



PTO Notes

Marion Cross School

Norwich, Vermont

October 28, 2011

Letter from the Principal: Quebec/Vermont Exchange

Marion Cross School is well known for its success in serving the needs of all students in a diverse learning community. One of the most important reasons for this accomplishment is our faculty's commitment to student centered learning, the focus on how their practice directly relates to their students' achievement.

Last spring, Marion Cross School was invited by the Vermont Principals Association to participate in the "Professional Learning Community Project" sponsored by McGill University. Its purpose was to build an international school community that would ex-

change successful teaching and learning practices to support student centered learning.

In March, six elementary school principals from Vermont and six from Canada visited schools in Quebec to observe and compare their learning environments.

Specific emphasis was on highlighting the characteristics of "inclusive and socially just practices and experiences for all children".

Last week, Canadian principals visited Vermont schools. They spent the day at Marion Cross on

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Last days of Box Tops challenge

The Fall Box Tops Challenge: Project Art Room Aprons is approaching its final two days. All of the classroom Box Tops for Education collection containers will be emptied on Tuesday, November 1st, and the final numbers tabulated. At this point in the contest, it is impossible to predict which class will win the prize of being the first class to wear the new Art Room Aprons.

After a blistering first collection, Mr. Girard's 5th Grade class still holds the lead...but, Mrs. Keogh's 2nd Graders are only 20 Box Tops behind them! Ms. Dustin's 1st Graders are also closing fast, with only 48 Box Tops or dimes needed to surpass the 5th grade class. Many other classes are still in the running as well.

For the most recent results, check out the results poster in the front office. Last spring, the winning class claimed its 1st place spot during

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CALENDAR

Wednesday, November 2nd

School Board Meeting
7 p.m., MCS Library

Friday, November 4

Parent Teacher Conferences
No School

Saturday, November 5

Gift Making Festival
10 a.m. to 1 p.m., MCS Gym

Monday, November 7

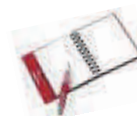
PTO Meeting
3:30 p.m., MCS Art Room

Wednesday, November 9

Visiting Author Jason Chin
All Grades

Friday, November 11

Veteran's Day
No School



Notes in Brief

Current needs:

- Volunteers and supplies for Gift Making Festival & Café
- Sponsors for Holiday Baskets

Going on now:

- Box Tops Challenge
- Spirit Wear Sale

Start saving:

- Books for Spring Book Sale

One week until Gift Making Fest

On Saturday, November 5th from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. the MCS gym is the craft making place to be.

The Gift Making Festival is a PTO sponsored event for kids (and adults) to create special, one of a kind gifts for family and friends. We plan to display examples of this year's crafts in the lobby a week before the event. This is a family event, so please no drop

offs. Donations of mardi gras beads, artificial flowers, empty Al-toid tins, and white plastic containers (Chobani yogurts, Alouette cheese spread) are needed. If you are willing to help with set up, or crafting at a table, please contact [Karen Loring](#).

Help Needed For Festival Cafe

We are in the process of rounding out volunteers for this year's Gift Making Festival Cafe and Sweet Treats Bar. All proceeds help offset the cost of the craft supplies and further PTO programs.

If you could help out with your time or your culinary talents please let [Donna Mackall](#) or [Beth Ryan](#) know. Our requests are as follows, and thanks very much—as always!

- One hour cafe shifts from 9 a.m.

to 2 p.m. (includes set-up and tear-down)

- Soups & Chili
- Cornbread muffins
- Quiche
- Bags of Mixed Salad greens
- Mac & Cheese
- PB&J sandwiches
- Bags of popcorn
- Bags of carrots or other veggies
- Cider
- Bagels and cream cheese
- Cookies, brownies, cupcakes, bars

Place your SpiritWear orders now

The MCS & Norwich SpiritWear fall and winter line is available for ordering between now and November 7th. The collection includes sweat shirts and pants, t-shirts, winter hats, and baseball caps imprinted with either Marion Cross School or Norwich. View the entire collection and [download an order form](#) now. Samples are available in the lobby for anyone who needs help deciding on sizes. The merchandise is expected in before the holiday break. Contact [Karen Loring](#) with questions.

Letter from the Principal

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Tuesday. While here, they received an overview of our mission and philosophy, visited classes, talked to teachers, and came together in the afternoon to discuss their visit.

Some of their most frequent comments during the “exchange of practices” portion of their visit were:

1. Peaceful and respectful students
2. Child oriented curriculum
3. Natural, purposeful integration of technology
4. Math integration throughout the curriculum including in the physical education classes
5. Community service (e.g. the giving bowl project)
6. Dramatic performances in the multipurpose room

At the end of the week, participants from both Quebec and Vermont met to compare the best practices of Canadian and Vermont schools.

McGill University expects to publish their findings in the spring.

—Linda Kelley
Principal



Students get to work at Fall Green-Up and Clean Up

A school full of cheerful students recently accomplished an enormous amount of valuable work on October 20 during our Fall Green-Up and Clean Up Day.

Some students worked on more than one project and some chose to do additional work during their recess! Thank you to all teachers, students, parent helpers, and custodial staff (who cleaned up all the muddy sneaker tracks after the day was over).

Here is a list of the jobs students worked on, but the true quantity of the work done had to be seen to be believed. Incredible.

- Kindergarten: raked leaves and worked in the garden
- 1st grade: picked up trash, planted bulbs, and raked leaves
- 2nd grade: worked in the garden, raked leaves, and spread

mulch on the Nature Trail

- 3rd grade: worked in the garden and raked leaves
- 4th grade: pulled invasive buckthorn out of the Nature Area
- 5th grade: spread mulch on the Nature Area trails and



pulled invasive buckthorn.

- 6th grade: harvested and bagged potatoes for the Haven (65 pounds!), cleaned up the PTO flower beds, and worked in the vegetable garden

In addition, our 6th grade students were photojournalists for the event, taking pictures of all the other classes doing their work.

Look for their pictures and write-up soon on the [Marion Cross website](#).

Special thanks to Ruth Hall who coordinated photographing all the different classes and to Allison Litten who edited the hundreds of pictures to make a wonderful slide show for our celebratory Rep, following the day's work. As one teacher commented afterwards, "It was a true team effort." Thank you, team!

—Lindsay Putnam
LEEP Coordinator



Giving Bowls event raises thousands for Willing Hands

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE who attended, supported and volunteered during Sunday's Giving Bowls 2011. Thanks to you we:

- Raised more than \$7,400 for Willing Hands.
- Raised a lot of awareness about the good work of Willing Hands.
- Sent at least a car load of canned goods and fresh bread to the Haven.
- And gave Norwich residents a great opportunity to talk to our neighbors, while eating delicious soup. Approximately 700 people joined us during the afternoon.

Giving Bowls would not have happened without the vision of our fearless leader, Tracy Smith... but it



also would not have happened without all the great people in this town who made it happen by volunteering, attending, making bowls, donating tents and money, and just supporting the entire Giving Bowls effort.

THANK YOU ALL,

— *The Giving Bowls 2011 committee: Lauren Adams, Cinnie Bensen, Lisa Christie, Julia Dickenson, Carolyn Frye, Karen Loring, Katie Madden, Stephanie McCaull, Sarah McGinley-Smith, Ashley Milliken, Amy Neuman, Laura Perras, and Tracy Smith.*



Classroom News

Learning fun dans la classe de Français

Bonjour tout le monde! Greetings from the French classroom! It has been a very exciting start to the school year in French. Students have been working hard and producing some amazing work.



After some life-changing workshops this past summer and fall, I have changed my approach to teaching French and my thoughts about language learning in general. Students are finding that French class is a little different than it has been in the past.

Using a method called TPRS (Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling), students create stories in class to reinforce new vocabulary. These stories and vocabulary sets parallel the material we are studying in our textbooks (Alex et Zoé in fourth and fifth grade, and Discovering French Nouveau! in sixth).

Reading has become an integral part of our class time. Using the research of Stephen Krashen as our starting point, students spend a certain amount of time several days a week reading books in French from my library; they can also check these books out to bring home.



This also allows me to sit down and read in French, which I am rarely able to do! If you are ever interested in learning more about this method or more specifics about what happens in the French classroom, feel free to drop me a line or come and visit us!

For updates about what is happening in the French classroom, please visit my [website](#).

For more information about TPRS and the importance of reading in the foreign language, please visit www.sdkrashen.com and www.lmp.ucla.edu/k-12/tools_tprs.aspx. Merci, et bonne lecture!

— Mademoiselle Allison Litten, French Teacher

ArtStart proves fruitful for 1st grade students



ArtStart kicked off with its first fruitful art project on October 20th. 1st graders learned about the 16th century Italian painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo, who's unique portraits consisting of produce, trees, flowers and books were like no others.

The 1st graders created amazing faces, animals and abstract art of their own with fruits and vegetables. Many thanks to the Hanover Coop and Dan and Whit's for donating produce for this event.

To learn more on how you can participate in upcoming ArtStart projects please contact [Danielle Taylor](#) or [Karen Wilson](#).

Holiday Basket Helpers need more help than ever

Well, it is almost that time of year again. Believe it or not, the holidays are just around the corner and the Hartford-Norwich Holiday Basket Helpers need your help more than ever!

The Hartford-Norwich Holiday Basket Helpers is a local nonprofit agency in existence for more than 30 years. It is dedicated to providing gifts of warm clothing and cherished toys to children in Norwich and Hartford. In addition the group assembles fruit baskets for seniors.

As you can imagine, many are struggling in these

hard economic times and this year the hardship is compounded by the devastating effects of Hurricane Irene. Many more of our neighbors are in desperate need of support, and will be forced to make very tough choices this holiday season.

Basket Helpers hopes to ease their burden by making sure they have something special to brighten their holiday season. However none of this is possible without your support.

There are two ways you can help. You can either sponsor a child or donate raisins for fruit baskets.

SPONSORING A CHILD

Sponsoring a child this season is fast and easy. The commitment consists of a couple of hours of shopping from a specified list, then dropping off the unwrapped gifts in Wilder on December 6th or 7th.

To sponsor a child, please go to the Norwich-Hartford Holiday Basket Helpers website at www.holidaybasketsvt.org. Once there you will see an online registration form.

Thank you for anything you can do to help. Please email [Ann Marie Smith](mailto:AnnMarieSmith@holidaybasketsvt.org) with any questions.



RAISIN DONATIONS

Fruit is collected at all elementary schools in Hartford and Norwich and this year, as in year's past, Marion Cross is charged with collecting small individual boxes of raisins.

Volunteers will use the donated fruit to create 150 holiday fruit baskets for seniors in Hartford and Norwich.

The raisins can be dropped off in a box outside each classroom or in the shopping cart by the office beginning on Wednesday, November 9th.

If not enough fruit is collected, we must spend our cash buying more fruit instead of buying food cards for the seniors.

Bats and cats and pumpkins at NPL—oh my!

Join us for our Annual Halloween Dinner of pizza and soda on Monday, October 31st, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. This is the perfect time to grab a bite to eat before a big night of trick-or-treating around town.

Tickets are available at the Library for the eerily low price of \$5 per person. Goblins 3 years and under

are free. Space is limited, so buy your tickets before they disappear.

Also, don't forget to bring your carved creations to the Library for our Annual Pumpkin Lighting. We'll light the candles at 5:30 so that everyone can stop by throughout the evening and see what their neighbors have made. When they

are all lit, the library steps are quite spook-tacular. You won't want to miss it! Please note, jack o' lanterns need to be picked up at the end of the trick or treating.

— *beth reynolds*
Children's Librarian @ NPL

Nonprofit Spotlight

Second Wind helps treat addiction

This month's local business partner, Yummy Yummy, is spotlighting the Second Wind Foundation, an organization that helps people struggling to recover from addiction.

Though there is a lot of shame associated with addiction, it is a debilitating disease which can be treated extremely successfully. Second Wind Foundation helps hundreds of Upper Valley residents making a huge impact with its programs.

Addiction and addictive behaviors permeate our society in every neighborhood, in every community and at every socio-economic level, causing immeasurable damage affecting us all.

Progress in accepting the nature and the extent of this addiction continues. Addiction is increasingly understood to be a chronic condition, and recovery is finding acceptance. While recovery-intensive events such as in or out patient treatment continue to play a critical initial role, and often help transition patients into Alcoholics Anonymous and other recovery programs for the long term, treatment is time-limited and recovery is a lifetime event.

Final days of fall Box Tops challenge

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the last collection day...so who knows what next Tuesday will bring! One thrilling result of this collection challenge is that we have already surpassed our goal of 2,500 Box Tops (and dimes.) With a strong last push we may even top 3,500! This is a GREAT start to the school year, and will provide the PTO with \$350 to use towards valuable classroom support.

So make one last pass through your pantry and get those scissors ready. Bragging rights and fresh aprons are on the line. We will announce the winning class in the next PTO newsletter, and (hopefully) at an upcoming Rep.

—Katie Kitchel & Jo Ellen Gardner, Box Tops Co-Coordinators

It has been found that a key component in successful recovery is peer support. Peer support is effective, and ultimately necessary for long-term recovery. Peer support is affordable, and peer support is sustainable. The importance of peers is the basis of the work of the Second Wind Foundation.

The Second Wind Foundation's seeks to advance recovery from addiction and addictive behavior through recovery support services, education, and advocacy for social, cultural, and health care parity with other illnesses. Their focus is on peer support, because of its effectiveness, affordability and sustainability. They support a variety of recovery services by filling the gaps among existing programs as well as providing their own programming.

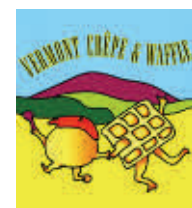
Their long range hope is to foster an environment in which people with addictive illness are accepted, treated and supported as any other patient, whether in a hospital, workplace, neighborhood or home.

Information for this profile compiled from the [Second Wind Foundation](#) website.

Thank you to our local business partners!



LEDYARD

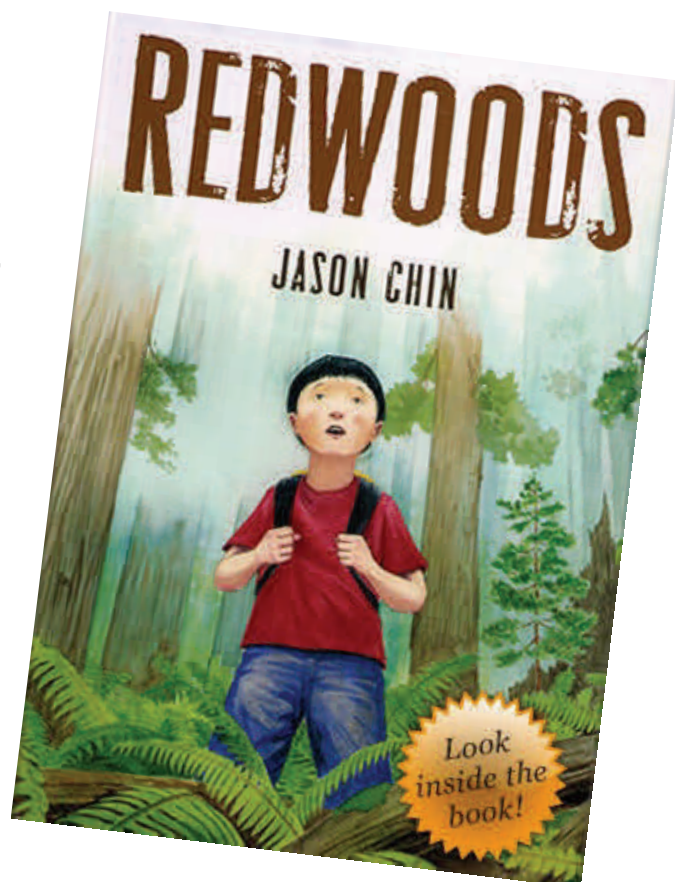


Visiting author program to welcome Jason Chin

Upper Valley Native and Author Illustrator Jason Chin will be at MCS Wednesday, November 9, meeting with K-6th grades, thanks to the generosity of the Norwich Women's Club. Jason's *Redwoods* was a 2009 Red Clover Book, and his just-released *Coral Reefs* has also been hailed as a "hybrid of straightforward nonfiction text with fanciful pictures." Since the 6th grade habitat is the ocean, Jason will focus on *Coral Reefs* with sixth graders. With the upper grades, he will share information about the research process, discussing primary documents, onsite research, and online resources. *Redwoods* will be

a good tie-in to the 3rd grade study of their habitat, the forest. With the lower grades, he will talk about the research process and also about his illustration techniques. Thanks to Joy Blongewicz, Ellen Keogh, and the Norwich Women's Club for their efforts bringing this author to MCS!

— Mary Bender
Visiting Author
Program



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