



Douglas Digest

News of the C.T. Douglas School
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Douglas Digest

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Table of Contents

<i>PTO News</i>	Pg 2
<i>School Council</i>	Pg 3
<i>Douglas Cares</i>	Pg 3
<i>Music@ ouglass</i>	Pg 3
<i>Boardwalk</i>	Pg 4
<i>Food Service</i>	Pg 4
<i>Script</i>	Pg 4
<i>Box Tops</i>	Pg 4
<i>Snack Cart</i>	Pg 5
<i>Social</i>	Pg 5
<i>Veterans</i>	
<i>Appreciation</i>	Pg 5
<i>Douglas Dates</i>	Pg.6

NO SWIMMING – YOU MUST BE THIS TALL TO RIDE

"I can't go to school...I'm too small."

"You're what?"

"I'm too small."

"You know what, today is your lucky day, we just changed the height requirement and you're just the right size – see, you make it above this line – Congratulations!"

When I was five, my mother enrolled me in swimming lessons at the local YMCA. I sat in the echoing room with the pool while my mother watched from a gallery up above. Distraught that my mother had left me, and certain she would not come back, there was no way I was jumping into this strange pool.

"I can't swim!" I whined.

"It's OK, just trust me, I'll hold you." said the shaggy haired instructor (this was 1970).

"No, I can't swim...I mean I can't go in the water."

"Why not?"

"I'm allergic to water!"

And just like that, swimming lessons ended! How can you argue with that?

Even in the days before life-threatening allergies, the swimming instructor knew that he had a problem on his hands. He just didn't know what the problem was. I wasn't particularly afraid of water – I was afraid that my mother wasn't going to come back! I would say anything to get her back at that moment and voila, that life-threatening allergy to water appeared!

Please don't worry, I grew out of the water allergy and I learned to swim. My mom taught me.

So there is one new student at Douglas whose father gently brought him into school and ignored the height restriction. He stayed by his side and backed off at just the right moment. Each morning my new friend gives me a high-five and a grin. He's tall enough to go to school now.

He also knows that school is filled with people who will stay by his side and back off at just the right moment. This is what teaching is all about. We're all teachers, making choices about when to stand by a child's side and when to back off. It's a delicate balance and sometimes one of us stumbles. Sometimes we're just keeping our heads above the water. But, our goal is to swim – regardless of the height requirements.

THANK YOU

To all of the Douglas families who completed and submitted the online volunteer form, and ordered the 2008-09 Douglas Directory. Our first year of collecting this information online was very successful and we got great feedback from parents about it, but also discovered some things we can improve for next year. We appreciate your support of the Douglas community, and look forward to a wonderful year of parent volunteer participation in school programs and events.

Lori Fassman & Dawn Gomez, Volunteer Coordinators | Torri & Alex Horovitz, Douglas Directory

PTO NEWS



Thank you to all who were able to join us at our September PTO General Meeting. We enjoyed a wonderful exchange of ideas and information as well as Dr. Whitbeck's presentation about the Douglas CARES program. We look forward to another presentation called "Up Close and Personal" at our next PTO General Meeting presented by our Douglas Specialists, Jayne Carter, Speech Therapist and Akiko Morii, Japanese Sensei. Come learn about this new initiative at our PTO Meeting on Thursday, November 13th at 7:30 PM in the Douglas Cafetorium.

September was a busy time at Douglas and the following volunteers have made things easier on our children, our teachers and all of the parents by helping:

- Kim Shamah did a great job coordinating Kindergarten Screening this year helping make our newest Douglas community members feel comfortable during their important day.
- Nancie Boudreau did a thorough job preparing for Picture Day to ensure smooth transitions with many smiles!
- Nancy Young and Laura Fay, our Nature Walk Coordinators, laid the groundwork for success to ensure materials and volunteers are ready for our Nature Walks this year.
- Lori Fassman and Dawn Gomez, our Volunteer Coordinators and Torri and Alex Horovitz, our Directory Producers, consolidated all the on-line information provided by our parents to create very useful volunteer lists for all our Activity Coordinators and to produce a fantastic directory again this year.

September was a time for Building Our Community Spirit:

- Maria Albarran and Kristan Smith-Park with their many welcoming volunteers organized a "Newcomers Welcome Picnic" on a beautiful sunny afternoon on September 11th. Parents and children new to Douglas in grades Kindergarten through 6th were invited to picnic with returning families to Douglas. Together, questions were asked and answered and children played in a comfortable, fun environment.
- Our 8th Annual Walk for Peace, which this year raised money for Pennies for Peace, a project of the non-profit Central Asia Institute, was truly inspiring beyond our Douglas Community. Thank you to Mrs. Breslin for organizing the walk, to all the students who participated in the ceremony, and to Mr. Broggi for leading all of us in song. This is a wonderful tradition at Douglas to take time to remember to strive for peace and to remind all of us to do so in their everyday life.

Our PTO strives to focus on helping parents, teachers and children build community and connect with one another in a fun and positive way. We appreciate the fact that so many parents help the PTO in achieving this goal by volunteering and by financially supporting our fundraising efforts. In recent years, the PTO has eliminated many fundraisers allowing volunteers to spend more time and energy working to connect with others at Douglas and build community at school. We continue to be able to maintain this limited fundraiser approach because of your participation in our Direct Solicitation Campaign as well as our "free" fundraisers and "social" fundraisers.

- Thank you to all the parents who have responded to the Direct Solicitation Campaign. One hundred percent of your donations go directly to support the children of Douglas. The money raised through the Direct Solicitation Campaign goes towards funding teaching assistants for the classrooms, the library, the computer lab and grade-level socials as well as helping to purchase recess equipment. If you haven't had a chance to send a donation to the Direct Solicitation Campaign, please consider doing so in the next few weeks. Please check with your employer to see if they will match your gift to the school. This is a great way to double your contribution! Thank you!

We look forward to seeing you and your children at some of the traditional and fun days at Douglas this fall: Douglas Spirit Day, the Halloween Parade, Veterans' Appreciation Program, and the Ice Cream Social. Be sure to read through our monthly Douglas Digest, the School Announcements emailed on Sundays and the Douglas Web Site for more information about upcoming events. As always, we look forward to hearing from you with any comments or questions.

PTO co-chairs

Cassie Stewart cassie_stewart@comcast.net 978-635-1661 & Cheryl Witty ckwitty@verizon.net 978-266-0177

SCHOOL COUNCIL PARENT MEMBERS

This year the Douglas community had five parents run for three openings on the School Council, Scott Howe, Sonal Keswani, Edward Palazzo, Lisa Racie and Judy Rowland. Each nominee offered a broad spectrum of experience and knowledge. Thank you to each nominee for their willingness to volunteer and thank you to everyone who voted. Congratulations to **Scott Howe, Lisa Racie and Judy Rowland** for being voted in for a two-year term. These three parents will join current Council members, Kathleen McDonagh, Anne Sullivan Soydan and Tamara Ricciardone, all of whom have a year remaining on the council. A special thanks to outgoing Council member **Kaylani Krishnan** for her service during the past two years on the School Council. Her input and guidance on the council was greatly appreciated. The School Council members will serve with two Acton community members, four Douglas teachers and Dr. Whitbeck. They will be an integral part of all discussions relating to the educational goals for Douglas. Our sincere thanks to all of the candidates, past and present, and to Terry Martins and Linda Ahern for helping us "man" the ballot box at the back to school nights.
Cassie Stewart and Cheryl Witty - PTO co-chairs



MORE NEWS FROM DOUGLAS SCHOOL

DOUGLAS CARES

"We have the wings of our minds and thoughts. We have the wings of our hearts. As we exercise them, they will carry us upward. How often do we send our children into the world with only one wing? We must exercise our hearts as well. Young eagles must have two strong wings." Kevin Locke- Lakota Tribe

The Vision of the Douglas School states that we celebrate learning in a caring and collaborative community. To realize this vision we must teach each other what this means. One way to do this is through the newly developed Douglas Cares program. Children in grades K-6 will receive instruction in and be recognized for the five character traits identified as important to those Douglas community members who are working toward a caring and collaborative community.

C Cooperative (implies success for all rather than emphasizing individual achievement)

A Accountable (taking responsibility for actions and situations)

R Respectful (demonstrating admiration for your and others' abilities, qualities, and achievements)

E Empathetic (the ability to identify, understand, and share the feelings and ideas of another)

S Supportive (provide encouragement and help to others around you)

Throughout their seven years at Douglas, student will be awarded a "feather" for outstanding efforts that demonstrate one of the C.A.R.E.S character traits. Once every ten weeks the school will host a "Feather Ceremony" in which we award the students, staff, and parents the feathers that they have earned. This will be a wonderful way to celebrate the learning and achievements of our community. We hope that you join us in modeling and celebrating these traits.

MUSIC AT DOUGLAS

We love singing at Douglas. Our goal throughout a child's Douglas experience is that they leave with a common repertoire of songs. There are many musical opportunities for students that go beyond band and Mr. Broggi's music class. The thought behind a lot of our singing and playing music is simple - the more that we work together and sing together, the better chance we have for a peaceful world, and a world where everyone feels accepted! You just can't feel angry or excluded when you're surrounded by people singing together.

Here's the update for our musical October:

October 4th – Mr. Broggi and Dr. Whitbeck play at Octoberfest (3 -3:45 pm) – raising awareness for the "Build the Boardwalk" project

October 17th – Free concert (6-8 pm) at Savoury Lane featuring Mr. Broggi and Dr. Whitbeck.

October 23rd - Grades 4-6 Sing-A-Long (8:35 – 9:20 am) Join Mr. Broggi, Dr. Whitbeck and all of our intermediate students as we sing some of our favorite songs and even learn a few new songs.

October 24th – Douglas Family Songbook CD release party (6:00 – 7:30 pm)!! Join The Douglas Family band and students (including returning students from last year's 6th grade class) as they sing and play the hits from our first ever CD recording. Tickets for the concert will be on sale for \$5/person or \$10/family (bring grandma, grandpa, aunts & uncles all for one low price). Each \$10 order receives a CD. All proceeds go directly to the cost of professionally recording, mastering and producing this soon-to-be classic. To order CDs or tickets, simply send a note with quantity and your child's name with check or cash to Douglas School.



THE WEST ACTON BOARDWALK PROJECT – WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

As you may know from articles in the Digest last year, many parents and staff from both Douglas and Gates are working on solutions for the currently deteriorating Boardwalk. Over the past few years, sections of the Boardwalk, which runs between Douglas and Gates, have been floating away due to heavy spring rains and a change in the water flow pattern. The Boardwalk is used by many people in our community and it has become an integral part of the way schoolchildren, walkers, joggers and nature observers relate to their surrounding environment.

In an attempt to gather information about how the Boardwalk is used and its importance in the West Acton Community, the volunteer group “**The Friends of the West Acton Boardwalk**” is now conducting an online survey. This survey can be found at <http://boardwalk.westacton.net> and we hope that all Douglas families will take a few minutes to fill out this survey by October 15th to help us in gathering information we will need in writing grant proposals for the Boardwalk project.

If you have any questions, or would like to be a part of the Boardwalk Committee, please contact: Christine Phillips hylandphillips@verizon.net or Nancy Young saltyboys@comcast.net – Thank You!



FOOD SERVICE NEWS.....

Did you know that with the daily alternate lunch choices we offer an 8 ounce carton of milk, choice of fruit and vegetables? For example: The sandwich of the week also includes milk, fruit and vegetables.

Please see the back of the menu for this month’s healthy recipe!! If you have any comments or questions please feel free to contact the Food Service Department. We can be reached by phone @ 978-264-4700 x 3221 or by e-mail knelson@mail.ab.mec.edu. It is our pleasure to serve you!!

SCRIP - ONE STOP SHOPPING

With the holidays just around the corner, why not let OUR school benefit from your holiday shopping. Scrip is a program where you can buy gift cards and OUR school benefits. We have a large variety of gift cards available for purchase. Watch next month’s Douglas Digest for the attachment, the form will also be available on-line for your convenience. If you are having the holidays at your house and need to shop for groceries, we can help with that as well. Buy your gift cards to your local grocery stores through SCRIP, and help OUR school.



BOX TOPS, LABELS FOR EDUCATION, DONELAN’S RECEIPTS FUNDRAISER

Welcome to our 2008-2009 Box Tops for Education, Campbell’s Labels for Education and Donelan’s Register Tapes for Education fundraising campaigns. Last year we raised \$1,010 through the Box Tops program. In the Campbell’s campaign, we collected over 16,000 points which can be used to obtain free educational supplies for our school. With the Donelan’s program, we collected \$77,000 worth of register receipts and received a new digital camcorder and wireless microphone. With the continued support of the Douglas community, we are confident that we can improve upon prior year’s fundraising results. Look for additional program details in the flyer sent home via backpack. **Please send in your clipped Box Tops and Campbell’s UPCs/lids NOW.** Save your Donelan’s Supermarket register receipts from September 2008 through March 2009. Please deposit your Donelan’s receipts along with Box Tops and Campbell’s labels in the basket located in the Douglas lobby.

Please ask your family and friends to clip Box Tops and Campbell’s labels and save their Donelan’s receipts on behalf of our school. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Volunteer Co-coordinators Jennifer Aufiero (jennifer_aufiero@hotmail.com or 978-263-9549); Michele Walsh (michele_walsh@yahoo.com or 978-264-4651)



SNACK CART INFO ON DOUGLAS WEBSITE

Snack Cart info (including Pretzel Day, snack donation and volunteer schedules) can be found on the Douglas website at: <http://douglas.ab.mec.edu/index.html?forparents>. Alternatively, you can navigate to the info by clicking on "Home" and then "For Parents" using the menus on the left side of the main website page. We would also like to let you know that we do refrigerate leftover yogurts and cheese sticks for sale the following week so they do not go to waste.

A word about pretzels: Once a month, we purchase pretzels from the Boston Pretzel Company (<http://www.bostonpretzel.com/>) who uses only natural ingredients of wheat flour, water, soybean oil, yeast and salt. The pretzels are made in a factory where sesame seeds, but NOT nut products, are used. The pretzels come in 2 sizes, a large 6 oz. which contains 23 g carbohydrates and has 420 calories with less than 1 g fat. The small 3 oz. contains 12 g carbohydrates and 210 calories with less than ½ gram of fat.

If you order a pretzel for your child, please send in correct change (\$1.00 for a large, \$0.75 for a small) on Pretzel Day and remind your child which size to buy. We pre-order the pretzels on Tuesday and hate to see children be disappointed when the size they ask for is sold out.

Like last year, Snack Cart will be open for students not ordering pretzels. As always, we appreciate your support!

Susan Cudmore susan.cudmore@gmail.com
Stephanie Margolien smargolien@hotmail.com
Karen Dudziak karendudziak@yahoo.com
Co-Chairs



EVERYONE IS INVITED!!!!

Can you imagine a party where the whole school was 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 7th from 6:30-9:00 pm at Douglas School. You are all invited to gather with your friends and celebrate Douglas School. Many volunteers contribute to helping this event run smoothly. If you already signed up to help when you filled out your online volunteer form, someone will contact you shortly about the social. If you have any special talents to contribute or any questions, please contact Donna Yost at 978-635-1684 or donna.yost2@verizon.net. All are welcome to celebrate our elementary experience with ice cream, pizza, games and friends!

Donna Yost, Dawn Gomez, and Todd Marvin, Your fun loving, Ice Cream Social Co-Chairs

12th ANNUAL VETERANS APPRECIATION PROGRAM

Our 12th annual Veterans Appreciation program will be held Thursday, November 6 at 8:45 AM in the school Cafetorium. The Douglas School community encourages students to invite family members, relatives, friends or neighbors who have served or are currently serving our country to be honored at this special meeting. This program gives us an opportunity to reflect on the value of freedom and honor the members of our families and community who served to protect that freedom.

The assembly will incorporate music and readings that are inspiring and patriotic, highlighted by the fifth grade class. During the program each Veteran guest and child will sit together and the guest will be introduced to the student body. There will not be a formal reception following the program. However, the Veteran may choose to visit your child's classroom for a brief time. All visits must conclude by 10:30 AM. We will be happy to make the arrangements with the teacher and send a letter of confirmation to you by October 31st. **Due to teachers' schedules all visits must be arranged in advance; spur-of-the-moment requests (on the day of the program) to visit a class cannot be accommodated.** Please be aware that some classes may not be open for visits (again due to teaching schedules). Spouses of Veterans are welcome too!

Roberta Bizier, rbizier@verizon.com and Lori Fassman, lori@fassman.com



Douglas Dates

- October 2*** – First Pretzel Day for Snack Cart
- October 3*** – School Picture Day
- October 9*** – Yom Kippur – NO SCHOOL
- October 13*** – Columbus Day – NO SCHOOL
- October 21*** – Early Dismissal – Parent/Teacher Conferences
- October 24*** – Douglas Spirit Day” – Wear Blue and Yellow or your Douglas T-Shirt
- October 29*** – Early Dismissal – Parent/Teacher Conferences
- October 31*** – Halloween Parade
- November 4*** – Professional Day – NO SCHOOL
- November 6*** – Veterans Appreciation Program
- November 7*** – Ice Cream Social
- November 13*** – PTO General Meeting, 7:30 PM in Douglas Cafetorium

SNACK CART DONATIONS

- 10/16/08 Mrs. Bloom, Mrs. Sharp, Mrs. Breslin, Mr. Cail, Mrs. Littlefield, Mrs. Tajima
- 10/23/2008 Mrs. Oxnard, Mrs. Cherkerzian, Mrs. Nadolny, Mrs. Ritter, Mrs. Kay, Mrs. Ingraham
- 10/30/2008 Mrs. Hubbell, Mrs. Bethel, Ms. Savage, Mrs. Smith (AM Kindergarten only)
- 11/6/2008 Pretzel Day
- 11/13/2008 Mrs. Rand, Mrs. Simeone, Ms. Hunt, Ms. Fitzpatrick