

DOUGLAS DIGEST

office: 978.266.2560
principal: Dr. Christopher Whitbeck
school: <http://douglas.ab.mec.edu>
PTO: <http://www.DouglasSchoolPTO.org>

June 5, 2013

Douglas Digest

Editor:

Lori Fassman

Publisher:

Sharon Metzger

Distributors:

Jill Maxwell

Michele Walsh

The Douglas School PTO publishes the Digest every six weeks during the school year. **Next issue: September—have a great summer!**

We welcome article ideas and feedback. Please email Lori at lori@fassman.com.

- ◆ Get involved—sign up now to coordinate a Douglas program or event. We need to line up the following coordinators for the 2013–2014 school year. Please contact Eileen Matarese (mrsematta@verizon.net) for more information or to sign up.
 - ◆ Veterans Day Coordinators (2–3 people; previous chairs are willing and able to train)
 - ◆ School Store Team (3 open positions for fourth grade parents)
 - ◆ Post Office (2 open positions for third grade parents)
- ◆ Celebrate summer with your Douglas friends! Tuesday, June 25, is Douglas Day at Canobie Lake Park in Salem, NH. We have secured a group rate of \$25 (almost \$10 off per ticket). Just go to the GROUP ticket booth and give the group name “Douglas School” to purchase your ticket. Please RSVP by June 19 if you plan to go; email **Rachel Meehan** (rmeehan44@yahoo.com). (You don’t need to pre-purchase tickets, but we want to get a head count.) Thanks, Rachel, for coordinating!
- ◆ We look forward to seeing many of you at Douglas School night at the Lowell Spinners game, Saturday, June 22, 7:05 PM. Thank you to **Mary Lavene** for coordinating!
- ◆ Mark your calendar! On Friday, August 16, your child’s class placement will be available online after 3 PM at <https://absis.ab.mec.edu>. After you complete the emergency forms and PTO survey, class placement should appear.

Finally, a heartfelt thanks to every member of our community who has generously contributed time, effort, and support. We couldn’t have gotten through the year without you! Please enjoy a relaxing and safe summer!

PTO Co-Chairs 2012–2013

Martha Papalia and Eileen Matarese

From the PTO

Although this school year continues to stretch out as we make up those snow days, it really is time to start wrapping up the year! Until we meet again, there are several dates and events to add to your calendars. Please check our Summertime reminders on page 3 as well as the Dates to Remember section on page 4.

Here are some final events and activities of the school year.

What I’ve Learned

Each day we probably ask our children, “How was school?” Sometimes I ask, “What did you learn today?” My hope is that each child has something new to share. I often start the day by shouting to the students waiting in the lobby, “Go learn something!” I know that they don’t always share with you, but I’m pretty sure that they do learn something new most days.

Each June I ask the same of myself. What have I learned? Month to month I jot notes. Some become Digest articles, and there I have a collection of things that I’ve learned. However, some lingering thoughts remain. These are things that continue to provoke me, make me think more deeply each time I read them. I haven’t yet turned them into complete articles, but they still represent what I’ve learned. My list reads as follows:

The perfect is the enemy of the good. I am definitely on the side of the resistance! I am reminded of the child who graduated Douglas and his mom asked him, “What do you want to get out of junior high?” He answered, to her dismay, “Mom, I’m hoping to just be average.”

There are many ways of telling the truth. My son asked me, “Dad, what do you do when you’re not doing paperwork or sitting in a meeting?” After exhausting a list of tasks, we summarized my job as, “Listening to people.” When you listen to as many people as I do, you have many opportunities to share the truth—it’s often better to just listen.

Letting go and giving up are not the same thing. JK Rowling was rejected by twelve publishers before hitting it big with Harry Potter, Walt Disney’s first animation company went bankrupt, the Wright brothers had almost 1000 failures before successful flights. Letting go of failures and learning from them is very different than giving up. The same is true of raising children—let go of some things, but never give up on them.

Don’t believe everything you think. We seek to confirm what we believe and surround ourselves with like-minded people. Imagine inviting others to poke holes in your beliefs in an attempt to clarify them.

Learn to speak five languages! First, the language of your own people and culture and history. Second, the international language of your time—English. Third, the language of love and romance—often non-verbal. Fourth, the world language of the human race—music. And, fifth, the language of the cosmos—which has no words. The latter is a language composed of the unspeakable feelings of amazement and wonder we feel at being part of an infinitely astonishing universe. One must stop and be still to know it. It is the language of awed silence. It is the perfect language of summer! Take time to practice.

C. Whitbeck

Thank You...Merci...Gracias! ಧನ್ಯವಾದಗಳು 谢谢

As PTO Co-Chairs, we join the kindergarten tours and explain to parents what we mean at Douglas when we say "PTO." They might expect us to talk about fundraising efforts—and of course we do—but, more importantly, we urge them to imagine our PTO like a bridge. It connects families to school, parents to students, and adults with staff, teachers, and peers. It even carries the possibility of bridging new friendships. What would Douglas be without the PTO? Our calendars might be less busy, but our experiences—and our children's experiences—would be less rich.

Did you know that our PTO represents upwards of 80 committees, chairs, and co-chairs, and thousands of volunteer hours? So many things that make Douglas, Douglas—from the Ice Cream Social to Nature Walks, Book Fair, Cultural Events, Talent Shows, and Douglas Day—couldn't happen without parents. If we had enough space here, we would thank each person for his or her enthusiasm, time, effort, and unique contributions to the exceptional 2012–2013 school year. As we don't, we'll just have to humbly say, "thanks for crossing the bridge together." (Check the PTO website for longer thank-yous!) We hope your time and effort was as rewarding to you as it was to Douglas School.

For their work during the past month, we want to thank:

- ◆ **Peter Broggi** for leading our Memorial Day celebration. Our guest speaker **James Derby** (US Air Force WWII veteran), our student presenters, and the 5th and 6th grade band helped make the ceremony a moving reminder of why we celebrate this holiday.
- ◆ **Stephanie Margolien, Sue Cudmore, and Kathy McCullen** for organizing a wonderful all-school event featuring Poetry-in-Motion with David Zucker. Thanks also for the "pre-Douglas Day" spectacular all-school performance, "Bubbleology."
- ◆ **Jill Buonomo and Amy Krishnamurthy** for organizing Douglas Day. Douglas Day is always a memorable day for students to enjoy fun competitions with their classmates, and for parents to enjoy watching, participating, and picnicking with their kids. And to **Brian Cotter** for transporting our Dunk Tank (a true highlight of the event!) back and forth to Leominster.
- ◆ **Sheryl Fox**, for managing the Scrip program this year, including the final successful run last month, and to the parents who participated in the program. Each year, this program raises nearly \$1000 for Douglas School.
- ◆ **Candace Doncaster and Bridget Steinkrauss** for organizing the Staff Appreciation Luncheon, coming up June 12 and catered by Visnja Zarak and Donna German of Hostess Catering. Thanks also to all of the parents who volunteer that day, and to **Mira Greenland** and the Baking Committee for providing desserts. This luncheon enables Douglas parents to show how much we appreciate our teachers and staff!
- ◆ **Tamara Ricciardone**, for her 8th and final year managing the popular School Supplies ordering program, the unique PTO service (not a fundraiser) for parents that "magically" makes needed supplies ready and waiting for our students when they start school.
- ◆ **Diane O'Hara and Maria Parodos** for coordinating the Donelan's receipts program and **Linda Gower** for coordinating the Box Tops and Campbell's Labels programs, and to all the Douglas parents who thoughtfully collected and turned in these items for the school. Box Tops made more than \$1050 for the school this year.
- ◆ **Ellen Hurley** for managing the Safe Arrival program for 10 years and to the dozens of volunteers who come in daily to track the safety of our children. We thank you!

- ◆ **Sharon Metzger** for your eagle eyes, editorial excellence, and amazing commitment to all things Douglas including the website, Digest, and Directory.
- ◆ **Lori Fassman** for being a pillar of technological wizardry! Managing our Volunteer Survey, CORIs, website, Directory data and orders, Auction website, and Safe Arrival online.

Thanks to School Staff and PTO Board

There aren't enough ways to express our gratitude to Douglas's dedicated staff for always going above and beyond the call of duty. Thank you to **Dr. Chris Whitbeck** for his open-minded approach, wit, and wisdom; we look forward to another wonderful year together. Thank you to **Sharon Armistead, Sharen Crooks, and Laurie Maylander**—the humble and ever-helpful backbone of our school.

Thank you to all of the Douglas teachers, assistants, specialists, SPED teachers, and staff for your support of the PTO including creating highly-sought-after classroom auction items and participating in so many of our wonderful cultural events. Thanks also to **Kathy Clifford** and the kitchen staff for providing hot food to the hungry kids of Douglas all year long, to **Aaron Foley** and crew for keeping our school in running order, to our nurses **Diann Oster** and **Tory Reiersen** for being there when our kids don't feel well, and to **Sasha DeMello** and **Sue Stewart** for creating opportunities for our children to expand their reading abilities.

Special thanks to the PTO Board, for the many hours of time they spent helping the PTO this year, and for all of their support and wisdom. As we transition from this year to next, we would like to thank several departing board members in particular, including:

- ◆ **Cheryl Witty**, former PTO Co-chair, Ice Cream Social Cake Room Extraordinaire, PTO Hospitality Chair, and graduating Douglas parent—thank you for 14 years of service!
- ◆ **Cassie Stewart**, former PTO Co-chair, Interschool Council Rep and Alumni Reception Coordinator
- ◆ **Kristan Smith-Park**, former PTO Co-chair and Technology Secretary
- ◆ **Stephanie Margolien and Sue Cudmore**, our devoted Cultural Enrichment Chairs
- ◆ **Amy Austin**, our tireless Snack Cart co-chair
- ◆ **Stacey Smith**, our active Playground chair

And finally, a personal note from Eileen: Alas, my final and heartfelt thanks goes to **Martha Papalia** for her fearless leadership and forward-thinking style. Her positive attitude and determination have constantly inspired me throughout the year. Though her shoes will be hard to fill, I'm committed to keeping her vision and eternal optimism alive! I'd also like to welcome the incoming Junior Co-chair **Karen Jarsky**, who brings an abundance of experience with her background in higher education and motivational ideas to our PTO for next year. Thank you, Martha, for being such a great mentor this year, and welcome Karen, I look forward to working with you!

Eileen Matarese, Martha Papalia, and Karen Jarsky

Chris Borgman Memorial

On June 20, 1–2 PM, Douglas School will have a memorial service celebrating the life of our late teacher, friend, and creator of Work and Play, Chris Borgman. Please join us on the primary playground as we dedicate our new grove, benches, and playground structure in memory of Chris.

Summertime!

Summer vacation is just around the corner, but here are some things you can be doing or thinking about during the summer to get ready for the next school year. (Most of the links are not open yet, but will be highlighted on the PTO website.)

- ◆ Moving within Acton? New email address or cell number? Update emergency contact info in PowerSchool (<https://absis.ab.mec.edu/>). Contact Sharon Armistead (sarmistead@abschools.org) for help with your username and password.
- ◆ Complete the online Volunteer Survey when it is open in mid-August (the link will be available via email and via PowerSchool as well as the PTO site).
- ◆ Order your copy of the 2013–2014 Douglas Directory, our handy phone book containing contact info for the Douglas community, a calendar of school and PTO events, a list of sixth graders willing to babysit, and more.
- ◆ Place an ad in the Douglas Directory telling the community about your Douglas family-run business. Spread the word to other area businesses.
- ◆ Check the PTO website for the “Back to School Checklist” that will help you keep track of “parent homework” at the start of the school year.

Keep in touch: If you aren't receiving weekly email announcements from the PTO, join the list (or update your email address) by sending email to technology.secretary@DouglasSchoolPTO.org. These emails are a great way to keep up with what's going on at school all year long. They include reminders of when report cards are available, when school picture day is scheduled, which current activities need volunteers, and much more.

You can also join our Facebook page, which is a neat way to hear stories and see photos of what's going on at Douglas.

Have a wonderful summer vacation!



The PTO Pays it Forward

Douglas parents all have one thing in common: we are devoted to our school, to the staff, and to our children's educational experience. Year after year, by committing our valuable time and expertise, our generous contributions to the Annual Giving Campaign and assorted grade level fundraisers, and by working together as a community, we enhance the building's appearance and equipment, and pay for valuable educational resources. Thank you to Douglas parents for yet another banner year of giving. Below are some results of what you have contributed, and can expect to notice during the next school year.

In and around the building:

- ◆ A new video monitor for the lobby that will help staff and students embrace the regional commitment to digital learning
- ◆ Colored spotlights for the stage to add drama and mood to Douglas performances
- ◆ A world map mural located on the big kids' playground (thanks to Artist in Residence: Catherine Christensen)
- ◆ Playground supplies (balls, jump ropes, etc.) replenished twice each year
- ◆ A circle garden bench in memory of our beloved Paula Seaburg

In the classroom:

- ◆ An amazing range of cultural enrichment performances throughout the year
- ◆ A significant contribution toward funding classroom assistants and library and computer lab staff, as well as continuing to fund our writing specialist
- ◆ Funding for Scholastic magazines for each class, so parents pay less
- ◆ Staples or CVS cards for each teacher, specialist, and nurse at the beginning of the year, toward their supply needs
- ◆ A year's worth of hygiene supplies including anti-bacterial soap, wipes, and tissues for each classroom
- ◆ Significant funding for classroom field trips to offset parent spending (*new!*)
- ◆ Scholastic books for each age and grade level, courtesy of this year's successful Book Fair
- ◆ Funding for the expenses of the 6th grade plays
- ◆ Funding for the 6th grade graduation reception
- ◆ Full funding for the 6th grade yearbook (*new!*)

From the Donelan's receipts program (average market value in parentheses):

Apple iPad (\$815), digital camera (\$150), Latin percussion box (\$145), playground balls (\$45), Frisbee Golf set (\$25), and other classroom supplies (\$33)

Social programming contributions include:

Festival of Cultures, Douglas Day, Teacher Appreciation Events, Spirit Days, Memorial Day and Veterans Day events, Movie Nights, March Speaker Series...and so much more!

Mini We Day

On Thursday, June 6, 1–3 PM, Douglas will host a Mini We Day for all students in grades 4–6! We Day is an initiative of Free The Children, an international charity and our educational partner that works with schools to implement social justice curriculum. The Douglas Mini We Day will feature musicians, dancers, videos and speakers who are passionate about making a difference in the world. We hope to gather all our Grade 4–6 students for a Mini We Day, part of the world's largest movement of people bettering the world, and have an epic celebration redefining possible! Here is a video link to show what We Day looks like so you can get excited for our smaller but equally exciting version:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXb2jhxOmTE>

There is no cost for this event! We will have hot dogs, pizza, and drinks for sale at a small cost, as well as unique Douglas Mini We Day T-shirts!

Did you know? Douglas received an EPA Energy Star award for excellence in energy efficiency—look for the plaque in the lobby. Sixth graders pictured here (L–R): Nicholas Schulman, Brian Gower, Bertalan Gyimesi, Arnav Mehra, Jeremy Albuquerque, Alyssa Fayerman, Rachel Kiernicki, and Erin Song. Not pictured: Bryan Gilman-Orozco. <http://ab.mec.edu/departments/facilities/energy-efficiency.shtml>.

Dates to Remember

Thursday, June 6

Mini We Day, 1–3 PM (see page 3)

Thursday, June 6

Spring band concert (Douglas and Gates), ABRHS auditorium, 7 PM

Thursday, June 6

AB School Committee meeting
RJ Grey Junior High library, 7:30 PM

Friday, June 7

Last day of band lessons

Wednesday, June 12

Last day to return library books

Wednesday, June 12

Staff appreciation luncheon

Friday, June 14

Volunteer reception, library, 8:30 AM

Thursday, June 20

Memorial Service for Chris Borgman
Primary playground, 1–2 PM

Friday, June 21

Grade 6 Graduation, 9:15 AM
Followed by Reception

Final day to check lost and found

Saturday, June 22

Lowell Spinners, 7:05 PM

Monday, June 24

Last day of school!
Thursday dismissal schedule

Tuesday, June 25

Douglas Day at Canobie Lake Park

Tuesdays, July 9–August 6

Douglas free concert series, 6–8 PM

Tuesday, July 23

Dr Yong Zhao presentation,
ABRHS auditorium, 7 PM

Friday, August 16

Class placement available online
after 3:00 PM at PowerSchool
(<https://absis.ab.mec.edu>).

Monday–Friday, August 19–23

Douglas vacation camp

Thursday, August 22

New family orientation

Monday, August 26

Back to school staff luncheon

Monday, August 26

Kindergarten orientation

Tuesday, August 27

First day of school! (late schedule)

Join the **Douglas Elementary School** group!



Douglas PTO Board 2013–2014

Co-Chairs

Eileen Matarese
Karen Jarsky

Secretary

Beth Poulton

Treasurer

Corinne Hogseth

Assistant Treasurer

Jennifer Aufiero

Cultural Enrichment

Rachel Greene
Kathy McCullen
Sarah Wilfert

Douglas Digest

Sharon Metzger
Lori Fassman

Gardening

Hayley Reynolds

Health and Safety

Laurel Ghose

Hospitality

Martha Papalia
Karen Pierce

Interschool Council

Lynn Armstrong
Martha Papalia

Movie Nights

Jennifer Patenaude
Bridget Steinkrauss

Playground

Pam Caliskan
Linda Gower

PTO/School Committee Liaison

Deanne O'Sullivan

Snack Program

Heather Chase
Liz Schaller
Janice Yee

Technology Secretary

Rachel Meehan
Sharon Metzger

Volunteer Coordinator

Christine Fox
Bridget Steinkrauss

Farewell and Fond Memories

As we prepare for another school year to end, we want to bid a fond farewell to the 43 families who will be departing the Douglas community once their child graduates this month. On behalf of the PTO, we would like to thank you for all of your support and participation over the many seasons we've shared together. The entire Douglas family will miss you.

Shana/Steve Brown
Alison/Kevin Bullock
Lynn Parker, Kennett Coleman
Beatriz/Jesus Cruz
Namita/Sujal Davé
Svetlana/Indranil Dey
Carlos Dias
Maureen Ryan-Friend/Steven Friend
Kathy/Charles Frizzell
Lauren Gilman, Ferney Orozco
Heather/Jim Harer
Susan, Paul Haverstock
Menggiu Zheng/Haibin Huang
Sharon/Duncan Kautz
Barbara Rennert/Martin Kiernicki
Mila Kim

Nianwen Shi/Wai Kwong
Rheta Roeber/Paul Malchodi
Mandeep/Kanwaljit Mangat
Laurie/Scott Maylander
Mansi Bhan-Mehra/Gaurav Mehra
Allyson Melanson
Robin/Joseph O'Donoghue
Sandra/John Pallozzi
Sagarika Kesanapalli/Naveen Pandaraboyina
Marjorie Pizana/Joseph Passeri
Deirdre Bellevue/Paul Plucinsky
Rageswari/Dillip Pradhan
Rebecca Prendergast/Jack Tombeno
Lisa/Timothy Racie
Linda/Paul Roberge
Denise Theodores/Andrew Rodwin
Judy/Raymond Rowland
Elsie DiBella/Dan Rubens
Sharon Roggio/Mark Schulman
Yaqing Liu/Xiangyang Song
Lori/Tak-Chung Tang
Wenkai Zhu/Liqun Wang
Judy/Bennett White
Cheryl/Michael Witty
Qianzi Xu/Qing Wu
Jin/Fang Yang
Shelly/Ray Zhao