

MCAS Communicator

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

February 2016

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

Thank You, Counselors

This is National School Counselors Week! Be sure to thank a school counselor YOU know for his/her dedication to our students' success!

MCESP "Give Back" Tuesday

Please support our IAs, paras, secretaries and other support professionals on Tuesday, February 2 - they are having a give back at Holly's to fund two scholarships for MCHS grads. Here is the link to the required coupon:

<http://educatemc.net/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/4/DOC012916-01292016163007.pdf>

Water for Flint

The MCAS Transportation Dept. is collecting bottled water for Flint, Michigan. Schools, individuals, and members of the public are welcome to drop off donations at the Transportation office, 1100 S. Woodland Avenue, Monday-Friday from 7am to 5pm, through February 5. All donations will be delivered by Transportation staff volunteers to the United Way of Genesee County Michigan, which will distribute to Flint residents in need. Contact Transportation if you need a pickup or with any questions. Monetary donations can be made here: <http://www.unitedwaygenesee.org/>

Black Ribbon Tribute

If you notice black ribbons or antenna flags on our school buses, they are a tribute to Lawrence Township elementary school principal Susan Jordan, who was tragically killed last week at her school when a school bus hit her. Jordan pushed several students out of the way, saving their lives.

Black History Month Exhibit

During the month of February the MCAS Safe Harbor After School Enrichment Program presents: Continuing The Legacy of Black History -- "Education, Celebration and Inspiration". The exhibit at Mullen features an array of displays, media viewings, music, audio listening stations, memorabilia, games, puzzles and student activity stations from the collection of Allen and Cenora Williams. *It is open to the public for self guided tours Monday through Friday from 1:00-4:00 pm. Group and classroom tours are available by calling 873-2026.*

Black History Community Day takes place at Mullen on Saturday, February 13. Enjoy exhibit tours from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. The Michigan City Black History Committee Student Quiz Bowl takes place from 2:00 to 4:00 pm with featured speaker Mr. John Hall.

Wall of Fame Nominations

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2016 MCAS "Wall of Fame." The Wall of Fame honors school employees who have made outstanding contributions to the children of the Michigan City Area Schools. It is permanently displayed in Heritage Hall at MCHS. Inductees are honored each spring at the annual Employee Retirement and Wall of Fame dinner (date TBA soon!). To qualify for nomination, the candidate must have been employed by the Michigan City Area Schools for a minimum of 15 years. He or she must have been retired or separated from the school system for at least five years. (Special circumstances may be considered for those not meeting the 15 year requirement due to hardship or death.)

Deadline for nomination this year is March 28, 2016. Follow this link to print out a nomination form:

http://educatemc.net/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/664/2016_WOF_Nom.pdf

Healthy U @ Work Newsletter

Seasonal affective disorder, understanding "processed" foods, ask the trainer, and more!

http://www.workingwellsite.org/images/newsletter_january2016.pdf

EAP Program February Newsletter

<http://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85/2016%20February%20EAP%20Newsletter.pdf>

EAP Webinar for February

Our Employee Assistance Program is offering a webinar at noon on February 17. The topics are Cultural Diversity in the Workplace and Heart Health Nutrition Tips. Register at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8373555473281202946>

CPR Class

CPR for teachers in need of license renewal is scheduled for Thursday, March 24th. Training is at 3:30 at Mullen, which is at 100 Manny Court, adjacent to Lake Hills Elementary. The fee is \$40 cash or check, payable to Dolphin Solutions. The certification lasts two years. Important: Please contact Linda Bechinski (lbechinski@educatemc.net) to sign up.

Tax Prep Assistance from United Way

Did you earn under \$61,000 last year? Want to file your Federal and State taxes for FREE? Thanks to United Way of LaPorte County, YOU CAN! No need to buy expensive tax software or pay huge fees to get your taxes done. Visit myfreetaxes.com to file your taxes for free, or dial 2-1-1 to set up an appointment to see an IRS certified tax consultant at no charge. Follow this link for more info on this:

<http://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85/Vita%202016.pdf>

Trine Courses for Educators

Trine University in Angola, IN, offers several online continuing education courses for teachers, in partnership with VESI. For more info:

http://www.virtualeduc.com/trine/index.php?utm_source=trine&utm_medium=email&utm_content=image&utm_campaign=bananas

Robotics News

It's build season! On January 9, 12 area teams from FIRST Robotics viewed the kickoff for this year's challenge: "FIRST Stronghold." It is a medieval "capture the castle" that involves picking up and catapulting Nerf boulders while placing/navigating barriers.

Safe Harbor Training Update

Out-of-school time providers from Elkhart, South Bend, Stark County (Knox), New Prairie, Gary and Michigan City met together on January 21 to learn and network, with special guest speakers from the 21st Century Learning Centers program and the Indiana Afterschool Network. Staff from the Museum of Science and Industry will be bringing their STEM expertise to Safe Harbor and the other afterschool providers on February 18th, teaching some project-based learning activities.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY NEWS

Coolspring Discount Cards

Coolspring Elementary has "community discount cards" available for purchase. They are \$10 and offer special deals to Panda Express, Papa Johns, Culver's Dunkin Donuts, Jiffy Lube, and more. Contact the school office to purchase yours today! (They expire 9/30/16.)

Joy "Viking Run"

Save the date! Sign up early! Joy Elementary School is holding a 5K and "fun run" on Saturday, May 7th to support improvement of their playground and grounds. Early Bird discount and a free t-shirt for those who sign up by May 5th. Visit the event site here to download an entry registration form:

<http://educateMC.net/vikingsontherun>

St. Patrick's Parade

Schools, groups, teams, etc. are welcome to take part in the annual Michigan City St. Patrick's Day parade on Saturday, March 12th. A parade application form is here:

<http://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85/StPatricksDay.pdf>

Help Knapp Help Leukemia Society

Knapp Elementary is raising funds to donate to The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society this winter. Please consider helping them reach their goal! Here is the link to donate (through Feb 19th):

<http://events.ils.org/pages/in/KnappElementarySchool>

City Alum to Help in Panama

MCHS graduate Morgan Laux, now studying at Ball State, is raising funds to travel to Panama to distribute medicines and provide medical services for families and individuals in need. She is asking staff to support her by visiting the Ball State Global Brigades Medical/Dental web site here (click "donate" and designate Morgan Laux in the "on behalf of" drop down menu):

<https://www.globalbrigades.org/empowered/chapter/ball-state-university-medical-brigades-chapter>

Calling all Bowlers

The annual Junior Achievement Bowl-a-Thon will be held on Saturday, March 16 at City Lanes (sessions begin at 12:30 or 3:00pm). Teams of up to five bowlers are needed! Consider forming a school or group team to help raise funds for this important program, which brings volunteers into our classrooms each year to teach students economics, business, financial literacy, and much more. For signup info please contact Lisa Scheller at lisa.scheller@ja.org, (219) 508-4676.

Art Scholarships

The Michigan City Public Art Committee offers up to \$200 per year for visual art classes or individual art instruction for qualified children between 5 and 18 years of age. Funds can be

used for instruction in painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, collage, crafts such as beading, mosaic, sewing and weaving, or art camps taught by a legitimate instructor. (The committee will not fund music, writing, dance, or drama instruction.) Applicants must show financial need and take instruction from an art provider located in the Michigan City limits. The deadline for applying is 30 days before the instruction begins. Applications are available at the LaPorte County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Marquette Mall, or contact Jane Daley, jane@michigancitylaporte.com

Garden Show at MCHS

"THINK, EAT, LIVE GREEN" is the theme of a garden show planned by the La Porte County Master Gardeners on Saturday, March 19, 2016. Designed as a fun and informative day for the whole family, the Garden Show will be held at Michigan City High School from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. The cost is \$10 per person payable at the door and children under 12 are free. The Garden Show will feature keynote speakers, seminars and demonstrations, a gardening series for children, garden and food vendors plus door prizes and raffles.

Have you visited MCAS's **Community Backpack** lately? Check out these recent postings at <http://educatemc.net/communitybackpack>:

- Teen Court Applications and Training (Feb 22)
- Black History Month Exhibit Info
- "Think, Eat, Live Green" Garden Show (March 19)
- Trail Creek Youth Sports Signups (every Sat. in Feb)
- HealthLinc "Give Kids a Smile Day" free dental care (Feb 15)
- and MORE!