

WOODLAND HILL Montessori Messenger

Vol. 42 Issue 13

www.woodlandhill.org

March 13, 2009

Dear Parents,

I am very excited to report that our new building project is really coming together quickly now. The tiled floor in the lobby is installed, the gym is being painted, the cabinets are in the classrooms, and the bathrooms are nearly finished. It is very exciting to see our new wing almost ready for our children to use. We are still hopeful that the completion will be by our June Moving Up celebration. I would love to give you a tour of our new space, so please stop by. We also will be giving group tours on Saturday, March 21 from 11:30 a.m. to noon, and on Tuesday, March 31 from 5:30 to 6 p.m.

I have read all of your surveys and comments, and we are in the process of sharing the information as appropriate. They are overall very positive, but also have constructive comments that we will be using to improve our school. I really appreciate the time that everyone has taken to complete them; it is obvious from reading them that parents have a deep commitment to our school. The strategic plan will also make use of survey information. Michael Endler is Chair of our Strategic Planning Committee, and Tobi Saulnier is facilitating our workshops which will take place on Saturday, March 21 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. and Tuesday, March 31 from 6 to 9 p.m. I hope you will consider joining us for one or both of these sessions.

Beginning this spring, Woodland Hill will begin work on the reaccreditation process through Middle States and American Montessori Society. Board member Patricia Altman has agreed to chair this committee and she, along with faculty, staff, parents and Board members, will be working on our self-study as part of this process. Accreditation is a full examination of a school, including its faculty, administration, board and community. It is a lot of work, but well worth the effort. Key to this whole process is the teachers and staff, because of course the curriculum, teaching, outcomes and environment are most important in a school.

On Sunday, April 5, I will be headed to Metropolitan Montessori in NYC for three days to serve as Assistant Chair of the accreditation team for NYSAIS and AMS. I always bring back many new ideas on these visits, as well as share information and learn from other Montessori educators. I will also be examining their self-study which will help us in our own very similar process.

Upcoming Events at WHMS

For updates to the WHMS calendar,
go to our website
www.woodlandhill.org

- Mar. 17 St. Patrick's Day
- Mar. 19 6pm Cultural Fair
- Mar. 21 WHMS Alumni Event~
College search process
- Mar. 26 8:45am Diversity Meeting
- Mar 26. 7:30am MS Coffee House
- Mar. 27 MS Progress Reports
- Mar. 27 9am LE and Primary Assembly
12:45 UE and MS Assembly
- Mar. 28 Voyage of Discovery ~
Geography
- Mar. 31 Silver Graphics Due
- Apr. 4 GALA

**GET YOUR WHMS YEARBOOK
ON SALE NOW!
YEARBOOK ORDER FORM ATTACHED!**

Save-the-Date
for the Family Fun Day,
"Bowl Into Spring."
Sunday, March 22, 4:00 to
6:00pm at Spare Time in
Latham. Bowling, pizza, and
prizes!

I hope you will all join us for our annual gala on Saturday, April 4. This year's theme is "Fiesta" and I know it will be a lot of fun. My husband Jim will be the emcee and auctioneer (with my indispensable help!) and the venue this year is Franklin Terrace on Campbell's Avenue in Troy. The Gala Committee is acquiring some amazing auction items and these along with the classroom items are going to help our school raise money. This year's funds will benefit the new gymnasium wing. The food will have a Mexican flair; there will be Mariachis, and included in the price are Margaritas! Olé! Book your sitter! Call Grandma!

A couple weeks ago, I received an e-mail from a former parent, Renee Canver, who now lives with her family in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. She saw the Play for Power/Water Tower story on Fox News and wanted to send her greetings. Rob Kivort also told us that when his parents were in Mazatlan, Mexico last week, they also saw the story on Fox News.

Today (Friday) is my last meeting of Leadership Institute of the Rensselaer Chamber of Commerce. The group has met once a month for the past year and we have covered many topics in leadership from strategic planning to finance. The day long seminars included panel discussions featuring local leaders, as well as speakers, activities and handouts. It was a very worthwhile experience and I learned a lot.

Sincerely,

Susan Kambrich



Our construction crew hard at work!





WHMS' SECOND ANNUAL
VIOLIN PLAY-A-THON
TO BENEFIT
MAKE-A-WISH FOUNDATION.

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

11 A.M. TO 2 P.M.



COLONIE CENTER
L.L. Bean Courtyard on first floor.

Come and show your support of the WHMS violin students and the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Last year, they raised over \$500!

Justin Bruck
Harper Cartwright
Grace Clune
Jora Cohen and Anne Marie Haber
Caroline Crowell
Jason Eveleth
Genevieve Franck
Caroline Galt
Tori Gernert-Dott
Max Heller
Mairin Kelly

Lily Mahoney
Conor McGinn
Addison Oberting
Matthew Pantano
Vama Rao
Leyland Rodrigo
Sia Shah
Christine Somerville
Zoë Zubrick

Accompanied by Marla Bracco, violin
and Brandon Zhou, piano.

Welcome to Woodland Hill

Manasa Bala, along with her parents Guha and Deepa have joined Nancy and Marion's classroom as a new three year old. We are excited she has enrolled at WHMS.

Will Fisher has joined the Upper Elementary in Sherrie's advisory group as a 6th year student. Will transferred from Bethlehem Middle School. Welcome Fisher!

~ CLASSROOM NEWS ~

PRIMARY LIZ & KRISTEN

As Dr. Seuss once wrote, “Oh the places you’ll go!
You’re off to Great Places! You’re off and away!”

Little did we know that a March 2nd birthday celebration for Theodore Geisel would also be a wonderful introduction to our transportation study.

By land, air, and water, our travelers are learning that transportation helps us move from place to place. This week we “hit the road” and read about various forms of land travel. Subways, trains, automobiles, and yes, unicycles were part of our lesson. A close study of tire tread has also sparked an interest in the many grooved faces of tires and why they all look so different. In the coming weeks we will continue our travels through air and by water.

We’re still trying to figure out how that clever leprechaun travels. He’s quite mischievous and takes great pleasure in relocating and rebuilding our materials. (He’s not very good at it either!) Maybe we’ll catch him this year!!

EMMY & DIANE

Our class has begun a study of SPACE and all the wonders it has to offer. We are currently learning about the moon and later we will introduce the planets. We have read several books and these are a few of the interesting facts that the children have learned: that the moon is drier than a desert, there is no wind, the first animal in space was a Russian dog named Laika, there is an American flag and foot prints left by the Apollo 11 Mission (1969) and if you drove to the moon, it would take 153 days (with no bathroom breaks!)



To help us experience what it might be like in space, the children are making a space craft for the classroom. When completed, they will be able to view the phases of the moon and the constellations.

This time of the year the children are preparing to catch one of those little tricksters from Ireland (a Leprechaun.) We have been told that if you plant “Leprechaun grass” they might set up a little house and live there. Well, we’ve planted the grass and are watching it grow nice and tall. We will see what happens on March 17.

JULIA & JULIE

If you are going to put your child to bed and are snuggling with a book, the chances are high that it would be one of the books written by Dr. Seuss, a.k.a. Theodor or Ted Geisel whose 104th birthday was celebrated this March.

While he was at the beginning of his writer’s career, the publishing house asked Ted to write and illustrate a children’s primer using only 225 “new-reader” vocabulary words. With the release of *The Cat in the Hat*, Ted became the definitive children’s book author and illustrator. Thanks to Dr. Seuss our children have books that are easy to read and look at with the simplest text and with pictures painted mostly in primary colors.

Every March we celebrate our literacy by reading Dr. Seuss books. Our kindergartners are working hard on their favorite Dr. Seuss’ books so they can read them to their classmates in circle time!

If Dr. Seuss is your favorite author, you may visit his museum in Springfield, Mass. It is not too far from here at all. Their website is www.thecatinthecat.org.



“Oh, the places you’ll go! There is fun to be done!
There are points to be scored. There are games to be won.”

Oh, the Places You’ll Go ~ By Dr. Seuss

NANCY & MARION

As we continue our study of Asia, we have had several visitors teach us about the country where they, or their parents, grew up: Daisy Chan, George's mom, taught us about China; Valerie Ang, Ceyan's mom, taught us about the Philippines; and we had a former student Angelina Dwight and her mom, Ira, teach us about Indonesia.

We have their pictures on our large wall map of Asia depicting where their homeland is located in Asia. When Angelina and Ira visited us, Ira taught us about a very large fruit they call King Fruit in Indonesia that they like to eat. So naturally I brought a King Fruit, aka a Durian, into our classroom on Monday. It is a very large thorny fruit that has a very distinct odor, but sweet fruit. Note: it has such a distinct odor that it is banned in public places around Southeast Asia.



Before we opened it to taste it the children had this to say about it:

Jack, "At first, I thought it was a porcupine."
Izzy, "It looks like a pine cone."
Tristan, "It looks like a spiny acorn."
Logan, "I think it is a pointy mango."
Isabella, "It looks like a kind of pineapple."



After it was opened students took a taste. 10 out of 21 children liked it!

CASSANDRE & LOURDES

We are having a great time studying the artists from Europe. We began our exploration painting in a "cave" in our classroom with ground-up chalk mixed with water. The classroom windows were darkened and we crawled beneath a large table and crouched in the darkness to paint inside the cave. We have studied various artists and are learning to hone our observation skills as we recreate some works of Morisot, Kandinsky, Miro, Mondrian, and Matisse. Our classroom is also being filled with works of several different groups of animals.

As spring approaches, we are learning the characteristics of mammals, arachnids, birds, fish, arachnids, amphibians, and insects. Soon we will have an exciting new class project where we can study birds up close...stay tuned!!

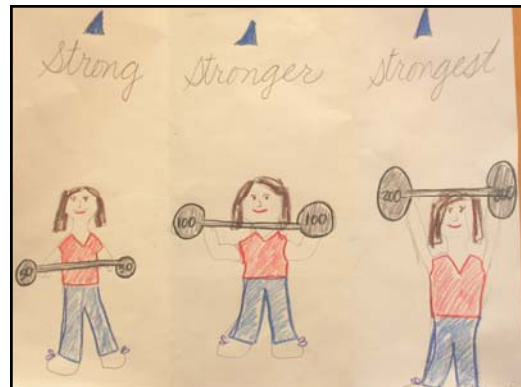
LOWER ELEMENTARY MARYANN & VALERIE

Our trip to the Schenectady Museum Planetarium was fun and informative. The children shared with the museum educator their wealth of knowledge regarding the solar system and astronomy. Of course, the children asked many questions as well!

We are visiting the continent of Asia in our cultural studies. In addition to many research activities, there are several art and craft activities available for the students to choose from. Japanese bookbinding, creating a decorative painted scroll, wood writing from China and making a set of Japanese otedama (bean bags) to juggle are among the favorites in our classroom.

JULIE & ASTRA

In our grammar lessons, we have been practicing identifying parts of speech. The children have learned the noun family: article, adjective, and noun. This week we are learning more about adjectives by comparing them. We have learned the terms positive, comparative, and superlatives. The children enjoyed making and illustrating charts with adjectives: dark, darker, and darkest and deep, deeper, and deepest.



We are very excited about the upcoming Cultural Fair. It is on Thursday, March 19. The children are studying countries and will make displays of the cultures they research. In the classroom, we are continuing our study of Asia. We have learned and researched the animals of Asia and have started making geographical and topographical maps.

SANDY & OLGA

By Eliezer Lev

Our class is studying fossils. It's really awesome because fossils help us learn a lot of new things about really old things! We have a lot of cool fossils. One of them is a leaf and another is a fish. We are making our own fossils from sand and glue and seashells. The first years have made timeline cartoons that show how fossils are made. We're also learning about the Clock of Eras which shows the important times of the Earth's life. We made our own gigantic Clock of Eras. We are also studying dinosaurs and other animals on a long timeline. We watched a movie about plant and animal life.



UPPER ELEMENTARY

It was so good to meet with everyone during the parent-teacher conferences!



As we enter into the second half of the school year we will be picking up the pace specifically in our cultural units. The upper el students continue to work in two groups: Group One is working on creating an impressionistic archeological dig of early man's artifacts. Group Two has been studying and researching different parts of the atmosphere: troposphere, stratosphere, mesosphere, thermosphere and exosphere.

Thank you, Dennis Phayre (Bella's dad) for coming in and giving a presentation on solar power to all of the students.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

After a very busy January and February, we are now enjoying some quieter times in our classroom. Each morning over the last two weeks, two students have given a short presentation about what they learned or experienced during our "Intersession," which occurred during the week of February 9-13. Students who traveled to Mexico have reported on all facets of their trip, including tasty details about Mexican food and informative presentations about the land and the government of Monterrey, Mexico. Students who remained at WHMS during Intersession have impressed us with reports on their self-directed projects which focused on mythical beasts, the pirate Blackbeard, and changes in communication technology. We very much enjoyed the homemade apple pies baked by a student who studied 18th Century Culture.

If you attend the Cultural Fair on Thursday, March 19, look for our display that highlights the students' favorite parts of the Monterrey, Mexico exchange visit.



The middle school students will again host a coffee house on Thursday, March 26. Breakfast items will be prepared and served by the students in the middle school classroom beginning at 7:30 am. Profits will support our class field trips, so come on out and enjoy some coffee and a bagel with us!

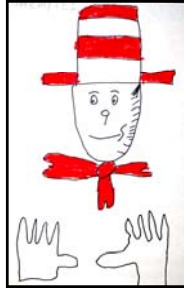
Specials

~ART with Janis~

Greetings from the Art room!

“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself, any direction you choose.”

Dr. Seuss



In honor of Dr. Seuss's birthday lower elementary students had great fun creating these drawings of everyone's favorite cat!

~ENRICHMENT ~ Meg

“Leaping Lizards & Rocking Reptiles”

On March 6, the Children’s Museum, CMOST, visited our elementary enrichment program, bringing with them live animals including a red tail boa constrictor, an eastern box turtle, a bearded dragon, and a legless lizard. Oh my!

The children learned how each of these animals eat and digest food, where their natural habitats are, and the proper handling of these animals. All of the animals were friendly and none of them would be a danger to humans in the wild. Most of the animals in the museum have been rescued from pet owners who could no longer care for their “pets.” The children had a great time learning about the reptiles up close and in person. We hope to invite the museum back next year for another amazing lesson on wildlife!

Primary after care is in need of magazine pictures of live animals. If you have any old magazines, especially National Geographic and would like to donate them please drop them off to Amanda Bentley or to the front office.



LIBRARY NEWS *from Mary Beth*
Our Library is really taking shape!

The WHMS Elementary Library has been improving week by week, and now has over 1400 books that have been bar-coded and entered into our catalog. These improvements mean that:

- Students and staff can search on a subject (for instance, “presidents” or “dolphins”) and find books on those topics.
- They can also search by title, author or keyword.
- Each book’s barcode will allow it to be checked out to students and staff (as soon as we’ve created library cards – coming soon!)

Students, teachers and parents can access our catalog from the computer in the Library, or from home at this Web address:
<https://whms.follettdestiny.com>.

Other Library initiatives currently in the works:

- a link to the Library catalog from the WHMS homepage
- library cards for elementary and middle school students
- library cards for teachers and staff
- training for teachers and students on how to search our catalog

Parents, if you have WHMS library books at home, please have your child return them to the Library.

Look for the school logo on a sticker in the inside front cover. Thank you!

the Voyage of Discovery
The Montessori
Geography Curriculum

Saturday, March 28, 2009 8:30 am to 12:30 pm

You are invited to join members of the WHMS faculty as we present a very popular Montessori parent education program. Teachers will lead you through lessons in Geography from the primary level through middle school. This is a wonderful way to gain a deeper understanding of how your child learns Geography the Montessori way.

Child care is available Saturday, March 28, 2009, from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm during

The Voyage of Discovery

The cost is \$12.00 for the first child in the family and \$8.00 for each additional child. Please pack a peanut free lunch for your child. Siblings are welcome but must be toilet trained.

To reserve a place for your child(ren), send this registration form along with cash or a check made payable to Woodland Hill Montessori School.

Family Name: _____

Child(ren)'s Name(s): _____

\$ _____ payment is attached in CASH or CHECK please circle one



College search workshop for MSA/WHMS alumni currently in 8th through 11th grade and their parents

Saturday, March 21, 2009 • 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Have friends and family members started to ask you “Where do you want to go to college?” Do you even know where to begin the college search process to find the “right” school for you?

Kris Gernert-Dott, Director of Admissions and Community Outreach at WHMS, has over 17 years of college admission experience at Skidmore, Hamilton and Union Colleges. She is eager to share her perspective on this important process with MSA/WHMS alumni and their parents. This college search and application seminar will provide you and your parents with the proper tools to navigate the college process as soon as you are ready to start.

Kris will be joined by Lynell Engelmyer who has 20 years of experience in college admission and financial aid at Lebanon Valley College (Pa), Hartwick and Union Colleges, and The College Board. She is currently a private college counselor and author of *Moving Forward Newsletter: what teens and parents need to know in the years leading to college*. Together Kris and Lynell will help answer your college search and application questions. When you leave the WHMS campus, you will no longer feel overwhelmed by the college process, and you will have gained the skills to start your college search!

To register, contact Moira Rienzo at moira@woodlandhill.org or 283-5400

- 10:00 a.m. Registration**
WHMS Great Room

- 10:10 a.m. The College Process Starts Here**
Welcome and introductions. The college search timeline.
Understanding the Admissions Process *We'll guide you through the ins and outs of the Admissions decision making process.*

- 11:00 a.m. For Students: Standing Out in the College Search Process**
Clean tips on writing a memorable essay and having an outstanding college interview.
Just for Parents *Surviving your child's college search process.*

- 12:00 noon WHMS famous Pizza lunch!**
Join your former MSA/WHMS classmates and parents for lunch

- 12:30 p.m. Walk a Mile in My Shoes...**
Ask questions of MSA/WHMS alumni who have just completed the college search process and/or are already in college. What is the application process really like? What is college really like?



Spring into Enrichment
Friday, April 10 – Friday, 17

*Join us for spring enrichment and have a bubbly time
with Cassandre Hall in primary!*

*Elementary will be exploring different sports
with Cindy Roy*

If you are in need of enrichment care for any of the above mentioned dates
please circle the dates you need and complete the information below.

4/10 4/13 4/14 4/15 4/16 4/17

Child's Name _____ Teacher _____

Child's Name _____ Teacher _____

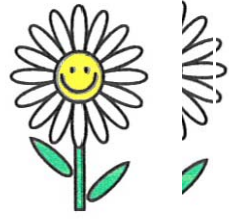
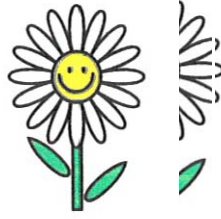
Child's Name _____ Teacher _____

If your child is not 3, does he/she nap? Yes No If Needed

Before April 1st _____ \$30 (per child) After April 1st _____ \$40 (per child)

****Please note your child will need lunch and snacks. ****
*****This is a peanut free program*****

BOWL INTO SPRING



Bowl away the winter blues and welcome spring!

Sunday, March 22, 2009

4:00 to 6:00pm

Spare Time, 375 Troy Schenectady Road, Latham

Admission: \$6 each (\$5 each for family of four or more)
includes two games, shoe rental, pizza, and drink

There will also be a bake sale and prizes for the best bowler in each of these categories: Primary,
Lower El, Upper El, and Middle School

Sponsored by Friends of WHMS

Please indicate name of each bowler and whether bowler is Primary (P),
Lower El (LE), Upper El (UE), Middle School (MS), or other (O)

Name: _____ P LE UE MS O

Name: _____ P LE UE MS O

Name: _____ P LE UE MS O

Name: _____ P LE UE MS O

(Please list any additional bowlers on the back of this form)

\$_____ cash or check (payable to Friends of WHMS) enclosed

Please RSVP by Friday, March 16^h

We are also looking for baked goods for our bake sale!

Yes! I can bring the following to the bake sale: _____

Any questions? E-mail Kelli Flansburg: golfcartwrights@aol.com



2008-2009 Woodland Hill Montessori Yearbook Orders



The 2008-2009 WHMS yearbooks are currently on sale for \$40.00.*

Our yearbook is published by Taylor Publishing Co. in Dallas, Texas. It is bound with a hardcover and is printed in full color.

The supply will be limited, so please place your order **NOW** so you are not disappointed. We will distribute the yearbooks in June.

Please make your check payable to WHMS yearbook and give to Meg Parascandola in the main office along with the order form.

If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Hillengas at nhillengas@nycap.rr.com

[*please note: we are unable to offer a discounted price for multiple copies ordered or WHMS staff this year due to price increases, but wanted to keep the price as low as possible]



***** 08-09 WHMS Yearbook Advertisement order

You may also want to create an ad to recognize your child's accomplishments, or thank a teacher, or advertise your business:

(**Please note, pricing changes from last year):

Family AND business ads:

1/8 page— \$50.00

¼ page— \$100.00

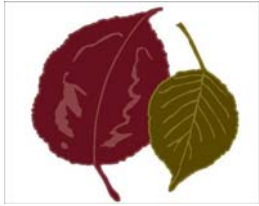
½ page — \$ 175.00 (inc. 1 yearbook—please note on order: child's name & teacher)

Full page — \$ 300.00 (inc. 1 yearbook—please note on order: child's name & teacher)



Please submit **ALL** artwork/photos in JPEG form to Nancy nhillengas@nycap.rr.com or Christine cbruck@nycap.rr.com





08-09 WHMS Yearbook order form

FAMILY NAME: _____

_____ number of books ordered (\$40.00/book) total amount enclosed _____



Student name	Classroom teacher

08-09 WHMS Yearbook Advertisement order form



I would like to place an ad in the WHMS Yearbook.

I will/have send(t) the artwork to Nancy/Christine for publishing



<u>Size:</u>	<u>Price:</u>	<u>QTY:</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>For ½ page & full page ad</u>
1/8 page	\$50.00			Pls note child's name & teacher to
¼ page	\$100.00			Receive yearbook inc in price:
½ page	\$175.00			
full page	\$300.00			