

# MCAS Communicator

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

## January 2014

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

### **Snow Makeup Days**

Happy New Year! As a result of last week's school closings due to severe weather, the end of first semester has been extended a week, through January 24th. (Grades will be due Jan. 29 and report cards will be sent home Jan. 31.) We have also made the following calendar adjustments:

**January 21** - School will be in session!

**June 4** - School will be in session! (This is now the last day for students.)

**June 5** - Teacher work day

Please see yesterday's email from Xavier Botana (and/or see your immediate supervisor) with any questions about how the schedule changes impact you.

### **YOU Can Help a Student**

Hours for Ours is celebrating National Mentoring Month, a campaign held each January to promote youth mentoring. Think of mentors in your life and take a few minutes to thank them. Then consider becoming a mentor yourself. Our students need mentors, and it's an investment worth making! Opportunities are available:

- \* during lunch time or after school
- \* to encourage student success based on educational and career interests
- \* to pass on your love of gardening and outdoors in the Safe Harbor horticulture education program
- \* to use your passion in STEM to be a catalyst for student success

For more information contact Sherri Silcox at [873-2026](tel:873-2026) x 8744 or [ssilcox@mcas.k12.in.us](mailto:ssilcox@mcas.k12.in.us).

### **CPR Training for Teachers**

The next CPR training for teachers in need of license renewal is set for Thursday, February 20th. Please contact Linda Bechinski at [lbechinski@mcas.k12.in.us](mailto:lbechinski@mcas.k12.in.us) **asap** if you are interested in attending. The training will take place at Mullen and will begin promptly at 3:30 p.m.

The fee is \$35 cash (please bring exact change) or check (payable to Opportunity Enterprises).

### **Safe Harbor - Promoting College and Careers**

Safe Harbor's College and Career Program has had a busy winter so far! In December, we were invited to Peters and Markse to check out some of the local manufacturing going on in the community. During the tour, Club Discovery students got a chance to see and feel CNC lathes and other manufacturing equipment in action, while also getting the opportunity to do a Q and A with the technicians. We also headed out to Ancilla College in Plymouth, where our students were given a tour of the campus and Ancilla's state of the art nursing facility. Next up on our agenda is a visit to Saint Joseph's College of Calumet in Whiting.

### **Club Discovery News**

The Middle School Club Discovery Program is providing information sessions for students on Internet Safety and Awareness. The objective of the sessions is to inform and educate students on proper and correct use of social media, why it's important to limit information

shared, and how to recognize and avoid dangerous websites. The sessions are being conducted by Marty Corley of the MCPD and member of the MCAS School Board. The first session took place at Krueger, with additional sessions to be scheduled at Barker and Elston during January.

### **Robotics Team News**

On [January 4th](#) the Michigan City Robotics team #3936 hosted its first kickoff event. During the event, FIRST headquarters in New Hampshire unveiled the 2014 challenge to teams listening in from around the world! Eleven teams (with 130 participants) from across Northwest Indiana gathered at Mullen for this kickoff. They engaged in lively game brainstorming and picked up their kits of parts for this year's challenge: "Aerial Assist," which is a combination of volleyball, passing, and goal scoring. It will prove very challenging! Our 20-member team is scheduled to attend two regional events this year, in Troy, New York, and Chicago. Special thanks go out to Sherri Silcox, Dean Price, Al Walus, and our team and mentors for making it a very successful event!

### **Reminder: Ad Building Hours**

The Admin Building will now be closed for 1/2 hour while our receptionist takes lunch from 11:00 - 11:30 a.m. If you are planning to visit the Ad Building during this time, please be sure you call ahead to make sure someone will be available to buzz you in.

### **Board Members Going Green**

MCAS School Board members are now receiving handouts, school newsletters/newspapers, invitations, and other info electronically through the Board Docs system. Rather than sending printed materials for inclusion in the Board packets, please remember to send this information by email to Tonya Falls at [tfalls@mcas.k12.in.us](mailto:tfalls@mcas.k12.in.us). Thank you!

### **Wanted: "Mock" Interviewers**

The A. K. Smith Center will be hosting a "Future Careers Expo" on Thursday, February 13th - part of its annual Career and Technical Education Month activities. They are seeking business/community members, retired teachers, and others to conduct "mock employment interviews" for students. Volunteers are asked to arrive by 7:30 a.m. and help with the interviews between 8-10 am and 11:20-11:30. Breakfast/lunch are provided. Interested - or know someone who might be able to help? Please contact Terry Hektoen at (219) 873-2120, ext. 8720 or [thektoen@mcas.k12.in.us](mailto:thektoen@mcas.k12.in.us).

### **MC Helping Tornado Victims**

Springfield Elementary student Konstantin Bauer is conducting a fundraiser to help victims of the tornadoes that hit Illinois and Indiana on November 17. He and his family (and classmates!) are selling wristbands that say "MC Schools - Reaching Out - Supporting Tornado Victims" and are donating 100 percent of the proceeds to help victims. If you have a student group or team that would be willing to help Konstantin by selling these wristbands at your building/location, contact Springfield teacher Sheila Sobecki at [ssobecki@mcas.k12.in.us](mailto:ssobecki@mcas.k12.in.us)

### **Dual Credit/AP Workshop**

Did you know that our students can graduate from high school with one year (or more!!) of college credit - at little or NO cost? And did you know that last year, MCHS students earned more dual credits through PNC than any other school in the Duneland conference? The MCHS Parent Network will host an informational meeting for middle/high school parents on the topic of Dual Credit and Advanced Placement on Wednesday, January 22, at 6:00 pm in the high school auditorium. Representatives from MCHS and PNC will be on hand to explain

how the process works. Public, private, and homeschool parents wishing to learn more about this amazing opportunity are invited - please spread the word!

### **WAY TO GO!!!**

Congrats to MCAS Athletic Director **Robert "Bear" Falls**, who has been named District 1 Administrator of the Year by the Indiana Basketball Coaches Association! He will be honored by this group during a special event in April.

Congrats to Krueger Principal **Vera Jones**, who was profiled recently as LaPorteCountyLife.com's "Life that Matters." Click the following link to view this article: <http://www.laportecountylife.com/community/serving/37653-a-la-porte-county-life-that-matters-vera-jones>

### **SCHOOL and COMMUNITY NEWS**

There's a lot NEW on "**Community Backpack**" -

visit <http://mcas.schoolwires.net/domain/49> for details on all of these:

- \* **Affordable Care Act** - Help from MDWise and Covering Kids and Families for those who wish to enroll for healthcare by March 31st
- \* **Art Class Scholarships** for students ages 5-18 - Students in need can receive up to \$200 for group/private art instruction!
- \* **Martin Luther King Jr. Day FREE Activities for Kids** - PNC education students will host activities at the MC library on 1/20 from 10:30-12
- \* **Young Champions Cheerleading** - signups by Jan. 30th
- \* **Michigan City Children's Choir** - begins this week! Email Sunny G-O for more info at [sunnyjogardner@yahoo.com](mailto:sunnyjogardner@yahoo.com), or call 219-561-3264
- \* **Tennis Academies** at Northwest Athletic Club
- \* **LaPorte County Parks** Winter Programs

### **Flying Wild Educator Workshop at Indiana Dunes**

On Saturday, [January 25](#), area educators are invited to "fly wild" at the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. From 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. teachers, pre-service teachers, naturalists, birders, scout leaders, and others are invited to meet at the Paul Douglas Center in Miller, Indiana, to learn how they can bring students, other teachers, and their communities together to advance bird conservation. "Flying WILD" introduces elementary and middle school students to bird conservation through standards-based classroom activities and environmental stewardship projects. A \$35 fee includes lunch, materials and a copy of the Flying WILD activity guide, which provides activities that teach about birds, their migration, and actions people can take to help birds and their habitats. Pre-registration is required and space is limited. For more information or to register, visit <http://www.duneslearningcenter.org/educators-adults/> or call (219) [395-9555](tel:395-9555) by Friday, [January 17](#).

**Liberty Tax Service** (5180 Franklin St) will be holding an Appreciation Week for all MCAS employees, Feb 24- March 1. Any new customer can have their taxes done for free. For information, call (219) 872-1040.

**Trine University's** School of Professional Studies offers online, self-paced continuing education courses for teachers.

For information visit: <http://www.virtualeduc.com/e-announcements/trine.htm>