



MARION CROSS SCHOOL

# PTO **September 2016** NEWS

## Upcoming PTO Events

Friday, September 23: PTO Meeting, 8.15am, MCS Library

Friday, September 30: Tea Towel Orders Due

Wednesday, October 5: Bike to School Day, 7.30am Huntley Meadows or Norwich Public Library

Friday, October 14: Fall grant requests due

## Important MCS Reminders

Friday, September 23: Norwich Community Picnic 5.30-7.00pm

Tuesday, September 27: School Picture Day

Friday, October 7: No School – Teacher In-Service Day

Monday, October 10: No School – Columbus Day

Wednesday, October 19: MCS Open House 4.30-5.30pm

## Welcome

Welcome to the first PTO News of the 2016-17 school year! Since we do not yet have emails for everyone, we are sending out this issue on paper AND email. Starting in October, the PTO News will be delivered monthly via email. Your PTO Co-Chairs for this year, Stephanie McCaull and Susan Simmers, invite everyone to come to PTO meetings to learn more about PTO events and get the latest "MCS Update" from Mr. Bill. Meetings are held in the MCS library, with childcare provided for afternoon meetings.

Friday, September 23, 8:15am-9:15am  
Thursday, November 3, 3:30pm-4:30pm  
Friday, January 6, 8:15am-9:15am

Thursday, March 2nd, 3:30pm-4:30pm  
Friday, May 5, 8:15am-9:15am

## PTO Membership Drive is On!

Thank you to all the families who have contributed to our membership drive. If you have not had a chance to contribute there is still time! We are collecting membership dues through September 30<sup>th</sup>. Your membership dues help to fund many enriching programs, materials and grants, as well as events that build the MCS community. With your contribution of \$25 you can choose to receive a MCS printed directory OR online directory. With a contribution of \$35 or more, you will receive both a printed and online directory. Pay online\*\* or by check payable to "Norwich School District". In the memo line write "PTO dues" and indicate whether you want a print or online directory - or both. New families, please join the registry online\*\* or by returning the membership form mailed home by September 30th to be included in the print directory.

\*\* To register and/or pay online, simply find the PTO directory email sent to you from MySchoolAnywhere and update your child's teacher and family information if it has changed. After you update your information, you are given an option to pay PTO membership dues.

Questions? Contact Jessica Eakin, [jceakin12@gmail.com](mailto:jceakin12@gmail.com) or Stephanie McCaull, [smccaull@gmail.com](mailto:smccaull@gmail.com).

## PTO Facebook Page & Web Site

Be sure to check out and "like" the **Marion Cross PTO** page on Facebook! Join us to keep up to date with MCS news, events, last minute changes, and great photos too. The PTO Web site is always there to keep you informed <http://marioncrosspto.weebly.com>



## **Tea Towels are back!**

Art teacher Caitlin Eastman has brought back the tea towels, a much loved MCS tradition. This fall, every student at MCS has drawn a self-portrait in art class. All 300+ self-portraits will be silk-screened onto 100% cotton tea towels (aka dish towels), with the year and the MCS logo in the center. You can see tea towels from years past in the lobby. They make great holiday gifts - parents, kids and relatives love finding their student's portrait on the towels, and it's fun to collect them as mementos of the school year.

Tea towels are \$10 each. Bright green order forms will be sent home with students this week (September 19th) and tea towels will be delivered before the holidays. The order deadline is Friday September 30<sup>th</sup>

## **Get Ready for Bike to School Day on Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> 2016**

Come join the MCS Bike Parade! This fall's Bike to School Day takes place on Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup>. There are two starting points, Huntley Meadow and the Norwich Public Library. Older riders will start at Huntley Meadow while younger riders are encouraged to meet at the Norwich Public Library and join the end of the bike parade as it passes. All children in 1st grade and below must be under the direct supervision of an adult and all riders must wear helmets. Riders should assemble at 7:30 at both sites with a planned departure from Huntley Meadow promptly at 7:40. Volunteers are needed to stop traffic at intersections to ensure participant safety. Anyone interested in volunteering please contact Dan McGinley-Smith at [mcginleymith@gmail.com](mailto:mcginleymith@gmail.com).

## **Celebration Books!**

Keep an eye out for Celebration Book program forms. This is a great way to support the MCS library while also honoring your child, a teacher, or someone else important in your life.

## **It's Box Tops for Education Time: Let the Fall Challenge Begin!**

The MCS PTO participates in the Box Tops for Education® (BTE) program - a national school earnings program that since 1986 has provided over half a billion dollars to schools across the country to purchase items needed for their school. If you are unfamiliar with this fundraising program, please visit the PTO website to learn more.

The first collection challenge of the year will continue through Friday, October 21st. We have set a goal of \$600... that's 6000 BTE coupons and/or dimes. If everyone works together, we know we can reach, and even surpass, that goal!! Each valid BTE coupon is redeemed for 10 cents, and the money raised supports purchases for school programs. For those families who would like to participate in the collection challenges, but do not purchase Box Tops products, we also happily collect dimes!

It is super easy to participate - just CLIP out the Box Tops coupons that are found on hundreds of products and CONFIRM that the expiration date is intact and valid. Then SEND the coupons into school with your child. Collection containers are located in each classroom as well as in the main office. For a complete listing of participating BTE products visit: [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com).

Over the years, the BTE program has provided funds to purchase floor mics for the Multi; new aprons for the Art Room; a portable keyboard for the Music Program; scooters, parachutes, and spike ball sets for the PE Program; and many, many other items for the school. The students get very excited about these competitions, and it's fun to see them so engaged in raising money for their school.

We are still looking for parents to serve as BTE counters for their classrooms. Please contact Brie Swenson ([brielouise@hotmail.com](mailto:brielouise@hotmail.com)) if you would like to volunteer.

If you have any questions about the Box Tops program or want to get further involved, please don't hesitate to contact any of the "Box Tops Divas" Brie, Katie Kitchel ([kkitchel@me.com](mailto:kkitchel@me.com)) or Jo Ellen Gardner ([jo.ellen.gardner@hitchcock.org](mailto:jo.ellen.gardner@hitchcock.org)). They would LOVE any help and creative energy with this program!

## **A Big PTO Thank You To...**

Thank you to Andrea Nolon and Maggie Pepper for organizing the wonderful Back to School breakfast on the first day of school. And thank you to all the volunteers who brought baked goods, bagels, fruit and drinks to feed us all as we socialized. We hope everyone had fun reconnecting with familiar faces and hopefully meeting new families too. We can't wait to do it again next year!

Thank you to our Welcome Committee - Emma Cottage, Amy Staggs and Lorena Markov - for a successful Popsicles on the Playground event for new families just before the start of school!

## **Meet the Teacher – Katie Cormier, School Counselor**

**Why did you choose MCS?** For the past five years my family had been traveling around partially for my husband's job, but also to explore different regions of the country. Last year, while out in California, we started thinking about our oldest daughter who was due to start Kindergarten in the Fall of 2016, and how nice it would be to find a place we could really plant roots before her formal schooling began. Once the MCS School Counselor position was posted, I had to apply, as my husband and I knew the Upper Valley would be a wonderful place for our family to settle. My husband grew up in Hanover and saw firsthand what an amazing place MCS was, and having worked in several VT schools myself, I too understood what a great community Norwich is. Once I came for my second interview and witnessed the phenomenal whole child education delivered at MCS, I knew this would be a spectacular place to grow and immerse myself in as an educator.

**What are your 1st impressions?** What a welcoming and supportive community! I can't get over how friendly everyone has been and how genuinely interested they are in my own journey, not only as an educator, but as a mother and new community member. I am also blown away by the students. They are an amazing group of students, who have gone out of their way to introduce themselves, make me feel welcome and show kindness.

**What was your previous role to coming to MCS?** Most recently, I was working part time teaching an after school mindfulness class to 3rd through 5th graders. Prior to that, I worked as an elementary school counselor in northern Westchester county New York. I have also spent a year working part time as a reading specialist at Greenwich Academy in Connecticut and before that worked as an elementary school counselor in Chittenden Vermont and Vergennes Vermont. My first "real" job was as a learning specialist at Proctor Academy.

**What influenced you to become a School Counselor?** I have always enjoyed working with kids, and thought maybe teaching would be a good profession for me, but as a learning specialist at Proctor Academy, I quickly realized that students could not be available for learning if they were emotionally unavailable, or had other barriers in their way. This sparked my decision to get a master's in school counseling, and I really love what I do as I get to work with all students and see how each part of the school (teachers, staff, parents, administration) works together to create an environment to support student growth.

**List 5 adjectives that describe yourself** Kind, open minded, optimistic, hardworking and compassionate.

### **What does being a School Counselor mean to you?**

It means being part of a team of people working together to create the best possible learning environment for students. I feel strongly that working together with everyone involved in a student's life is the only way to make progress, and being a school counselor allows me to help facilitate some of that group work. A school counselor also works hard to present lifelong lessons to students through a comprehensive, preventative school counseling program, which involves working at the whole school level to create positive school culture, in the classroom teaching social emotional learning, in small groups with focused social learning goals and one on one to help students reach their own individual potential.

### **What are your hobbies and interests?**

Being a Mom to three young children takes up most of my time outside of school and I love it, even though it can get crazy. My daughter Evie is five and just started at The Ray School, my son Asa is three and my youngest son Wes is ten months. I also love being active by practicing yoga, biking, hiking, running and doing things outdoors with my husband Jon and our kids.

### **What is your favorite thing at MCS?**

The people. I also love REP and can't wait to see the skating rink out front once the temperatures drop.

### **What do you think is the greatest challenge facing elementary students today?**

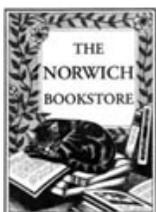
Time. It is so difficult living in an age where everything is available to you immediately. Kids are forced to grow up quickly, and so much time is spent in activities and school that it's difficult to enjoy simply being a kid with unstructured time.

### **Marion Cross School Business Partners**

**Morano Gelato Hanover is the Marion Cross School Business Partner for the month of September. Jenn Langhus, mother of Gideon (1<sup>st</sup> grade) and Gunnar (8<sup>th</sup> grade at RMS) and Pam Miles, mother of Zach (5<sup>th</sup> grade), Carly (8<sup>th</sup> grade at RMS) and Sophie (Junior at HHS) have owned Morano Gelato on Main Street in Hanover Since September 2013.**

### **What do you love most about September in the Upper Valley?**

Jenn: The afternoons are so lovely and warm, but the nights start to cool down and it makes me start thinking about apple picking and cider donuts. Yum!



### **What makes Marion Cross School so special?**

Pam: Marion Cross is a special place not because of the classes taught there or the "rigor." It is special because it is a community based on caring and connection. I have had kids at Marion Cross for many years and I still get a kick out of it when my older kids know the names and grades of so many of the younger kids at the school.

### **Where did you two meet?**

Jenn: John and Gunnar and I were living in Cape Town and this American family moved into town that had a daughter, Carly, in Gunnar's class. We became fast friends and as you do abroad quickly became family too. Our husbands both travelled all of the time and I was pregnant with Gideon, so we became a "village." And we are still a village, 8 years later!

### **Why gelato?**

Pam: We entered into this business for two reasons: first, the gelato is spectacular. Morano Gelato has been a success since day one for a reason. This gelato is not just good but exceptional. Exceptional gelato makes people happy! It just does. It is a treat that appeals to all ages. We get children having their first bite of ice cream and elderly couples out for a date. We are so fortunate to be able to bring some happiness into the lives of so many.

### **Best Part about owning a gelato shop?**

Jenn: The best part of owning a gelato shop is the pure joy on people's faces when they taste a flavor they love!

### **Thank you business partners!**

**Thank you to everyone for joining the PTO and supporting another great year at MCS!**