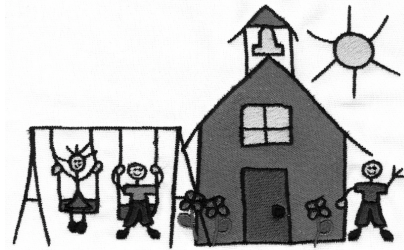


PTO NOTES

The Marion Cross School
November 21, 2005



Calendar

No School: Wednesday, November 23

Thursday, November 24

Friday, November 25

PTO Meeting: Monday, December 5, 7:00pm, Library

School Board Meeting: Wednesday, December 7, 7pm,
MCS Library

Holiday Concerts: K-3, Tuesday, Dec. 13, 1pm

4-6, Thursday, Dec. 15, 1pm

Homework Club: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 3:15-4:30pm,
Library Classroom

Dresden and Norwich School Board Meetings and Budget Presentations

Please Come

Members of the Norwich/Dresden School Boards cordially invite you to join them for some meetings! Budget season is approaching - your participation in the process is welcome.

Tuesday, 11/22: Dresden School Board Regular Meeting
7:00pm, Richmond Middle School (RMS)

Wednesday, 12/7: Norwich School Board Regular Meeting
7:00pm, MCS Library

Tuesday, 12/20: Dresden School Board Regular Meeting
7:00pm, RMS

Monday, December 12: SAU #70 (Hanover/Dresden/Norwich)
Public Hearing & Budget Adoption, 7:00pm, RMS

Thursday, January 5: Norwich School Board
Budget Presentation, 7:00 pm, MCS Library

Tuesday, January 10: Dresden School Board
Budget Presentation, 7:00 pm, RMS

Thursday, January 12: Norwich School Board
Budget Deliberations, 7:00pm, MCS Library

Tuesday, January 17: Dresden School Board
Budget Deliberations, 7:00pm, RMS

Thursday, January 19: Norwich School Board
Public Hearing & Budget Adoption, 7:00pm, MCS

Tuesday, January 24: Dresden School Board
Public Hearing & Budget Adoption, 7:00pm, RMS

Gift Making Festival a Huge Hit!

The Gift Making Festival is a truly special event. It provides a great opportunity for the MCS community (young and old) to share creative and social time together. The gym was filled with smiling faces as all enjoyed making imaginative and worthwhile gifts for friends and family. What a great kick off to the holiday season!

It took an army of volunteers to pull it off. Thanks to those of you who donated your time and energy and especially to Julia Dickenson, Deb Kaplan, Veronica Thurston and Elizabeth Young for their dedicated leadership. We would also like to thank the following local organizations for their support: King Arthur Flour, The Baker's Studio, The Norwich Inn, Youth-in-Action, The Coop and Lebanon Graphics.

6th Grade Raises Funds at GMF for Two Worthy Organizations

The second annual sixth grade service table enjoyed a successful day at this year's Gift Making Festival. Thirty-two students volunteered to staff the table throughout the course of the day, with several others helping with prep work and posters prior to the event. The class raised about \$250 to be distributed between its chosen organizations, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the Sustainable Energy Resource Group. Congratulations to all!

If you didn't get to the table on Saturday, don't worry! You haven't missed your chance to support the sixth grade and these wonderful organizations or to purchase one of the beautiful dove ornaments made by the students. We have some extra ornaments and plan to sell them in the front office through the next few weeks. Stop by and support our kids in their efforts to reach out to their community!

VT Authors

Beth Hilgartner, our neighbor (Rector at the grey church next to MCS) and multiply published author, spent the day with grades 4-6 on November 7th. She had writing workshops with each class in 5th and 6th grades, and talked with the 4th grade about how she became a writer (she started in 5th grade)!

Beth worked with 6th graders on the 3 elements of character development (personality, voice, and looks) and had each child experiment with using voice by inventing a character and having the character write a letter to a trusted friend. In 5th grade she shared examples of how to enter a fantasy world: with action/dialogue, or a descriptive passage, and had the children begin writing about their fantasy world. The children were attentive and wrote beautifully.

Thanks to the teachers for preparing the children and to Susan Voake and the PTO for sponsoring Beth's visit.

Food on Friday Takes a Back Seat for the Holidays

Now that we are rushing headlong into the holidays, there are so many different organizations asking for our help in this busy season of giving and receiving. At this writing, it is hoped that we will have an overflowing cart as a result of the food drive at the Gift Making Festival, which should carry us through for a while. Since Food on Friday is "on-going," our project is happy to take a back seat to the other charities and philanthropic efforts that are coming our way in the next few weeks. If you are still moved to give, the cart will always be in the lobby. After the holidays, we will continue to build momentum.

The Haven is short on: baked beans, canned veggies and tuna fish. Barbara Henzel sends her thanks.



REMINDER
Keep those raisins
coming!
Collection box in the
front lobby.

Gift Wrap Has Been Distributed CHECK YOUR ORDERS

Please check your orders and report any discrepancies to Lydia Starosta by tomorrow, 11/22. Her phone number is 649.5231. If you forgot to order or want to order more, you can do so online anytime at www.innisbrook.com. Marion Cross will still receive 50% of all sales (click the apple icon on the left side of the home page), shipping is free over \$60, and orders are usually received within 4 days. Thank you so much to all who participated!

Run, Run as Fast as You Can

Join hundreds of holiday revelers on Saturday, December 3 from 10am-3pm. Grab the kids and come ogle a premier collection of exquisitely made gingerbread houses, on display at Tracy Hall in Norwich. The houses are the centerpiece of the third annual Family Place Gingerbread Festival, an all-inclusive family event featuring a silent auction, cookie decorating, story telling, face painting, live music, and a gingerbread house making demonstration by King Arthur Flour.

You can do more than ogle the houses though! You can bid on the houses, and on beautiful gifts for loved ones, including quilts, relaxing getaways, memberships to museums, signed children's books, gift certificates for restaurants, golf, skiing, paintings by local artists including Marla Ianello, and much more. There is a Gingerbread Café with kid-friendly snacks, and a Gingerbread Store selling holiday gifts and baked goods. This event is a great way to kick off the holiday season.

Hartford-Norwich Holiday Basket Helpers

We are currently still in need of sponsors for at least 50 children. That number will most likely increase, as we always have emergency requests near the end of our campaign.

If you ever wanted to get involved in Basket Helpers, this is the year. In light of all the things that have happened this past year, those in need are facing more difficulties than ever. To sponsor a child we ask that you purchase approx. 5 requested gifts, usually 3 pieces of clothing and 2 toys, from a list given to us by the child's family. The unwrapped gifts are to be dropped off in WRJ in early December, for distribution before the holidays. If this is inconvenient I can collect them, just let me know. All the children are from the Upper Valley, so your generosity will be felt at home.

Ann Marie Smith, 649.1667, birdseye95@adelphia.net

Teacher Feature

Marguerite Ames
Grade 6

Just what do teachers do when not in school? Sometimes it is hard for children, particularly young children, to imagine their teachers anywhere else but in the school setting. My youngest child, for example, was convinced that the two teachers at her Montessori School, then in the St. Barnabas Church, were sisters who lived together, right in the church! Well, just as they were neither sisters nor did they live in the church, I do not live in my classroom, something my 6th-grade students understand quite well. In fact, it is not uncommon for me to run into students and their families at certain venues around the Upper Valley. The contexts of these encounters provide clues to my life and interests outside of the Marion Cross School, although there are some connections.

Often students see me when they are biking along Bragg Hill Road, which is, in fact, where I live in a house originally build as a summer home by my parents, right across from my grandparents. (Yes, I remember Norwich before the Interstate came through, when there were many working farms in town, and when kids, like me, took swimming lessons in the frigid Norwich Pool!) Often I am walking my border collie, Maeve, along the road, or in the winter, skiing across the fields in front of my home. The flowers that bloom around the house in the spring and summer survive in spite of my benign neglect: I just don't have time for gardening right now!

In town, the observant might spot my car in front of the Norwich Historical Society, when I am attending board or committee meetings, or at Tracy Hall, where I am either in a fencing class myself or picking up my teenage son, Emery, from one. Emery is why I run into some families at the Okinawan Karate Academy: he teaches there, as does my husband who is, in real life, a writer and a photographer. Also, Lebanon is a common destination for me: Lebanon Ballet School, where my daughter Camille studies and I occasionally take classes. Which brings me to my dancing life...

Dance, from ballet to ballroom, from medieval to modern, has always been an important part of my life. At Dancers' Corner, I study Irish Step dancing, which I have been doing for about five years. Although I have performed in Christmas Revels and the New World Festival, I generally just do it for fun and because I truly love the music. Some afternoons I have been seen rushing into Dartmouth's Alumni Gym in an effort to arrive for my beloved Modern Dance class on time. Not surprisingly, I have offered classes in both Irish and Modern Dance as part of the MCS elective program, and all 6th-graders participate in 18th century dancing.

Again, Hanover is another place I frequent: the Hanover Co-op, a connection to cooking, yet another great passion. During an early interlude in my adult life, I was a professional cook and caterer. For fifteen years, I contributed columns devoted to cooking and culinary history to the recently deceased monthly, "Behind the Times." To me cooking and food traditions provide special insight into culture, so culinary history is an important component of some of the history units I teach.

Many students notice me driving around a lot, so it may appear to them that I must really enjoy it. This is just not so! I do, however, love to travel and learn about other cultures. Over the years, I have lived in London, studied in Italy and traveled extensively in Europe. Recent grants have taken me to Nova Scotia and Louisiana to study the Acadian culture, and to South Carolina to learn about the Gullah people. This love of travel, actual or vicarious, is why I am rather glad that my oldest daughter, Megan, chose to attend Emory University, far away in Atlanta, rather than a New England school, and why, for nearly ten years, I have hosted French students. Experiencing other ways of life paves the way to a better understanding of one's place in the world. Indeed, níl gach uile fhánaí cailíte! (Not all who wander are lost!)

If you haven't been into school recently and had a chance to wander the hallways, you're encouraged to do so! There are some wonderful classroom projects on display at all grade levels.

Is it hard for you to get to daytime PTC Meetings?

Here's your chance to come see what we're all about!

Monday, Dec. 5, 7pm, MCS Library
Please forward agenda items to Cinny at cbensen@valley.net.

Do come!

Norwich Public Library Happenings



Here are some of the exciting upcoming events being sponsored by the Library. Please feel free to call us at 649.1184 for more information. And don't forget to stop by and visit our Giving Tree, available on December 1st through the holiday season. It will be decorated with book suggestions that we'd love to add to our collection. We think books make the very best presents!

Lovely Lemony Snicket

On Wednesday, November 30th kids in grades 3-6 can join us at 3:00pm for a book discussion focusing on that sinister scribe - Lemony Snicket. We'll talk about all of his books, including the latest, *The Penultimate Peril, Book the 12th*. Theme food and beverages will be provided and we'll toss around some trivia. It promises to be Absolutely Awful - you won't want to miss it! Sign up is required, 5 person minimum needed.

And for the Parents

On Thursday, December 8th we'll host a Movie Night in conjunction with The Shops on the Norwich Square. Enjoy a night on the town! Drop your kids (ages 5 & up) off here at 6:00pm to watch "Madagascar" and get some holiday shopping done locally. (Movie time approx. 90 minutes.) Popcorn and beverages provided.

Book Talk and Tea

Wondering what books might make great holiday gifts for the kids? Come to The Norwich Bookstore at 2:00pm on Sunday, Dec. 4th for a book talk of the best books being published this holiday season. Covering kid's books from birth up through senior high, I'll show samples and provide several suggestions for perfect presents. Light beverages and desserts provided.

Hope to see you there,
Beth Reynolds, Children's Librarian

TRY THIS: CHALLENGE YOUR CHILD TO FIND FACTS IN THE NEWSPAPER

Turn reading into a daily game! After you have finished a section of the newspaper, challenge your child to find a few facts in the articles. For example, "Can you find the capital of Belize?" Have fun!

The GMF Soups and Quiches were yummier than ever this year...makes one want to put together a cookbook of favorite MCS recipes...

Corn Chowder

8 strips bacon, diced
1/2 cup onion, chopped
1/2 cup celery, finely chopped
2 Tbsp. butter
1 1/2 cups potato, diced
3 cups water
Salt and pepper to taste
1 bay leaf
3 Tbsp. flour
1/2 cup milk
1 quart whole milk, warmed
16 oz. light cream
2 cups whole kernel corn
Chopped parsley

In a large skillet set on medium-low heat, fry bacon, keep soft. Reserve drippings. Add onion, celery, butter and a small amount of the bacon drippings and saute vegetables. Do not allow vegetables to brown. Add potatoes, water, salt, pepper, and bay leaf. Cook over medium heat about 1/2 hour to soften potatoes. Transfer to a large soup pot. Mix flour and milk and slowly add to vegetables. Stir frequently and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and add the warmed whole milk, light cream and corn. Cook low to medium heat, stirring frequently for 1/2 hour. Adjust seasoning. Top with parsley to serve.

Note: Adjustments may be made to thin or thicken soup with milk or flour.

Flavor is best when made a day ahead and refrigerated overnight. Serves 12.
Recipe from Mary Ann Holbrook, Alison and Jay Mobilia's grandmother.

Next newsletter deadline:
Thursday, December 1.
Email submissions to:
alice.williams@mac.com
Thank you.