

MCAS Communicator

an e-newsletter for the staff of the Michigan City Area Schools

December 2012

(Please post for/share with those employees who do not check email!)

Reminders from Payroll

It's W-2 time! If you have moved recently, please notify the Payroll department so we have your current address on your 2012 W-2 form. Also, a reminder that the December pay date for all staff is December 14th. Pay dates in January are January 2, 11, and 25th.

CPR Certification - January

Teachers who need CPR certification for license renewal should contact Linda Bechinski at lbechinski@mcas.k12.in.us. Classes will be offered after school at Mullen on January 15 and 22. Cost is only \$30.

Help Safe Harbor Win a Grant

Please take a moment to nominate Safe Harbor for a community gardening grant...this will benefit a summer school courtyard project at Joy and an innovative hydroponics project in the greenhouse at Krueger. Here's how:

1. Visit this link: <http://www.seedsofchangefoods.com/givingback/>
2. Fill in your name/info
3. In the field "Community/Farm/Organization Name" type: Safe Harbor - Nurturing Joy School Garden
4. In the "Proprietor" field type: Herb Higgin
5. Click SUBMIT (No need to fill out the fields asking questions about the project, etc.)

Graphics Dept. Update

If you will be needing anything printed for early January/new semester, be sure to send it to Allison Ruffing before you leave for winter break. (Allison will be touching base with secretaries via email in early December to confirm planner quantities for Quarter 3.) ALSO, free complimentary bonus gift alert! Allison still has a lot of 2012-13 school year calendars on hand, so don't make photocopies...she'll be happy to send a supply to you. She also has extra elementary and middle handbooks.

Mentee Tree

Please take the time to admire the holiday "Thank You, mentors!" tree in the front lobby of the Administration Building during the month of December. Hours for Ours appreciates the volunteer hours that community mentors spend helping our students work to their potential. They always have a list of students waiting for that special someone to make a difference in their lives. If you, or someone you know, would like to give the gift of time and friendship to a student in our district, contact Sherri Silcox at [873-2026](tel:873-2026) x 8744.

United Way Results

Thanks to the generosity of all involved, we're happy to share the final results of an exciting and positive United Way campaign!

	Total Pledges	# of Donors	Average Pledge	Car Wash	MCAS Campaign Total
2011	\$24,768.28	183	\$135.35	\$975.22	\$25,743.50
2012	\$24,477.90	170	143.98	\$1,076.00	\$25,553.90

Highest % of Donors-Top 10 Groups:

Barker.....37.77% (Donut Party Winner!)
 Joy.....36.00%
 Edgewood.....32.14%
 Knapp.....29.03%
 Admin.....28.13%
 Safe Harbor/H4O.....28.12%
 Food Service.....28.07%
 Springfield.....27.58%
 Marsh.....27.27%
 Pine.....23.80%

Drawing Winners:

Peg Mansfield, Edgewood - Gift Basket
 Jenny Boem, Krueger - Helper for a Day (Xavier Botana)
 John Tiedeman, Safe Harbor - Helper for a Day (Dr. Eason-Watkins)
 Deb Carpenter, Springfield - Dinner with Dr. Eason-Watkins

MCESP Scholarship Fundraiser

MCESP is selling Fannie May candy bars for their 2012/2013 scholarship fund. Each bar costs only \$1.00! They are trying to sell enough bars to give two \$500 scholarships again for this year. Please see a MCESP member (Secretaries, I.A.'s, Para's and EAP's) and support a good cause.

One City One Sound

The One City One Sound holiday concert is Thursday, December 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the MCHS gymnasium. More than 1,500 of our talented instrumental and vocal music students in grades 5 - 12 will perform. (This represents an increase of more than 200 students who are participating in music in our schools this year!) The One City One Sound concert will be broadcast live on Cable Channel 98, WIMS and WEFM radio, and will stream live on our web site. **Note:** Pahs Road will be closed to west-bound traffic prior to the concert, from approximately 5:30-7:30 p.m. Again this year, there's a community service element to One City One Sound: Although admission is free, everyone is encouraged to "wipe out homelessness" by bringing a new kitchen or bath towel or a roll of paper towels. These towels will be donated to the Sandcastle Shelter, which has indicated that this is one of their greatest needs. (Sandcastle representatives will also be on hand to accept monetary donations.) Special thanks to the many (many!) individuals who are working hard on One City One Sound concert and rehearsal logistics - this is a huge cooperative effort!

Second Annual "Shoot-Out"

The MCHS Wolves basketball teams will be taking on our rivals, the LaPorte Slicers, in a varsity girls/boys doubleheader on December 18th. Tipoff for the girls' game is at 6:00 p.m. and the boys' game is expected to begin at 7:30. At halftime during the boys' game, many of our building principals will take part in a second annual "shoot-out" competition. They'll

be attempting to defeat last year's champion, Dr. Mo Mroueh, with a series of winning layups, foul shots and 3-pointers. Don't miss this opportunity to cheer on our teams *and* our principals! (Rumor has it that a superintendent may be involved, too...)

Food Drive for Salvation Army

Again this year, MCAS is helping the Salvation Army with a holiday food drive. Canned goods and other nonperishable food items may be dropped off through December 13 at most schools and buildings, including at the Ad Building. This year the Transportation Department is lending an extra hand to this effort – they have buses parked at the Transportation Service Building and Plant Planning, and will be accepting donations of canned goods at those locations. They hope that the yellow buses will be a visible reminder to the community that the need for donations is great! Each year, MCAS has been the main resource for this project, helping to provide food to more than 2,000 families in our community at the holidays.

Give a Gift of Reading

"Operation Bookworm" is also under way at our buildings. Operation Bookworm is a collection of new books for children and teens, which will be given as presents this holiday season to families in need in our community. Look for a collection box at your school or building! The National Honor Society at MCHS is coordinating this project again this year, and books will be distributed by the Salvation Army. The school/building that collects the most books (based on size of building staff) will receive the services of NHS students after school for one full week. Just ask Knapp, which won last year...this is a very valuable prize! Please remember to pick up a book or two (or three!) when you are out looking for holiday bargains.

Adopt a Sandcastle Family

Sandcastle Shelter has several families that live in the shelter or have just recently moved out...they are seeking donors to provide Christmas gifts for these families. For more information, please call Sandcastle Director Katherine Cope at (219) 879-2552. Click here for a list of the families in need:

<http://educatemc.net/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85/sandcastlefamilylist.jpg>

Christmas Clearinghouse

The Salvation Army is asking groups, clubs, individuals, etc. to contact them to see if the family they are planning on helping is on their list as already receiving help from another group or groups. (In the past there has been duplication where one family receives holiday baskets, etc. from several different groups while some families in need are overlooked.) The number to call is [874-6885](tel:874-6885).

Holiday Learning Fun

The Early Childhood class at A. K. Smith will be hosting a free holiday-themed event for children ages 3-6 on Tuesday, December 11 from 8:00 -9:30 a.m. Activities will include games, crafts, music, cooking, art and more. This is limited to 24 children; call 879-2120 ext 8379 to register.

Smooth Jazz Fundraiser

Thanks to everyone who supported the "Music in the City" Smooth Jazz Concert at Blue Chip! This event raised approximately \$13,000 to support our Dress for Success and Music programs. Hats off to those who coordinated and supported this effort, including Lance Werner, Blue Chip Casino, Horizon Bank, General Insurance, NIPSCO, the LaPorte County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Theresa Edwards, who coordinated the silent auction that evening.

WAY TO GO

- Congrats to the recipients of this year's Barbara A. Carmen Memorial grants for classroom projects and equipment! They include: **Amy Hamann**(Barker), **Holly Zborowski** (Knapp), **Jane Malott** (Pine), **Kim Stepp**, **Nadia Dabagia**, **Ann Schreeg**, **Carol Sloane**, **Virginia Przybylinski**, and **Mary Beres** (Joy), and **Janelle Spolyar** and **Michelle Jones** (Springfield).
- **Krueger Middle School** and Safe Harbor's **John Tiedeman** were honored by the Shirley Heinze Land Trust as recipients of the 2012 "Bringing Home Nature Award". This award recognizes individuals and/or groups utilizing native plants in landscaping and helping to bring back ecosystems lost to development. (Krueger was recognized for its rain garden, and Safe Harbor was recognized for native plantings in the courtyard at Joy.)

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lilly Scholarships

The Unity Foundation of La Porte County is offering two full-tuition, four year college scholarships to benefit La Porte County residents. They provide full tuition, required fees, and a special allocation of up to \$900 per year for required books and equipment for four years of undergraduate study, leading to a baccalaureate degree at any accredited Indiana public or private college or university. Deadline for applications: January 18, 2013. For more information and an application visit: <http://uflc.net/scholarships/grants-scholarships/>

Holidays at Barker Mansion

Michigan City's Barker Mansion is offering field trips and educational tours. The program this winter is "White House Christmases". Learn how the Lincolns and ten other Presidents and families decorated the White House trees and the holiday traditions they observed. School holiday tours begin December 3 and continue through January 15. Remember: MCAS students tour free! Call for reservations: (219) 873-1520.

New on "Community Backpack"...

* A list of December programs for kids and teens, from the **LaPorte County Public Library**

* Information about **Junior Jazzercise** (for ages 8-14)

* **Michigan City Soccer Club** spring signups - for kids ages 4-14

Visit <http://mcas.schoolwires.net/domain/49> for details on these and other community events!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL - ENJOY WINTER BREAK!