

# MCAS Communicator

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

## February 2012

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

### **Section 125**

"Section 125" enrollment is now going on, for flex spending and other pre-tax deductions. Every MCAS employee is required to meet with the American Fidelity representative, whether or not you decide to participate. Please check with your building secretary to sign up for an appointment. If you missed the American Fidelity rep at your building, please call Jenny Clouse (ext 8347) to schedule your appointment at another building sometime this month.

### **Legislative Breakfast Saturday**

The Dunes Shore District Council of the Indiana State Teachers Assn. invites all MCAS staff to a legislative breakfast **this Saturday, February 4**, at 9:00 a.m. at MCHS. A legislative briefing will be provided by Nancy Papas, ISTA Public Education Advocacy Coordinator. Topics to be addressed include property tax caps and school funding, charter school funding, and other topics concerning the Indiana Dept. of Education. Following the briefing, there will be a discussion forum for legislators of Northwest Indiana, interested citizens, parent organization reps, teachers, education support professionals and school officials. Continental breakfast will be served. RSVPs are appreciated but not mandatory; email Viola Peels (vpeels@ista-in.org) to RSVP or ask any questions.

### **Career & Tech Celebration at Marquette Mall**

February is Career and Technical Education month! Be sure to stop by Marquette Mall **this Saturday (Feb 4th)** between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to visit with A. K. Smith students and staff at CTE Month exhibits. At 1:00, Mayor Meer will be on hand for a special presentation, and several outstanding LaPorte County CTE students will be honored.

### **Email, Please**

Do you know an MCAS employee who does not have an MCAS email account? Please let him/her know that ALL employees are encouraged to have an account and check email regularly. Contact Cindee Bethay (ext. 8347) or stop by to see her at for the forms necessary to set up an account.

### **EducateMC.net**

MCAS has a new web site! The new site can still be accessed at the "old" URL (www.mcas.k12.in.us) AND ALSO at our brand new URL - **EducateMC.net**. Each school page has a new address, too... EducateMC.net/coolspring, EducateMC.net/MCHS, EducateMC.net/marsh - etc. Some areas of our new site are "under construction"...contact your principal for dates/times of upcoming training sessions for teachers and other staff maintaining pages. Technology staff is also available to help individuals one-on-one each Thursday at the A. K. Smith Center 2nd floor computer lab, from 2:30-4:30 p.m.

### **Wellness Screenings Next Month**

Wellness Screenings for staff will take place from 6-9am on Tues, **March 20th** in the MCHS Library and Thurs, **March 22nd** in the Elston Middle School Library. This year, you may sign up either online or by using a paper form available at your building. (If you sign up using the paper form, remember to bring your completed form to the screening.) A poster outlining testing information and costs, along with the sign up sheets and registration forms, will be coming soon to all buildings!

### **MCAS Logo Wear Still Available**

Polo shirts (both cotton and poly "performance" style) and lightweight fleece jackets are available, featuring the new MCAS logo. Visit the link below for a flyer featuring three of our very own MCAS models! Contact Dorothy Harris at the Ad Building with any questions regarding your order at ext. 8311.

[http://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85/Logowear\\_Combined.pdf](http://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85/Logowear_Combined.pdf)

### **Relay for Life Returning to MCHS**

Michigan City High School will be hosting Relay For Life of La Porte County once again this year. This was a huge success last year and organizers hope to see more people out there this year. The Relay For Life Event will be held **Saturday, June 23rd- Sunday, June 24th, 2012**. Relay For Life is one of the American Cancer Society's largest fund-raising events and the money that is raised is used to support various ACS research and services in the area. The next team captain meeting will be held on **Monday, February 13th, 2012** at 7:00pm at Purdue North Central. (All team captain/participant planning meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00pm at PNC.) To get involved or for more information regarding Relay, contact Kim Olesker at [1-574-257-9789](tel:1-574-257-9789) option 3 or email [kim.olesker@cancer.org](mailto:kim.olesker@cancer.org). Cancer survivors can register at the website [www.relayforlife.org/laportecountyin](http://www.relayforlife.org/laportecountyin) to participate in all the Relay activities.

### **Sponsor Chrissy**

Chrissy Duncan, Knapp Safe Harbor and Hours for Ours Site Coordinator, will be undertaking a huge feat in August as she walks 60 miles in 3 days for the Susan G. Komen Chicago 3-Day event. But she needs your help! Each walker must raise a minimum of \$2,300. Every two minutes, a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer in the U.S.; chances are, *you* know a woman who has been affected by it. Chrissy is walking in honor of her grandmother, a 16 year survivor, and several Safe Harbor staff members who are also survivors. For every \$25 donated, Chrissy will walk in honor, in memory, or in support of whomever the donor chooses by placing those names on the back of her team race shirts (please note this in the "notes" section while doing an online donation or attach a note if donating by check). You can donate online by visiting [www.the3day.org/goto/chrissyduncan](http://www.the3day.org/goto/chrissyduncan) or by making a check out to "Susan G. Komen 3-Day" and mailing it to Chrissy Duncan at Knapp Elementary. Chrissy thanks you in advance for your support!

### **Mentoring Celebration**

Hours for Ours and Safe Harbor would like to thank everyone who attended the celebration of National Mentoring Month at McDonalds last month! During the event, a number of community mentors were on WIMS radio and talked about the benefits of mentoring, and the Lubeznik Center and Safe Harbor staff worked with students on hands-on projects (including valentines for Ronald McDonald houses in Indianapolis and Chicago). The 2012 Champions for Kids fundraising program kicked off at this event; this program benefits both Safe Harbor and Hours for Hours.

Special thanks to new "Champions" sponsors at the gold, silver and bronze levels: Horizon Bank, LaPorte Savings Bank, Dr. John Avila, Marquiss Electric, and John and Jeanne Wolsiefer. So far, the "give back" from McDonalds and Champions sponsorships have raised \$1,915. Thank You to all for supporting our programs! If you would like to join the Champions Campaign, please call Herb Higgin or Sherri Silcox at [873-2026](tel:873-2026), ext. 8740 or 8744. And please remember to thank a mentor when you get a chance!

### **WAY to GO!**

- Congrats to Elston seventh grade teacher **Laura Daly**, who was recently awarded an \$8,000 Lowe's "Toolbox for Education" grant. She will be using the funds to transform her reading classroom into a quiet, cozy, and "cool" place for reading and learning, with bean bag seating, carpeting etc. Way to go!
- **Krueger Middle School** has been named the Conservation School of the Year by the Laporte Co. Soil and Water Conservation District! Each year, the SWCD honors a teacher who demonstrates a commitment to the conservation of our natural resources by focusing on conservation in the classroom. This year, SWCD decided it was so difficult to choose just one person at Krueger that they decided to honor the whole building for its commitment! Krueger will be recognized February 11 at a SWCD luncheon, where the honor will officially be announced. Way to go!

### **Community Announcements**

- **First Trust Credit Union** invites you to change a life by simply rolling up your sleeve on Valentines Day! Every day, hospital patients need blood products to help them beat serious diseases like cancer, and to survive life threatening injuries related to accidents or trauma. (Note: The local supply of blood type O negative has dropped to critically low levels.) First Trust is currently taking appointments for their on-site **Red Cross blood drive on Tuesday February 14**, from Noon to 5:00 p.m., at their Michigan City office at 950 E. U.S. Highway 20. Please call Laurie at (219) 877-2290 to schedule your appointment.
- **Members Advantage Credit Union** is offering two **scholarships** in 2012 for graduating high school seniors, or college freshman & sophomores enrolled in a college, university, or trade school. The first scholarship was created in memory of former board member Gail Walker. The second scholarship is given in honor of Leona Bruno, the first manager of Members Advantage Credit Union. Candidates must demonstrate scholastic achievement, personal integrity & community involvement. For more information and to download the applications, visit [macuonline.org](http://macuonline.org). Applications are also available at the Michigan City & Portage locations. Applications must be received/postmarked by March 31, 2012.