leaves are falling, the weather is cool again and the excitement of Halloween is behind us as the children gear up for the Ice Cream Social this month.

Each month, PTO volunteers are busy at work helping in the classrooms, with library and computer lab, and with nature walks. Thank you to all the parents who have generously taken time out of their busy schedules to help the children, the staff, and the PTO.

- ◆ Two very big PTO efforts took place in October: Photo Day (retake) and the Douglas Directory. Thanks again to Sara Junghans and Susan Haverstock, our Photo Day Coordinators and to the Douglas Directory committee of Sharon Metzger, Amy Austin, Lori Fassman, Dawn Gomez, and Martha Papalia for their efforts on these projects.
- ◆ Thank you to Deanne O'Sullivan and Kathy McCullen for organizing the Spiritwear sale this year. With many new offerings we cannot wait to see the children in their new Spiritwear this fall.
- ◆ Thank you to Barbara Rennert and Cheryl Witty for coordinating the Ink Jet Recycling effort, and thank you to everyone who has dropped off cartridges to recycle. In October proceeds from the ink jet program allowed us to provide each classroom with tissues, hand sanitizer, and Clorox wipes.
- ◆ Thank you to Kathleen McDonagh for her continued work with the Walking School Bus program for Douglas, and for organizing Douglas's participation in International Walk to School Day on Thursday, October 8.
- ◆ Thank you to Roberta Bizier and Lori Fassman for coordinating our Veterans Day program. The Veterans Day ceremony will take place on Thursday, November 5 in the Douglas Cafetorium. We look forward to hearing the music provided by the fifth graders under the direction of Mr. Broggi, and to hearing from our Veteran speaker, Riley Shirley, grandfather to Douglas student Jack Shirley.
- ◆ Thank you to our Ice Cream Social chairs, Donna Yost, Dawn Gomez, and Todd Marvin, and their many volunteers for putting together the much anticipated Ice Cream Social, scheduled for Friday, November 13.
- ◆ Thank you to Julia Kline and Paula Conquest for their work on Purposeful Change. This is a great way to show our children how together they can make a difference. The proceeds from this effort will be used to purchase software for the new computers at Douglas as well as to make a donation to Cradles to Crayons.
- ◆ Thank you to Sheryl Fox for heading up the very effective and successful Scrip Fundraiser this year for Douglas.
- ◆ Thank you to Jennifer Aufiero for continuing the Box Tops and Donelan's tape program and for introducing the new Stop and Shop program to benefit Douglas.

Many of our volunteers work behind the scenes to ensure that the Douglas community stays informed and connected. Communication is essential and we would like to take this moment to thank those who take on these important jobs.

- ◆ We are very fortunate to have a talented team of parent volunteers who put together our monthly Douglas Digest. Thank you to the editors, Sharon Kautz and Lori Fassman, Sharon Metzger our publisher, Jill Maxwell and Michele Walsh who distribute the Digest to the Douglas families, and Allen Nitschelm who donates his time and services by printing over 380 issues of the Digest each month.
- ◆ Thank you to Ellen Hurley and her committee of volunteers who run the daily Safe Arrival program to help ensure that students who are absent are accounted for each day.
- ◆ Thank you to Christine Phillips and Sharon Armistead who manage the ongoing efforts of keeping us informed with the weekly school announcements and to Janice Ward for keeping the website current with ongoing updates for the PTO.
- ◆ Thank you to Michelle Daniell for updating our Monthly Calendar in the lobby.
- ◆ Thank you to all of our parents, teachers and staff for taking the time to read the Digest, Announcements, and Flyers to stay informed about upcoming events and note schedule changes as they happen.

The **Acton Public School (APS) Committee Meeting** will be held on Thursday, November 19, 7:30pm at the McCarthy-Towne School. We hope that parents will try to attend and participate in the APS meetings to better understand current issues and concerns facing the Acton Public Schools during these difficult economic times.

The PTO is extremely grateful for the continued support from our Douglas parents and your fundraising contributions. Thank you to all the parents who have made contributions to the PTO **Direct Solicitation Campaign**. We have raised just over \$10,000 of our budgeted \$14,000 for this fundraiser. 100% of the funds donated go directly to support assistants in the classroom, library, and computer lab as well as to cultural enrichment, curriculum enrichment, and other projects that enhance the elementary school experience of each of our students! Please consider making a donation to this very important fundraiser for the PTO. Please check to see if your company has a matching gift program to add to the success of this program.

Our next **PTO General Meeting** will be on Monday, November 9, 7:30pm, in the Douglas Cafetorium. At the meeting Dr. Whitbeck will update the parents on the MCAS results. We hope you can join us.

As always, please feel free to share your comments and questions with us!

Cheryl Witty, ckwitty@verizon.net, 978.266.0177
Kristan Smith-Park, ksmith068@gmail.com, 978.263.3514
2009-2010 PTO Co-Chairs

**New at Work and Play—Come Join Us!
Monthly Events Calendar and
Fall Conference Special!**

Work and Play: We are excited to announce that we are now posting a calendar with special events, activities, or treats for each day of the month. November's calendar is up and running at <http://douglas.ab.mec.edu>. What a great idea for a play date! Just pick up a drop-in form at the Douglas office or on the website and join the fun!

Breakfast Club/Work and Play Fall Conference Special: Drop-in during your teacher conference before or after school for \$5 per child!

Please remember to send in a lunch if your child attends Work and Play on early release days.

Enrichment Classes: Remember that afternoon enrichment classes are not held on early release days.

*Chris Borgman, cborgman@mail.ab.mec.edu
Sasha DeMello, sdemello@mail.ab.mec.edu*

Ink Jet Recycling at Work

Thank you to those who have been dropping off ink cartridges at school to recycle. In October each teacher received Clorox wipes, tissues, and hand sanitizer for their classrooms, purchased with the proceeds from the PTO ink jet recycling program. We will continue to use the proceeds from this program to help out where we can at school.

Thank you,

*Barbara Rennert, brennert@comcast.net
Cheryl Witty, ckwitty@verizon.net
Ink Jet Recycle Coordinators*

Walking School Bus

On Thursday, October 8, Douglas School was a registered participant in International Walk to School Day. Walkers and bikers that day received a reflective wristband for their efforts. We thank all those who participated in the walk, with a special thank you to the Seakins family whose dad, Adrian, came along as Spider-Man!

Thank you to all the Walking School Bus participants!

*Kathleen McDonagh,
Parent Coordinator*



**Ice Cream Social and Cake Walk
Everyone is Invited!**

Can you imagine a party where the whole school is invited to eat pizza, play games, and enjoy ice cream sundaes?

Wait a minute...that sounds like the Douglas Ice Cream Social!

Please join us for a night of fun, **Friday, November 13, 6:30-9pm** at Douglas School. You are all invited to gather with your friends and celebrate Douglas School!



For **tickets**, please see the link on the Douglas website, print the form and send along with your check (made payable to Douglas PTO) to Douglas Ice Cream Social, Attention: Naomi Martin. Please order by Friday, November 7: Naomi will send your tickets home via backpack mail. If you order after that time, she will hold them at the door. Thanks, Naomi!

Many **volunteers** contribute to helping this event run smoothly, I hope many of you signed up on the online Douglas volunteer form. If you have any special talents to contribute or questions, please contact Donna Yost (donna.yost2@verizon.net, 978-635-1684). All are welcome to celebrate our elementary school experience with ice cream, pizza, games, and friends!

We look forward to seeing you there.

*Donna Yost, Dawn Gomez, and Todd Marvin
your fun-loving Ice Cream Social co-chairs*

KA-CHING!!!

Purposeful Change kicked off its annual fundraiser on Douglas School Spirit Day. This year, the generous donations will benefit our Douglas community and Cradles to Crayons, the Giving Factory. Our donation will help support their vision “that one day, every child will have the basic things they need to be safe, ready to learn and feel valued.” For more information on this charity, visit www.cradlestocrayons.org.

Collections for this fundraiser continue in the school lobby on the following days:

- ◆ Wednesday, November 4
- ◆ Thursday, November 5
- ◆ Tuesday, November 10
- ◆ Thursday, November 12



PM Kindergarten students can submit their donations in the school lobby, just before their day begins on **Wednesday, November 4 and Tuesday, November 10**. Donations can also be brought directly to the school office and deposited in the crate in the corner labeled Purposeful Change.

A final collection spot will be set up in the Nurse’s office the evening of the Ice Cream Social, **Friday, November 13**. Join in on this fun and rewarding fundraiser, be eligible for fabulous prizes, and see first hand the power of giving back—with even just a few coins.

We are still looking for a few extra hands to help count between now and the Ice Cream Social. Please contact Paula or Julia if you can lend a helping hand.

Julia Kline, juliakline@comcast.net, 978.635.0566
Paula Conquest, paulaconquest@gmail.com, 978.263.1153

Save the Date—Spring Social and Auction!

It is never too early to start thinking about the Douglas Spring Social and Auction! The 11th Annual Douglas Spring Social and Auction will take place at Wedgewood Pines Country Club in Stow on Saturday, April 10. Please mark your calendar! This evening is a fun social event and an important fundraiser for our school.

Over the next few months, please think about what donations and events the Douglas community might enjoy. Consider pooling your resources with other Douglas parents to make a combined donation. Over the past year, we have enjoyed events such as the Acton Scavenger Hunt, the pub party, and the Summer Kick-Off party. We also welcome creative donations such as lessons in your area of expertise, offers to bake cookies, or to cook an ethnic dinner. Remember that no donation is ever too small!

Our kick-off meeting for this event will be held on **Tuesday, December 8, 7:30pm**, in the Douglas cafetorium. We will need many volunteers to make this evening a success. Please consider joining us to help plan this important fundraiser and fun social event!

If you have any questions or would like to help to volunteer please contact Naomi Martin or Anya Fillion.

Naomi Martin, neasullivan@aol.com
Anya Fillion, anyawfillion@yahoo.com



Douglas Book Fair

The Scholastic Book Fair will be open for business Tuesday, December 8 through Friday, December 11. Stop by anytime the fair is open or visit with your child’s class and take advantage of this fundraising opportunity. This is an excellent time to shop for the holidays, and books always make welcome gifts for teachers. To make your gift shopping easier, we’ll put aside a “wish bag” full of books for each teacher/specialist.

More information and flyers will be sent home soon indicating each class’s date and time at the Book Fair, and showing a sampling of the many books at this year’s event. The Book Fair will once again include our popular Thursday Family Night!

Laura Fay, 978-635-3766
douglasbookfair@gmail.com



From the Nurse's Office

As you may know, the Acton Public and Acton-Boxborough Regional School nurses have been conducting annual hearing, vision, height, and weight screenings for students in grades K–6, 7, and 10 for many years. This year, because of a new State mandate (105CMR200.500) passed in April 2009, the school nurses will use these heights and weights to calculate Body Mass Index (BMI) for students in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10. The BMI is a “weight for height for age” index. BMI can be a useful tool in the early identification of possible health risk factors among developing youth.

BMI does not tell the whole story about your child's health status, and BMI does not distinguish between fat and muscle. For example, if a child is very athletic and has a lot of muscle, his or her BMI may be high even though he or she is not overweight. That is why we will encourage you to share the results with your child's health care provider. Your child's doctor or nurse is in the best position to evaluate his or her overall health and will be able to explain to you the results of the BMI screening.

Notification letters of BMI results and resources will be sent in a confidential manner to all parents/guardians of students in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10 who participate in the height and weight screening. Parents and guardians may waive their child's BMI screening by submitting a written request to the school nurse. Students' privacy will be respected at all times during the process of measuring height and weight, calculating BMI, and notifying parents/guardians of results.

Cultural Enrichment: Mr. and Mrs. Fish

On Wednesday, October 7, the 1st grade and Kindergarten students attempted to solve an ocean mystery with award-winning marine science educators “Mr. and Mrs. Fish.” The students tried to figure out who is leaving empty shells washed up on Massachusetts beaches and why. In so doing the students met and learned all about clams, crabs, starfish, snails, and seagulls.

In the second half of the dynamic hour-long performance, the students experienced how tide pool plants and animals hold on when a storm hits the Massachusetts seacoast. Mussels, barnacles, sea urchins, and seaweed came to life in what was a fun, interactive presentation.

Mr. and Mrs. Fish are the husband and wife team of Jeff and Deb Sandler of South Portland, Maine. For over 30 years they have excited and educated students of all ages as to life in the sea. They have won numerous awards for their work and have performed throughout the USA and 20 countries. Please visit their website at www.mrandmrsfish.com to learn more about them.

Much of the funding for the grade-specific programs comes from the Thursday morning snack cart. Many thanks.

Linda Skolnik



This month's recipe from eatingwell.com: Applesauce

Active time: 15 minutes. Total time: 15 minutes. Ease of preparation: Easy.

This speedy homemade applesauce is fabulous as a healthy snack for kids. Serve the applesauce with cinnamon pita chips and you have a delicious snack!



- 4 McIntosh apples, peeled and chopped
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar, or more to taste (optional)
- Pinch of cinnamon

Place apple pieces in a medium microwaveable bowl. Cover and microwave until softened, about 4 minutes. Move to a food processor, add brown sugar (if using) and cinnamon, and puree until desired consistency. Makes 2 cups.

Nutrition information: Per tablespoon: 9 calories; 0 g fat (0 g sat, 0 g mono); 0 mg cholesterol; 2 g carbohydrate; 0 g protein; 0 g fiber; 0 mg sodium. 0 Carbohydrate Servings

Dates to Remember

Tuesday, November 3	Professional Day: NO SCHOOL
Thursday, November 5	Veterans Day Remembrance Ceremony
Monday, November 9	General PTO Meeting at Douglas, 7:30pm
Wednesday, November 11	Veterans Day: NO SCHOOL
Friday, November 13	Ice Cream Social and Purposeful Change
Wednesday, November 18	Early Release; Parent/Teacher Conferences
Thursday, November 19	School Committee Meeting, McCarthy-Towne, 7:30pm
Tuesday, November 24	Early Release; Parent/Teacher Conferences
Wednesday, November 25	Early Release; Staff Appreciation Day
November 26–27	Thanksgiving: NO SCHOOL
December 8–11	Scholastic Book Fair

Snack Cart Donations

November 5	Pretzel Day
November 12	Mrs. Christensen, Mrs. Breslin, Mrs. Littlefield, Mrs. Tajima
November 19	Mrs. Sharp, Mr. Cail, Mrs. Oxnard, Mrs. Kay
November 26	Thanksgiving, no school
December 3	Mrs. Ingraham, Mrs. Cherkerzian, Mrs. Claffie, Mrs. Ritter

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MCAS Dates—2010

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 22, 23, 24, and 26
May 10, 11, and 12

Grade 4: March 22, 23, 24, 26, and 29
May 10, 11, and 12

Grade 5: March 22, 23, 24, and 26
May 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, and 21

Grade 6: March 22, 23, 24, and 26
May 10, 11, and 12

Please make every effort to have your children attend school on these dates and arrive promptly by 9:15am; tests will begin shortly after the start of school.

Your support is appreciated.

Dr. Christopher Whitbeck