

# MCAS Communicator

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

## September 2012

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

### **Welcome Back!**

It has been a GREAT start to the school year. Special thanks to our Transportation Dept. which did an outstanding job of keeping us on time and on track! Overall, student enrollment looks to be about even with last year; we will know more when we have the official "ADM Count" in mid-September. Dress for Success has also been a success -- districtwide, only 20 students arrived day one that were not wearing "dress for success" clothing. Special thanks to ALL who have worked hard to make this happen. Let's "Go for the Gold" this year!

### **Team MCAS Polos**

Navy blue "Team MCAS" polo shirts are still available for MCAS staff. Cost is \$12.50 (\$14.50 for 2XL and above) and shirts come in both men's and women's sizes. Please place your order directly with Reprographic Arts, which is located at 1017 Franklin Street. You can email individual or group orders to Kevin Brown at [kbrown@reprographicarts.com](mailto:kbrown@reprographicarts.com) or call 872-9128. Cash, credit cards, and checks are all accepted. (Note: Orders placed at the first-day meeting for teachers/instructional support staff at MCHS are still being processed by Dorothy Harris at the ad building - thanks for tracking all those initial orders, Dot!)

### **Embroidered Logowear**

Team MCAS polos aren't the only logowear available. Polo shirts (both cotton and poly "performance" style) and lightweight fleece jackets are available from St. Andrews Products and feature the MCAS logo. Visit the following link for a flyer featuring three of our very own MCAS models!  
[http://educatemc.net/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85/Logowear\\_Combined.pdf](http://educatemc.net/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85/Logowear_Combined.pdf)

### **Important Reminder from Payroll**

Please remember to log in to your employee access account at least once a month to keep your login/password active. (If you don't check your account regularly, you will be locked out and your password will have to be reset.) If you need help with your username or password, please call the payroll office at ext. 8348 or 8350.

### **Tech Hotline**

Need Technology help? Call Sue Purtha at the Tech Help Desk, ext. 8359. Help is available from 7:30-3:30 daily. Sue can reset RDS and PC passwords, and she can give support for most software applications. She can also create support tickets for anyone who can't be helped via phone.

### **Tech Tip #1: Bookmark Zimbra**

Want the quickest route to access your email each day?  
Bookmark <https://zimbra.mcas.k12.in.us/zimbra/> (This is also very handy in the event our web site is ever down, so you can still access email.)

### **Tech Tip #2: Access Your Voicemail from Anywhere**

Did you know you can check your voicemail, change your greeting, etc. from home -- or anywhere else? Here are the easy steps:

1. Call the main number for your building or the main MCAS number (219) 873-2000 and when the voice picks up, press \*
2. enter your extension and then #
3. enter your password and then #

You'll be in your voicemail!

### **Calendar Info**

A calendar for the 2012-13 school year is online. Printed copies are also available at schools. Visit the following link to view it:

<http://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/75/MCAS2012-13%20Calendar.pdf>

Note: Calendars for each school and for the district, with many more specific events, can be viewed on our web site by clicking the calendar icon. (The Athletic calendar can be viewed below the main calendar on the MCAS and MCHS home pages or by clicking on Athletics.)

### **Smooth Jazz Concert to Benefit MCAS**

Tickets are now on sale for the **October 13<sup>th</sup>** "Music in the City" Smooth Jazz concert at Blue Chip, featuring Billboard Top 10 jazz vocalist and saxophonist Mindi Abair and guitarist Bryan Lubeck. Proceeds will support our "Dress for Success" program and will assist in providing musical instruments and equipment for our schools. Please visit our web site at [EducateMC.net](http://EducateMC.net) for more information, or contact Ticketmaster at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com) or 800-745-3000 to purchase tickets. Spread the word!

### **Seeking Positive News**

There's a new web site in town... be sure to check out <http://www.laportecountyliife.com/> if you have not already done so. They are seeking positive news about schools/students. If you have something for this site, email it to Betsy Kohn at [bkohn@mcas.k12.in.us](mailto:bkohn@mcas.k12.in.us) and she'll make sure it gets to them (and potentially other places, too!) They do not insist on ready-to-publish articles; they will polish up drafts/bullet items for you. They also would like photos -- but please make sure any students pictured have media permission. (This is on the blue enrollment form families complete each year for registration.)

### **Flu Shots**

Flu shots are available for all MCAS staff and their family members on **Tuesday**, Sept. 18 in the Staff Lounge at MCHS. Cost is \$21 (cash or check, payable to Working Well.) Sign up sheets have been posted in mailrooms/are available from your building receptionist. Questions? Contact Linda Bechinski at [lbechinski@mcas.k12.in.us](mailto:lbechinski@mcas.k12.in.us).

### **Safety First**

Do you know what to do if you are injured at work? For emergencies, call 911 ... or go to Franciscan St. Anthony Health. For non-emergencies, report the injury to your supervisor and school nurse, and seek treatment from Franciscan Working Well. Working Well is located at 4111 S. Franklin Street, Michigan City; (219) 879-5400. Hours are **Mon-Fri**, 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Please note that Working Well is MCAS' designated job-related occupational health provider. MCAS will not authorize payment of medical treatment claims for work-related injuries from your personal physician.

### **Crisis Procedures Guides**

A revised Crisis Procedures Guidebook is now being printed, and will be distributed to all employees later this month. A companion "quick-reference" card will be posted in each room, outlining basic procedures for Lockdown, Evacuation, and Shelter in Place. Special thanks to our District Crisis Team, which includes representatives from area law enforcement, fire and other agencies, for their work on this new edition. It will replace the "flip charts" currently in use at our buildings.

### **Athletic Dept. News**

The MCAS Athletic Dept. would like to thank Tim Bumber, who retired this year as Girls Cross Country Coach after 17 years of service to the team! And a special welcome to new MCHS Head Coaches:

Ashley Kohler - Volleyball

Tom McGrath - Girls Cross Country

Jason Lenig - Girls Golf

Lucas Snyder - Boys Wrestling and Boys Track

A reminder that Homecoming will take place on Oct. 5th, when the Wolves take on the LaPorte Slicers.

GO WOLVES!

### **Thanks for Your Support**

Edgewood Literacy Coach Lisa Bailey sends a big "thank you" to the many MCAS staff members who supported her and her children this summer as they coped with a family tragedy. Thanks to all...from a grateful Lisa!

### **Win the MUSTANG!**

Tickets are now on sale for the 1968 Mustang restored by students and staff at A. K. Smith, in partnership with Sullair. The car is being raffled as a benefit for the United Way, and the winning ticket will be drawn on **November 9th** at Blue Chip. Tickets are \$10 each, \$25 for three, and are available by visiting the United Way web site at: <http://www.unitedwaylpc.org/1968-mustang-raffle.html>. Tickets are also available from Audra Peterson at A. K. Smith. For much more info about this project (you MUST see the before and after pics!) visit the Laporte County CTE web site at <http://educatemc.net/careertech>. Special thanks to Auto Tech teacher Ken Patterson and Welding teacher Kim Rosenbaum for all their work on this project.

***Stay tuned for more info about the MCAS United Way Campaign, which will begin soon!***

### **Mentors Wanted**

Hours for Ours is a school-based mentoring program partnering MCAS students with the Michigan City adult community. H4O operates in seven elementary schools: Edgewood, Knapp, Lake Hills, Marsh, Joy, Pine, Niemann; all three middle schools: Barker, Elston, Krueger; and Michigan City High School. Mentors meet with their mentee at lunch time on designated days, or tie in with Safe Harbor and meet after school. The program provides positive, stable, voluntary inter-generational relationships within the school setting to maximize student achievement, increase class attendance and promote constructive social behavior. For more information, or to apply to be a mentor to our students, contact Sherri Silcox at [873-2026](tel:873-2026) x 8744.

### **Safe Harbor Information**

It's never too late for students to join Safe Harbor! Here is information about programs currently offered...

\* **Safe Harbor** (elementary level): Applications are available from the site coordinator at each site, on the MCAS web site at <http://www.educatemc.net//Domain/62> or by calling 873-2026. **September and December are free!!** If students bring a friend who attends 30 days or more, they get half off another month. Regular fees are \$20 per month, for services **Monday** through **Friday** from the time the bell rings after school until 6:00. Safe Harbor is an exceptional value, offering homework help, academic enrichment, the myON digital on-line reading program, SPARK recreation, and a variety of enrichment opportunities.

\* **Club Discovery** is the middle school after school program at each middle school. The programs run **Monday** through **Wednesday** from after school until 5:30. There is a \$5 registration fee. Each program offers homework help, academic enrichment, and miscellaneous enrichment programs specific to the focus of the school. They offer transportation home through the MCAS transportation department.

\* **Cafe Read-a-Latte** is the high school after school program. It takes place in the cafeteria from immediately after school until 5:30 **Monday** through **Thursday**. There is a \$5 registration fee. The program offers homework help, tutoring, credit recovery, academic enrichment and a variety of other enrichment opportunities, including robotics, Tech Club, Book Club, and Goals for Graduation. Transportation home is provided.

### **Michigan City Robotics News**

Safe Harbor's Robotics program is going for the gold! Info on what they offer:

\* **FIRST Robotics** promotes science and technology careers to **today's** high school students. FIRST also promotes Gracious Professionalism, which teaches students to learn and compete like crazy, but treat one another with respect and kindness in the process. **The Michigan City Robotics Team 3936**, the high school FIRST robotics FRC team, meets from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm on Thursdays at Mullen for the fall semester. Any high school student or potential mentor is welcome to visit or join the team.

\* This year, **two FIRST Lego League teams** have been established, one for middle school and one for elementary school. The middle school team will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm and the elementary school team will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm. Both teams will meet at Mullen.

\* Safe Harbor will also be offering an 8 to 10 week instructional underwater robotics program called **SeaPerch** at Michigan City High School through Cafe Read-a-Latte. Students will use science, technology, engineering and math skills, and have fun, as they build a ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle). Throughout the project they will learn teamwork, problem solving, and technical applications. SeaPerch is sponsored by the Office of Naval Research.

***For information about any Safe Harbor robotics team, contact Herb Higgin at 873-2026 x 8740.***

### **WAY TO GO**

- Congrats to **Michigan City High School**, which was awarded an Innovative School Improvement Grant by the IDOE. Our high school is one of only nine schools in the state to receive this funding. The \$298,000 grant will assist MCHS in a re-alignment of math/Algebra curricula from middle to high school, will aid in a more systematic use of Dept. Chairs as teacher leaders/mentors, and will provide supports to freshmen who are struggling.

- Congrats to the MCHS **MCJROTC** program, which was named a Naval Honor School. Only 20 percent of 238 schools nationwide earn this award!
- Congrats to **Lake Hills**, which has been included in a "best practices" database by the American School Board Journal. Lake Hills' STEM magnet program was one of 81 highly-scored programs selected for inclusion in the Best Practices Database this year, from among hundreds of applications reviewed by the National School Boards Association as part of its annual Magna Awards program.

## **COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **On Your Mark, Get Set...**

MCAS Occupational Therapist Asst. Chris Kiser and her husband are coordinating a 5K Run/Walk for 11-year-old Prestin Butcher, a child who is battling brain cancer. The race is on [September 22](#) at 8:00 in Washington Park. For more information contact Chris at Joy, ext. 6308. Or visit the following link for a registration form: <http://www.mcas.k12.in.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=76>  
And for more info: <https://www.facebook.com/RunninForPrestin>

### **Recycle Bowl Time**

Registration is now open for Keep America Beautiful's Recycle-Bowl event. It debuted last year, and is held in October and November. Individual schools from across the country compete against each other to see who can collect the most recyclable items per student. Last year, Elston Middle School came in second place in the state of Indiana! The state school winner (in Kokomo) won \$1,000, and the national winner nets an additional \$2,500. Interested? Visit <http://recycle-bowl.org/> for more info -- and contact Alicia Ebaugh at the LaPorte County Solid Waste District, (219) 326-0014, or email her at [aebaugh@solidwastedistrict.com](mailto:aebaugh@solidwastedistrict.com).

### **Field Trip Grants**

The Target Field Trip Grants program provides funds for K-12 field trips; over 5,000 grants of up to \$700 each will be awarded. Eligible trips include art, science and cultural museum visits; community service and civic projects; career enrichment opportunities; and other events/activities. Funds may be used from [January 2013](#) through the end of the school year, to cover transportation, ticket fees, food, resource materials and supplies. Online applications must be submitted by [October 1](#). Visit the following site to learn more: <https://targetfieldtripgrants.target.com/>

### **Art Scholarships Still Available**

The Michigan City Public Art Committee still has scholarship funds available for Michigan City students in need, ages 5-18. Funds cover the costs of visual art classes or individual art instruction, up to \$200. Please share this information with any students you feel may be interested! For details and an application form visit: <http://www.mcas.k12.in.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=76>

### **Great Lakes Workshop**

The Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant Program and the Center for Great Lakes Literacy invites teachers to apply for a workshop and field experience on Great Lakes Literacy, facilitated by educators and scientists from the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant Program, Shedd Aquarium, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, and Alliance for the Great Lakes. This opportunity includes curriculum ideas, a stipend to develop a classroom community stewardship project, and much more. Deadline for applications

is [October 10](#); the workshop is [Nov 9](#) and [10](#). For more info: [http://iiseagrant.org/education/Inspire\\_Great\\_Lakes\\_Stewardship.pdf](http://iiseagrant.org/education/Inspire_Great_Lakes_Stewardship.pdf)

### **Quit Now Contest**

Thinking of quitting smoking? NOW is the time! Smokers who quit...and stay tobacco-free for the entire month of October...can qualify to win up to \$2,500! For details visit <http://www.quitnowindiana.com/> or call [1-800-784-8669](tel:1-800-784-8669).

### **5K Charity Walk**

The Minority Health Coalition of LaPorte County is sponsoring its 6th Annual 5K Charity Walk on Saturday, [October 6](#). Registration is at 8:45 a.m. and the Walk begins at 9:30 a.m. at HealthLinc, 710 Franklin. Cost is \$25 for adults, \$15 for students (12-17), children 11 and under free. Proceeds from the walk provide help to women who are in need of mammograms and other cancer screenings. For more info call Albertine Allen, [\(219\) 879-1712](tel:219-879-1712) or email [mhclc1940@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mhclc1940@sbcglobal.net).

### **Writing Out Loud**

The Michigan City Public Library will host discussions with two authors in September, part of its 28th annual Writing Out Loud series.

**September 15, 7:30pm** - Hugh Brewster, author of *Gilded Lives*, *Fatal Voyage* (a book about the Titanic) and the children's books *Anastasia's Album: The Last Tsar's Youngest Daughter Tells Her Own Story* and *Inside the Titanic*.

**September 29, 7:30pm** - Professor Paul Green, author of several books and articles on Illinois and Chicago politics, political analyst for WGN Radio, and Chairman of the Dept. of Political Science and Public Administration, Roosevelt University.