



# Douglas Digest

News of the C.T. Douglas School

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

Principal: Dr. Christopher Whitbeck

## October 2009

Douglas Digest

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### The Age of Discovery

Four hundred years ago this month, Galileo put lenses together and looked up into the heavens. He is credited with discovering the phases of Venus, the four largest satellites of Jupiter, and sunspots. In his honor, I collected some lenses, convinced that I could make some discoveries as well. My lenses are designed to look down and close. They included a ten-power Sherlock Holmes style magnifying glass with a handle, a ten power tripod to put down over wiggly or possibly dangerous bugs, and a really cool small twenty power loop that you hold to one eye and look really close at small things.

As I set out on my voyage of discovery, I never got any farther than my own hands, which look like photos taken by the Mars Rover...hills and valleys and cliffs and craters...scars from old wounds...ridges and mountain ranges...a bug bite that looks like a volcano...patches that could be dried up lake beds...loose flakes of exfoliated skin...and an oncoming wart.

I discovered my own fingerprints. I had never really looked at my fingerprints and yet they've been right there all these years. They look different on my fingers than they do on a glass of milk. If I color my fingers with marker and then touch a dry glass or piece of paper, they take on even more interesting shapes and textures. It's hard to believe that nobody in the whole world has, ever had, or ever will have these same loopy patterns on the end of their fingers.

During my investigation, I was interrupted by an urgent request to come to recess. I washed my hands quickly and went to solve the problems of our first and second graders. As I was talking to a particularly naughty child, he stopped, held my hands and said, "Your fingers are really dirty."

"Yes, I was experimenting," I answered. "Now, what was I saying to you?"

"Did you color on your fingers?"

"Yes, but that's not what we're talking about."

"What's this?" The offending boy said pointing to a scar that was now deep purple from a particularly strong magic marker.

"I'll tell you what, we can explore my fingerprints together if you promise never to do what you did again."

"OK! I have fingerprints too. They're different from yours. Do dogs have paw prints that are different from one another? What about monkeys? They have fingers, but I think that their thumbs are different from ours. Can we look at everyone's fingerprints?"

We spent about 40 minutes looking at things closely Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson style. Recess ended with a spontaneous hug from my new Dr. Watson and a big, "Thank you, Dr. Whitbeck, see you tomorrow."

The age of discovery brings many rewards.

*C. Whitbeck*



**Constant Contact Weekly Email Messages  
AND the Douglas Elementary School Email:  
Two Different Message Systems—Designate  
BOTH as Safe Sender Addresses**

At this point in the school year, everyone who would like to be on the Constant Contact Weekly Email Messages from the Technology Secretary should be up and running on the system. **If you are not** receiving your Constant Contact messages, please make sure that the [technology.secretary@douglasschoolpto.org](mailto:technology.secretary@douglasschoolpto.org) address is not being caught by a spam filter in your email system. If you use an email service or software that has the concept of a “**safe sender**” address list, please add this email address to it to make sure it gets through.

Dr. Whitbeck also sends messages out on an occasional basis, from his database email system which is generated from the PowerSchool Emergency system. To make sure you are receiving those email messages please designate the [email@blackboard.com](mailto:email@blackboard.com) as a “**safe sender**” address, to ensure your mail service is not filtering them.

The Constant Contact email data base is an entirely different database from Dr. Whitbeck’s PowerSchool email database. The email addresses are *not shared* between these two databases.

If at any time during the school year, you have a new email address, or a change of email address, please make sure to contact both the technology secretary at the below address, *and* to enter the PowerSchool site with your username and password to change your email address in that system. This will ensure that all databases are up to date during the year and that your family receives both sets of timely messages .

Thank you!

*Christine Phillips, 978.635.1747  
technology.secretary@douglasschoolpto.org  
Douglas PTO Technology Secretary*

*Sharon Armistead, sarmistead@mail.ab.mec.edu*

**Breakfast Club, Work and Play and Enrichment  
Classes Update**

Breakfast Club is a popular destination this year for the early morning crowd. We offer a variety of breakfast selections including French toast sticks, bagels, toast, cereal, and fruit! Morning activities range from arts and crafts, board and card games, to outside or gym playtime. We are happy to accept your child on a pre-booked or a drop off basis. Join us in the cafeteria starting at 7am!

Enrichment classes begin the week of October 5. Consider your child enrolled unless you are notified otherwise.

Don’t forget that Work and Play is offered after school every school day until 6pm including all early release days. Don’t forget to send a lunch with your child on early release days!

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

**Thank You**

...to all of the Douglas families who submitted the online Directory Information and Volunteer form, and who ordered a copy of the 2009–2010 Douglas Directory. Our second year of collecting information online was very successful, and we got great feedback from parents about the online survey—but also found 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  
Amy Austin, Sharon Metzger, Douglas Directory  
Martha Papalia, Douglas Directory Advertisements*



**Spiritwear—Date Change!**

Time to celebrate Douglas! Beginning in October, we will be sending out order forms via backpack for Douglas Spiritwear. We have an exciting new color on some items, and we have added some great new products! Orders will be due on **Spirit Day, Friday, October 30!** On October 30, show your Douglas Spirit and wear your Douglas T-Shirt, sweatshirt, or anything blue and/or yellow.

*Deanne O’Sullivan, deannewos@comcast.net 978.274.2558*

## Snack Cart Update

We'll continue to communicate electronically as much as possible, so please check the Douglas website and watch the Constant Contact weekly email for donation reminders and updates.

<http://douglas.ab.mec.edu/index.html?forparents>

Our first pretzel day was October 1, and our first popcorn day is scheduled for October 15. We use Weaver Gold popcorn, canola oil, and salt only in our new popcorn machine. The popcorn is dairy-, nut-, and gluten-free. We will sell 2 sizes, one for \$0.25 and one for \$0.50. Students who buy the small size may buy a second snack if they wish.



If you donate perishable snacks like yogurts and cheese sticks, we will keep them on ice that day. If there are any left, we refrigerate them for use the following week as long as they are not expired.

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

*Stephanie Margolien, [smargolien@hotmail.com](mailto:smargolien@hotmail.com)*

*Karen Dudziak, [karendudziak@yahoo.com](mailto:karendudziak@yahoo.com)*

## KA-CHING!!!

Gather up all the loose change you have been stockpiling all year long and beyond.

**Purposeful Change** is a time-honored tradition at Douglas School. During this unique all-school activity, children bring in their loose change and see it be put to a "purposeful" cause.



We will be collecting pennies and mixed change donations in the school lobby before school on Douglas School Spirit Day on **Friday, October 30**. Collections will continue intermittently (look out for more details in a weekly flyer or ask your teacher) up until the night of the Ice

Cream Social on November 13. Top prize winners in several categories will be announced at the social. Stay tuned for flyers in the coming weeks for more exciting details.

If you have any questions or can help count change (many hands make light work), please feel free to contact us:

*Julia Kline, [juliakline@comcast.net](mailto:juliakline@comcast.net), 978.635.0566*

*Paula Conquest, [paulaconquest@gmail.com](mailto:paulaconquest@gmail.com), 978.263.1153*

## School Council Update

We are pleased to announce that Kathleen McDonagh and Tamara Ricciardone have volunteered to serve on the School Council. They have plenty of experience as they both have served on the School Council for the past two years. Because there were only two positions to fill this year and two people volunteered, there will not be an election this year. Kathleen and Tamara will join our current School Council members: Scott Howe, Lisa Racie, and Judy Rowland, all of whom have a year remaining on the Council. The School Council members will serve with two Acton community members, four Douglas teachers, and Dr. Whitbeck. They will be an integral part of discussions relating to the educational goals for Douglas. Our sincere thanks to all of the candidates, past and present, for representing the Douglas parents on the School Council.

*Cheryl Witty and Kristan Smith-Park, PTO co-chairs*

## Veterans Appreciation Program

Our 13th annual Veterans Appreciation program will be held **Thursday, November 5, 9:30am** in the school cafeteria. 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 a special Community Meeting on November 5. 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 Veterans may choose to visit your child's classroom for a brief time. All visits must conclude by 11:30am. We will be happy to make the arrangements with the teacher and send a letter of confirmation to you by October 30. *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.net](mailto:rbizier@verizon.net), 978.635.0420*

*Lori Fassman, [lori@fassman.com](mailto:lori@fassman.com), 978.264.9710*

## **Picture Day, Sunny Skies and Big Smiles; Retake Day Information**

The skies were beautiful for our picture day! Thank you to Roseanne Keefe, Susan Cudmore, Jacqui Burak, Sharon Roggio, Olga Filatova, Candace Doncaster, and Colleen DiPietro for volunteering. Your help was greatly appreciated! And special thanks to all the staff for their patience and support.

School photos should have already arrived home via backpack. If your child was absent, or if you are unhappy with your child's photo, our Retake Day has been scheduled for **Friday, October 23**. More information will be sent home as we get closer to the date.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact:

*Susan Haverstock, 978.897.3845,  
smhavers@comcast.net*  
*Sara Junghans, 978.264.4769,  
junghans2@verizon.net*

## **Scrip Coming Soon**

In the next few weeks the first Scrip order form will be coming home via your child's backpack. Scrip is a great way to shop and support Douglas School at the same time. When gift cards are purchased through the Scrip program, the Douglas PTO receives a portion of the sale. Gift cards to local restaurants, supermarkets, and retail stores are included. If you are going to shop at these stores anyway, and you purchase your gift cards through the scrip program, Douglas benefits! A win-win for everyone.

If you have any questions, please contact:

*Sheryl Fox, 978.631.4157,  
nyoxnyox@yahoo.com*

## **Eagles' Nest School Store—Opening Friday, October 2**

The Douglas School store will officially be open for business on Friday, October 2. The store hours will be every Tuesday and Friday morning from 9–9:15. The store is run by the Douglas fourth grade and their parents. Most items cost less than \$1 and include pencils, mechanical pencils, pop-a-point pencils, pencil grips, folders, notepads, key chains, rulers, pencil bags, sharpeners, erasers, etc.

Gift certificates are available in \$1 denominations and make wonderful gifts. We'll also have raffles throughout the year for fun and interesting prizes!

We are still in need of school store "supervisors." If you are a fourth grade parent, please consider volunteering for this fun and rewarding activity with your child. Supervisors would work a two-week shift (two Tuesdays and two Fridays in a row).

Thank you from your 2009–2010 school store team: Michele Walsh (Purchaser), Maureen Cannata (Treasurer), Sara Levine (Scheduler), Patti Babcock (Manager). If you would like to be involved, please contact:

*Patti Babcock, ppbabcock@comcast.net*

## **Acton Public School Committee**

More info at: <http://ab.mec.edu/about/schoolcommittee.shtml>

School Committees are chartered by the General Laws of Massachusetts. As specified in the law:

*"The School Committee in each city and town and each regional school district shall have the power to select and to terminate the Superintendent; shall review and approve budgets for public education in the district, and shall establish educational goals and policies for the schools in the district, consistent with the requirements of law and state-wide goals and standards established by the Board of Education."*

The Acton Public School Committee (APSC) consists of six members who are elected for three year terms. The terms are staggered so two members are elected each year. The Acton School Committee is combined with three members from the Boxborough School Committee to form the A-B Regional School Committee. Both the local and regional Committees meet monthly on Thursdays. The meetings are broadcast on Verizon FiOS and Comcast cable television (live & reruns). A list of members, meeting times and locations, agendas, budgets, and more may be found on our web site shown above.

The Acton School Committee holds one of its monthly meetings in each elementary school during the course of the year. Our next meeting will be held on October 15, 7:30pm, at Merriam School. **Our March 18 meeting will be held at Douglas School.**

*John Petersen, john.s.petersen@verizon.net*  
*Acton Public School Committee Member*

## Join Us for a Night of Fun!

Friday November 13, 6:30–9:00pm at Douglas School, you are all invited to gather with your friends and celebrate Douglas School at the Ice Cream Social!

Answers to frequently asked questions:

- ◆ Parents must stay and enjoy the social with their children, no drop offs.
- ◆ Tickets will be available the night of the event: pizza for \$2 a slice and ice cream or sorbet sundaes for \$2.50.
- ◆ You can choose hot fudge, butterscotch, and/or strawberries with whipped cream and/or marshmallow for your sundae. We will have M&Ms, jimmies, Oreos, and gummy bears to put on top and, of course, cherries!
- ◆ You can play unlimited carnival games, and get a tattoo or get your face painted with a \$5 hand stamp.
- ◆ We would love a few more volunteers to help with games, more volunteers make shorter shifts and more fun for all, no experience required.
- ◆ In the cake walk, for each quarter you get a chance to win a *cake*, the odds are 1 in 10. (Those are pretty good odds!) The cake walk for grades K–2 will be on the stage in the cafeteria, and grades 3–6 will be in the gym.
- ◆ Over 250 cakes are given out to the winners of the cake walks at the social. If you are inspired to donate a cake, please make sure it is frosted and in a non-returnable pan with a list of ingredients. Please bring it to school on Friday, November 13, and put it in Room 12 between 4–6pm (before 4:00 cakes can be put in the teacher’s lounge).
- ◆ If you would like to volunteer or have any additional questions, please e-mail [donna.yost2@verizon.net](mailto:donna.yost2@verizon.net) or call Donna Yost at 978.635.1684.



We have so much to be thankful for and so much to celebrate. We really don’t get many opportunities to all get together and play. Remember: *Childhood is a journey, not a race.*

We look forward to seeing you there,

*Donna Yost, Dawn Gomez, and Todd Marvin, Your Fun-Loving Ice Cream Social Chairs*

### **This month’s recipe from Healthy Cooking for Kids: Old-Fashioned Fruit Crumble**

*low calorie, high fiber, low sodium, low cholesterol, low sat fat, heart healthy*

Use whatever fresh or frozen fruit you have on hand to make this old-fashioned crumble. Typical crumble topping has as much as a half cup of butter—ours has just a tablespoon of canola oil and, for richness, chopped almonds, which are full of healthy monounsaturated fats.

*Active time: 10 minutes; Total time: 40 minutes;*

*Ease of preparation: Easy*

- 2 1/2 cups fresh or frozen fruit, such as blueberries, peaches, plums
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons whole-wheat or all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1/4 cup chopped almonds or pecans
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons canola oil

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Combine fruit with granulated sugar, 1 tablespoon flour and orange juice. Divide among four 6-ounce ovenproof ramekins. Combine oats, nuts, brown sugar, the remaining 2 tablespoons flour, and cinnamon. Drizzle with oil and stir to combine. Sprinkle over the fruit mixture.

Place the ramekins on a baking sheet.

Bake until the fruit is bubbling and the topping is golden, 20 to 25 minutes. Let stand for at least 10 minutes before serving. Makes 4 servings.

*Per serving: 252 calories; 11g fat (1g sat, 7g mono); 0mg cholesterol; 38g carbohydrate; 4g protein; 5g fiber; 1mg sodium; 179mg potassium. 2 carbohydrate servings. Exchanges: 1 fruit, 1 other carbohydrate, 2 fat*

### **Dates to Remember**

Thursday, October 1	First Pretzel Day
Friday, October 2	School Store Opens
Monday, October 12	Columbus Day: NO SCHOOL
Friday, October 23	Photo Retake Day
Friday, October 30	Spirit Day
	Purposeful Change collection begins
	Halloween Parade
Tuesday, November 3	Professional Day: NO SCHOOL
Thursday, November 5	Veterans Day Appreciation 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

### **Snack Cart Donations**

October 8	Mrs. Christensen, Mrs. Sharp, Mrs. Breslin, Mr. Cail, Mrs. Littlefield, Mrs. Tajima
October 15	(Popcorn) Mrs. Oxnard, Mrs. Cherkerzian, Mrs. Nadolny, Mrs. Ritter, Mrs. Kay, Mrs. Ingraham
October 22	Mrs. Hubbell, Mrs. Bethel, Mrs. Savage, Mrs. Smith (AM Kindergarten)
October 29	Mrs. Rand, Mrs. Simeone, Ms. Hunt, Ms. Fitzpatrick
November 5	<b>Pretzel Day</b>
November 12	Mrs. Christensen, Mrs. Breslin, Mrs. Littlefield, Mrs. Tajima

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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