



PTO Notes

Marion Cross School

Norwich, Vermont

December 2, 2011

PTO announces winner of fall Box Tops for Education challenge

And the winner is...Mrs. Keogh's 2nd Grade Class!

The winner of the first Box Tops Challenge of the 2011-2012 school year is Mrs. Keogh's 2nd Grade class! Congratulations!

Mrs. Keogh's students collected an extraordinary 750 Box Tops for Education coupons and dimes, which translates into \$75 for the Marion Cross School PTO.

As a result, her class will be the first class to wear the new aprons that will soon arrive in Ms. Smith's Art classroom. We know that the students will have lots of fun placing the first paint marks on the pristine canvas of aprons.

In all 4,701 Box Tops and dimes were collected through this challenge bringing more than \$470 to the school.

This almost doubles our original collection goal of 2,500 Box Tops and allowed Ms. Smith to purchase 25 new aprons for students to use in her classroom.

We are also pleased to announce that we had full school participation in this challenge, with each class turning in at least a handful of coupons. So, whenever a student puts on one of the new aprons, he or she should feel a real sense of pride and ownership. Bravo!

(Continued on page 2)

Giving Tree offers gift ideas

Are you looking for a teacher gift? Look no further than the Giving Tree. The Giving Tree is a nice way to get teachers holiday gifts, gifts of gratitude, and a much needed helping hand in light of all the budget cuts. This would also be a fantastic opportunity to support our local business partners.

Here is how it works: the Giving Tree is a shared spreadsheet. Click here to see the Giving Tree items. If you choose to purchase a gift, check the spreadsheet using the link above. If you buy an item from the spreadsheet, please type in the word PURCHASED next to the item that you bought. This will let other parents know that the item has been or is in the process of being purchased.

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CALENDAR

Monday, December 5th
Norwich Pool Public Forum
7 p.m., Tracy Hall

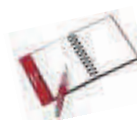
Wednesday, December 7th
Norwich School Board Meeting
7 p.m., MCS Library

Tuesday, December 13th
K-2 Holiday Concert
5 p.m.

Wednesday, December 14th
3-6 Holiday Concert
6:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 22nd
Holiday Break Begins

Tuesday, January 3
School Resumes



Notes in Brief

Going on now:

- Raisin Drive (ends Dec.8)
- Giving Tree
- Box Tops Holiday Challenge

Start saving:

- Books for Spring Book Sale

Box Tops winner announced

(Continued from page 1)

The next challenge begins...drum roll please...NOW and runs through the December vacation. Our goal is to discover how many coupons can be collected over vacation! This will be a grade to grade challenge, rather than a classroom challenge. The winning

grade will vote on where the PTO will allocate these funds...more on how this will work in a later newsletter. Have fun clipping!

—Katie Kitchel & Jo Ellen Gardner
Box Tops Co-coordinators

Project art room aprons: the top 5

1st Place: 2-Keogh with 750
2nd Place: 5-Girard with 380
3rd Place: 1-Dustin with 376
4th Place: 1-Draper with 360
5th Place: 1-Moore with 324

Quick Box Top Collection Tip
Visit www.boxtops4education.com for ideas on how to collect even more Box Tops for Marion Cross School.

Final week of raisin drive for Hartford Norwich Holiday Basket Helpers



Drop off a six-pack (or two) of small raisin boxes in the shopping cart by the office or in the tubs outside each classroom.



Collection ends December 8th.

Don't forget to use your local business card!

Our first drawing takes place December 15th

1. Fill up your card
2. Put your name on it
3. Return to the office

Win a Norwich Bookstore gift certificate!

Giving Tree in place for holidays



(Continued from page 1)

How to use the spreadsheet:

- Find the teacher's name and items
- Once you've selected a gift to purchase, type PURCHASED in the same box with the item
- Do not delete items; we want to keep all the items on the list even if they have been purchased
- Do not add your name to the spreadsheet; we'd like to maintain anonymity but feel free to add a personal note on any gift you give to a teacher

Finally, don't forget our Celebration Books program. Celebration Books are a great way to honor a relative, student, etc. while supporting the school library.

Classroom News

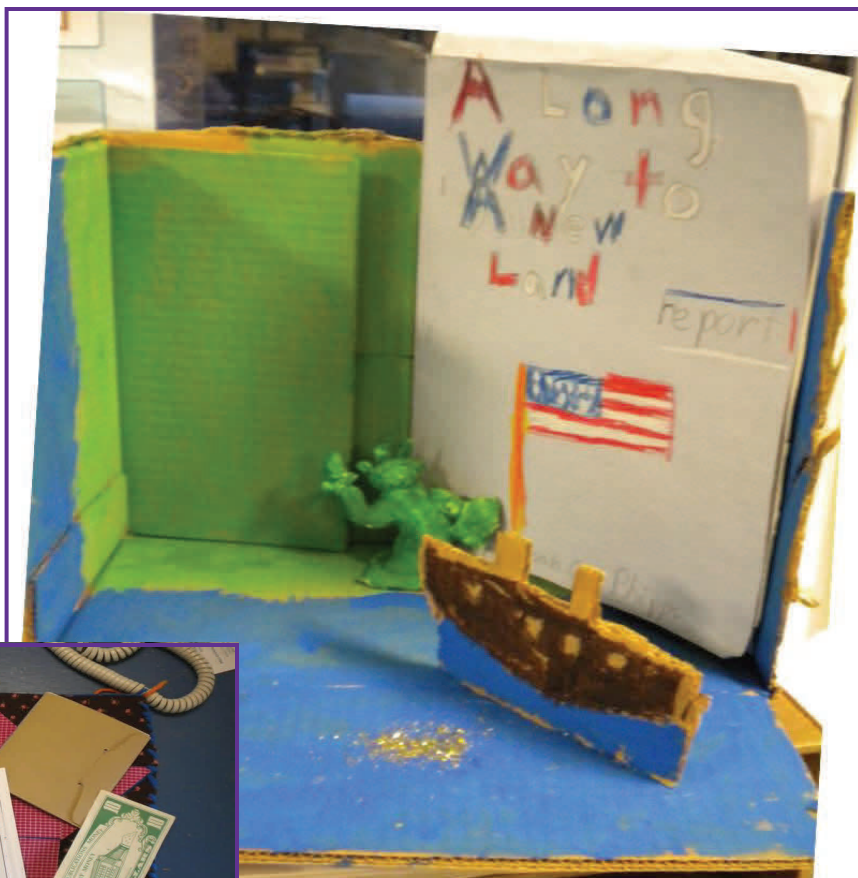
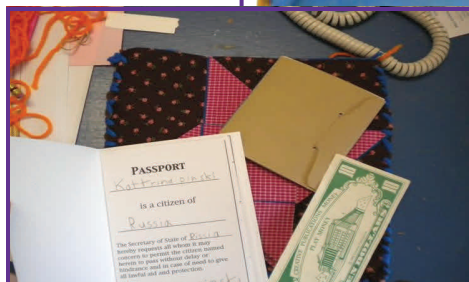
Second grade students get ready to immigrate

What does it mean to be American? When teaching an interdisciplinary unit, we start with essential questions to build the skills and curiosity that will drive a lifetime of learning.

Just like a good hook in writing, the essential question draws the student in. The curiosity about the people who chose to immigrate to America motivates students to read, write, survey, interview, build, draw and study. Using a variety of tools to explore this topic allows the students to deepen and retain their knowledge of American history.

Social Studies is the driving force behind this interdisciplinary unit of study, however, reading and writing are taught every day through related non fiction content. The arts, technology, math, and science are also integrated.

Immigration builds on the students' understanding of families, school and communities. The study of immigration is really a study of all our families.



Second grade kicks off the unit with an engaging family project and a fun potluck with many interesting and tasty meals stemming from around the world. A highlight of the unit for teachers is watching the children speak so proudly of their families.

The children get ready for the Immigration Trek by reading fiction and non fiction books. We play games to earn money for the ticket to America. Students get creative with their names and journal entries. They write about their decision to emigrate from their native land in the hope of finding a better way of life in America.

The morning of our trek is a busy one! The students come to school dressed the part of an immigrant. We take a hike on the nature trail to assimilate the journey to the ship. Snack time in steerage is a tight squeeze as the children learn about the conditions the immigrants had to endure on the ship. Finally, they walk by Miss Liberty and have to wait in line at Ellis Island. Tension is high awaiting their fate to see if they are allowed to enter the land of the free.

—Jennifer Newberry
2nd Grade Teacher

Community News

Movies, doughnuts, crafts, legos and more at NPL

Let's all go to the movies

Come on over to the Library for a special showing of *Cars 2* on Thursday, December 8 at 6 p.m. We're offering this movie in conjunction with the Shops on the Norwich Square so that parents can enjoy an evening out on the town while their kids age 5 and up enjoy popcorn and a movie. Refreshments will be provided, but bring your own pillow or cushion. Estimated pick up time 7:45. See you then!

Delightful doughnuts, creative crafts and books, books, books

Kids, join us afterschool from 3 to 5

p.m. on Monday, December 19 for a very merry afternoon. The supplies will be set out to make your own holiday gift tags (a perfect way to decorate those presents for family and friends) and there's a chance to make your own mini doughnuts. Make sure you grab a free book while you're here. It's our gift to you, just right for this time of year. (We think the winter break is the perfect time to curl up and read.) Come for the crafts and the cocoa, take home some tags and an amazing adventure.

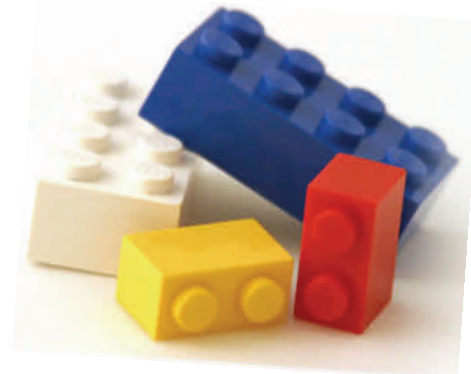
Let's Go with LEGO

We'll have the first highly-

anticipated meeting of our LEGO club on Wednesday, December 14 at 2:30. The kids who have expressed an interest in joining this new club can come afterschool for a rousing game of LEGO Creationary. Our first "building" meeting will take place in January, date TBD after we receive input from the participants. For those kids in third grade and up still wanting to join in the fun, please call 649-1184 or send an email to me at beth.reynolds@norwichlibrary.org. You must reserve a spot.

—beth reynolds

Children's Librarian, NPL



Trim the Tree

Join the Historical Society for a holiday celebration and make something special for your tree or the Historical Society's tree!

This year's event takes place on Sunday, December 11 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Norwich Historical Society. For more information, please call 649-0124.



Norwich pool meeting

The Norwich Recreation Council would like to invite all families (even kids!) to a public forum this coming Monday (December 5th) night at Tracy Hall. The forum, which begins at 7 p.m., is an opportunity to share thoughts on the Norwich pool and whether it should be rebuilt for future generations to enjoy. The council is hoping to see a strong turnout from Marion Cross families.

—Ian Strohbehn, MCS Class of 2006

Nonprofit Spotlight

Everybody Wins! tackles illiteracy



Our nonprofit spotlight for November is focused on Everybody Wins! Vermont, a literacy and mentoring organization selected by King Arthur Flour, this month's business partner. The following was compiled from the [Everybody Wins! Vermont](#) website.

Q. Why is Everybody Wins! important?

A. One of the most critical problems facing our country today is illiteracy. Our national standard of living and the ability for our country to successfully compete in a global economy are at stake if American young people are unable to read. Consider the following statistics:

- Roughly one in five American children grows up functionally illiterate. The effects on the American workforce are staggering. American businesses spend more than \$200 billion annually to teach remedial reading and math skills to their employees.
- More than one in four Vermont kindergarten students are not ready to participate successfully in school.
- The social costs of incarceration and welfare are directly related to functional illiteracy.

Q. What is Everybody Wins!?

A. Everybody Wins! is built on the power of reading and mentoring to increase

children's prospects for success while engaging a diverse range of volunteers.

Q. Why reading?

A. The more children read, the better readers they become; the better readers they become, the more they want to read. Research shows children who read well tend to achieve more academically, enjoy school more, and stay in school.

Q. Why mentoring?

A. Studies indicate that children who have mentors tend to do better in school; stay in school; have a better sense of their place and importance as community members; have better relationships at home; have higher self-esteem; avoid risky behaviors; and become volunteers.

Q. What does Everybody Wins! do?

A. Through Power Breakfast and Power Lunch programs, adult volunteers are paired with elementary school students to promote reading for pleasure, build self-confidence and enhance self-esteem, and serve as caring role models. The pairs meet weekly to share books and develop lasting relationships.

Since opening their first two sites in October 2000, EW! VT is now Vermont's largest mentoring organization, serving more than 650 students in 23 schools. To volunteer, call (802) 229-BOOK.

Disclaimer: the Founder and first Executive Director of Everybody Wins! Vermont is also one of the fundraising co-chairs responsible for this article.

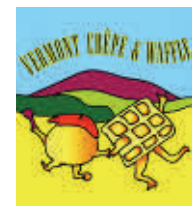
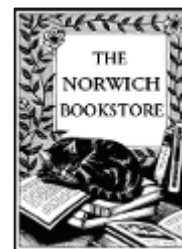
20% off purchases at Norwich Bookstore!

As part of their local business partnership for December, the Norwich Bookstore is offering **20% off all purchases for MCS families on Sunday, December 11th.** Just show your local business shopping card—extras available in the MCS office.

Thank you to our local business partners!



LEDYARD



Practice makes perfect



A late fall fire drill gave students and staff a chance to practice their evacuation skills. The report is that all went well with students recording what may have been their fastest escape time of the school year.

The MCS Community values a tradition of educational excellence and is committed to nurturing the whole child in a climate of respect.

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We're on the Web! Visit us at www.marioncross.org/pto