



MARION CROSS SCHOOL

# PTO November 2016 NEWS

## Upcoming PTO Events

Thursday November 17<sup>th</sup> - Staff Appreciation Feast (K-3)

Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> - Book Buzz

## Important MCS Reminders

Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> - Superintendent Search Community Forum (7pm, MCS Multipurpose Room)

Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup> - Veteran's Day, no school

Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup> - Parent/Teacher conferences, no school

Wednesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> to Friday November 25<sup>th</sup> – Thanksgiving recess, no school

## Halloween Candy Collection - Thank you!

A HUGE thank you to the generous MCS families and community members who donated candy to our Halloween Candy Collection over the past month. Due to your generosity, we were able to distribute multiple bags of candy to each of the houses on the trick-or-treating route in town. The folks along this heavily traveled route are very grateful for your help! Jill Collins and Molly Gentine, Halloween Candy Collection Co-Chairs

## MCS Spirit Wear Sale Starts November 14<sup>th</sup>

Show your school and community pride with Spirit Wear! T-shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants, shorts, beanies and tote bags with Marion Cross and Norwich logos will be available. These items make great gifts and will be delivered before the holiday break.

The Spirit Wear sale runs from 11/14-11/29. Order forms will be sent home with your child the week of Nov 14<sup>th</sup> and merchandise delivery will be the week of December 12<sup>th</sup>. We will have a table in the lobby of MCS on Nov 18<sup>th</sup> with samples and order forms. Any questions, please contact Melanie Michel at [Melanie.m.michel@hitchcock.org](mailto:Melanie.m.michel@hitchcock.org)

## Staff Appreciation Feast: Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup>

Each school year, we celebrate the teachers and staff of MCS with three separate Staff Appreciation Days: A Fall Feast in November, a Valentine's Brunch in February and Pie Day in May. K-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade families provide the Fall Feast, 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grades provide the Valentine's Brunch, and all grades contribute to Pie Day.

The Fall Feast is a delicious lunch buffet to show our thanks to the staff before the Thanksgiving break (and the day before conferences!) and they appreciate it immensely. If you have children in grades K-3 and would like to contribute to the Fall Feast, please sign up sign up [here](#). Items may be dropped off in the teachers' lounge on the morning of November 17<sup>th</sup> from 7:30-11:00am. Thank you in advance for your help!

## Save the Date: BOOK BUZZ, December 7<sup>th</sup>

We have a new event planned for December - BOOK BUZZ, a kid's version of The Book Jam's fun Pages in the Pub event. BOOK BUZZ is designed to get kids to read more, to let them be the "experts" and present their favorite books, to raise money for MCS, and to increase sales at the wonderful independent Norwich Bookstore. 9 students - one from each homeroom in 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade, along with Mr. Bill and a teacher or two, will present 90 second reviews of their favorite books. The audience will have the opportunity to order books from the bookstore that evening, and the bookstore will donate 20% of sales back to MCS.

BOOK BUZZ will be held from 5:30-6:30 pm on Wednesday December 7<sup>th</sup> at MCS. Doors will open at 5pm and light refreshments (Boloco!) will be provided. Tickets are \$5 per person, or \$10 per family. All proceeds go to support the MCS library and other MCS programs. Stay tuned for more information as we get closer to the date!

## **PTO Awards Fall Grants**

The PTO uses fundraising dollars to offer grants to the MCS community for materials, visitors and programs that enrich the students' academic experience. We are happy to announce that thanks to the hard work and generosity of our MCS families, we were able to fund a total of \$2151.84 in fall grants. Grants were awarded for:

- (1) The MCS Science Committee's purchase of compound microscopes to be used in Science, Art and LEEEP.
- (2) The 6<sup>th</sup> Grade field trip to the Ecology School in Saco, Maine.
- (3) A school visit from poet Tim Fortier for Grades 1 & 2 on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Congratulations to our grant recipients, and thank you to MCS families for your contributions!

## **Next Food Drive: Hartford-Norwich Holiday Basket Helpers**

First, a huge thank you to all who donated to Willing Hands! The organization was very grateful for all of our donations. Our next food drive is to benefit the Hartford-Norwich Holiday Basket Helpers! This non-profit organization provides assistance to seniors, children and families in need during the holiday season. Last year this amazing program delivered 187 baskets to seniors, containing canned & fresh fruit, fresh baked goods, a holiday card, an ornament and a \$25 gift card for groceries. In addition, 195 families and 435 children were provided with a few toys, warm clothes and a gift card to a grocery store for their holiday dinner.

Marion Cross is collecting canned Pears (single serve size is preferred) and raisins (6-pack small boxes please).

**\*\*Collection bins are located throughout the school\*\***

If you are interested in sponsoring a child/family this year, please call 802-295-3097 or email [info@holidaybasketsvt.org](mailto:info@holidaybasketsvt.org) for more information!

Thank you for your donations! Megan Anderson and Maya Barnes - On Behalf of the MCS PTO

## **Box Tops For Education Challenge starts off with “Fast Clip!” so we're raising the Ante!**

The BTE Fall Collection challenge is off to a fabulous start with 4700 BTE Coupons and dimes collected & counted within the first two weeks of the program. That almost meets the 5000 unit challenge we had set for this first drive of the school year! When we meet that goal, we plan to purchase new, super-cool recycling containers to place in the school to help us in our school goal of increased “Reusing, Reducing and Recycling.” However, since the collection challenge is off to such a great start (or “clip”—do you like my Box Tops puns?), we are going to up the ante and raise our goal to 8000 BTE Coupons and dimes. If we reach that goal by December 9<sup>th</sup>, we will be able to purchase the recycling containers AS WELL AS replacement chess pieces for the MCS outdoor chess game.

The classroom-to-classroom challenge is already a nail biter...perhaps not as intense as Game 7 of the World Series, but still quite exciting. We have full school participation already, with every class having submitted at least 15 BTE coupons and dimes. However, we also have 4 classes (K-Newberry, 1-Scully, 1-Moore, 3-Holley) that have submitted over 400 BTE coupons & dimes!!! Historically the classroom standings have fluctuated wildly over the duration of the challenge... so set your goals high and only time will tell which class will win the school bragging rights and the coveted magic tutorial with Mr. Bill.

But remember, in this program we are all winners—because the items the PTO can purchase through the BTE fundraising program will be used and enjoyed by every single student in the school. So keep up the good work everyone... I bet with focused effort we can even surpass our new goal of 8000 units.

The Box Tops Divas: Katie Kitchel, Jo Ellen Gardner, Brie Swenson and Laura DiPiazza

## **“The Milt Frye Fund? Not sure I’ve heard of it. . .” 20 years of supporting Experiential Learning at MCS**

Has your child ever come home talking about something they experienced while working in the MCS garden, paddling on the Connecticut during 5<sup>th</sup> grade River Day, team-building at the Hulbert Center, using cameras to document nature with Lindsay Putnam or hauling ‘injured’ classmates over rugged terrain of the Oregon Trail? Or how about the electricity-generating jump ropes at recess, sifting through tide pools at the Maine Ecology School, a hot-air balloon taking off as the morning bell rang or maybe she/he is excited about the Outdoor Classroom being built in the nature area? If so, then she/he has been touched by the Milton Frye Fund for Experiential Education. Blended in so very seamlessly with the Marion Cross curriculum, many parents and community members simply don’t know of the fund’s existence. Marion Cross educators develop ideas to implement hands-on learning in the school—and the Frye Fund provides the money that allows these experiences to come to fruition.

The Frye Fund was established in June 1996 to honor Milt Frye's twenty-three years of service as principal of MCS. The sole purpose of the fund is to support special learning experiences for the children at MCS and since its inception the fund has granted over \$100,000 for the students at MCS. Mr. Frye feels strongly that experiential learning is an important avenue for every child and essential for some as experience makes learning come alive:

"The essential element in thinking about Experiential Learning is that it recognizes that children (and the rest of us) all learn in many different ways. It recognizes that it is essential to provide different ways of learning, because some learn best outside the classroom. Classes visit Fort #4. Children have an opportunity to learn about history in a way that is quite different from reading a book or seeing a movie. This is experiential learning. The essential element is "learning." It is not a touchy feely experience, but it can and should be fun and interesting. This experience is an important avenue for every child, and for some it is essential."

This year, the Frye Fund is celebrating its 20th year of supporting experiential education at MCS and is in the midst of a public appeal to secure the endowment for years to come. We encourage you to visit the website <http://miltfryefund.weebly.com> to learn more about the activities of the Frye Fund and to learn what you can do to ensure that experiential learning at MCS continues well into the future.

### **The Frye Fund from a student perspective from Sage McGinley-Smith:**

"Throughout my time at MCS, I experienced many of the hands-on experiences that the Milt Frye Fund provides to students. From storytelling to the school gardens, they all offered a chance to learn as well as a break from a classroom environment. I especially enjoyed River Day as a way to learn about the ecosystem that we live in while also learning boat skills, and bonding with classmates. We enjoyed a beautiful day on the river, sharing jokes, laughs, and discoveries. I also vividly remember Oregon Trail Day, the thrill of finding our way through the woods, bumping and jostling in the cart, as we found our way around the Nature Area. It was an experience that has stayed with me for many years, one that has inspired many hikes and Halloween costumes in my life since. The Milt Frye Fund has given me so many lightbulb moments, inspirations, and happy memories over the years, ones that I will carry with me through high school next year and beyond. When I have a bad day, I am always able to draw back the memory of myself as an enthralled third grader on Oregon Trail Day, clumping along in my old fashioned blue dress and clunky black boots, believing that life's biggest challenge was making it over the next hill."

## **Marion Cross School Business Partners**

Dan & Whit's is the MCS Business Partner for the month of November. Below is an Interview with Dan Fraser.

### **As Thanksgiving approaches, what are you most thankful for this year?**

I am thankful for the basics in life - food, shelter and safety - things that so many in the world do not have.

### **Where will you be for Thanksgiving?**

I will spend Thanksgiving locally with family.

### **What is your favorite dish on the Thanksgiving table?**

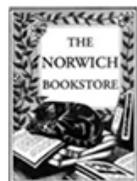
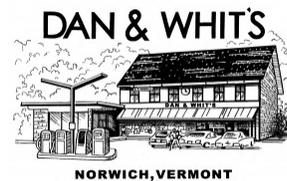
My favorite dish at Thanksgiving is boiled pearl onions.

### **What are Dan & Whit's plans for The Haven this year? Do you have a goal for what you would like the community to donate?**

Dan & Whit's again will participate in The 19 Days of Norwich, 1% for the Haven and hope that all local businesses do so as well. We will also do the Ton of Turkey Challenge - for every 25lb of fresh turkey we sell, we will donate 1lb of frozen turkey to The Haven. The Haven always appreciates milk "Liquid Gold" and eggs, as they are so rare, so we always encourage customers to purchase these items using our milk cap and plastic egg program.

### **Who or what inspires thankfulness (gratefulness) in your everyday life?**

What inspires me is finding the connection between the haves and the have nots. There are so many needy local people as well as so many local generous people with resources. It is great to connect the two groups.



**Thank you, business partners!**