

THE MESSENGER



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- 3/17 St. Patrick's Day
- 3/19 Circus Show 3 pm
- 3/20 **Open House** 12:30 pm
- 3/24 Proctors Theater, **Playing For Water, Power, Peace** 5:30pm
- 3/25 LE Theater Club presents *The Garden Show* 4:30 p.m.
- 3/25 MS Coffee House
- 3/26 Hudson Talbot Workshop
- 3/26 **History Fair** 6:30 pm LE-MS are welcome
- 3/29 Passover Begins
- 3/31 Julie & Astra's class play
- 3/31 **Silver Graphics** due
- 4/1 Good Friday
- 4/2-9 Spring Break
No School—Enrichment Available
- 4/4 Easter



April 16, 2010

WHAT – NO BRIEFCASE? MONTESSORI AND PAPERWORK

By Edward Fidellow

Montessori parents are often bewildered by the lack of paperwork coming home with their child. There's hardly any! So what does my child do all day? What can he be possibly learning?



For most of us our school experience was a blizzard of paper work – spaces to fill in, lines to write, dots to connect. Pages upon pages of busy work that hopefully conveyed to parents that we were learning. Much of it was redundant, boring and the waste of a good tree! But that was the measure for parents that learning was happening.

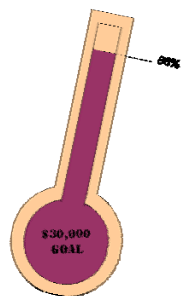
You've now entered a new universe when you chose a Montessori program. You didn't choose Montessori because it resembled your learning experience but because it represented the learning experience you wished you'd been privileged to have. When you visit the environment your eyes feast on amazing materials – colors, shapes, complexities. Is this material really for my three year old or four year old - isosceles triangles, quatrefoils, reniform leaf shapes? Does he really touch it and feel it and use it? But when there is no paper trail coming home, you wonder!

Read more on page 6



OPEN HOUSE—SATURDAY, MARCH 20~
12:30PM—3:00PM JOIN US ~ BRING A FRIEND

ANNUAL FUND DRIVE YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Make your donation to this year's Annual Fund.

WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP TO REACH OUR GOAL OF \$30,000.



Annual Fund 2009-2010

With Many Thanks

Leadership Circle

Anonymous
 Frank and Pat Bossolini
 Karen Cavanagh and John Mason
 The Edmunds Family
 Michael Endler and Lise Hafner
 Sarah Hazel
 IBM
 David and Jennifer Krygowski
 Terri M. Simmons
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in honor of Jack Altman
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 Ken Jacobs and Lisa Nissenbaum
 Gina and Stephen Kasper,
in honor of Gabby Kasper

Friends

Laura Koennecke and Jim Moore
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 Susan LaVigne
 Marion Newton and Christian Heller
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 Laura and Josh Mandel
 Daniel & Emilie-Anne Michaud
 Betsy Nicholson, *in honor of Cadence R. Young*
 Stanley and Arlene Nickerson
 Hiroshi and Helen Nishiyama,
in honor of Alex Nishiyama
 Meg Parascandola
 Mr. & Mrs. Cyril & Lydia Rodriguez
 Moira Rienzo
 Janis and John Rink
 Luke, Maggie and Molly Schmonsky
 Cora and Olaf Stackelberg
 Paul and Megan Stackelberg
 Denise and Hugo Walpurgis
 Connie Walsh & Michael Slik,
in honor of Eleanor Toomey's 5th Birthday
 Patricia Ward, *in honor of Isabella Mesko*
 Bradley White, Gilda Augustine,
 and Nicolo White, *in honor of*
Andrew McClain & Sandy Blakeman



ROOTS AND SHOOTS ~ OUT OF THE PITS

In conjunction with our work for Jane Goodall's *Roots and Shoots* program, the WHMS Middle School has volunteered to help the dog organization, **Out Of the Pits!** Out of the Pits is a local charity dedicated to helping pit bulls, and we need your help to do it.

The MS will be collecting loose change, old towels, old blankets and toys.

Donations will be collected in the

main lobby for the next few weeks. We appreciate any contribution you can make toward the cause. Monetary contributions are always welcome.

Here is what your donations can do:
\$5.00 will feed a dog for a week.
\$10.00 will buy them a collar and leash.

Right now, Out of the Pits is only able to save a small percentage of the abandoned and abused Pit Bulls

they are asked to accept into their program everyday. Many must be turned away due to lack of funding.

Your contribution could help save a dog's life.



BUS FORMS DUE APRIL 1, 2010

Watch for your Public School Transportation requests for 2010-2011. Forms are due on April 1, 2010. All requests for bus transportation (for WHMS students in Kindergarten through 8th Grade) for the 2010-2011 school year must be received, in writing, by your home school district by Wednesday, April 1 **each year**. If you do not meet this deadline, your district has the right to deny your child transportation to Woodland Hill for the upcoming school year. Several of the local school districts provide copies of their transportation request forms on-line. If you have any questions or problems downloading a form, please let me know.

Catherine
csager@woodlandhill.org.



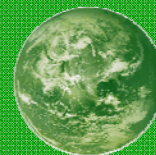
SPRING CLEANING? RECYCLE YOUR STUFF!

WHMS is interested in community recycling. Maybe you have items around your house that you no longer need. Keep them out of the landfills.

WHMS WISH LIST—

- Pressure cookers
- Rice cooker
- Weight bench
- Free weights
- Little Tykes Cozy Coupes
- Sand toys

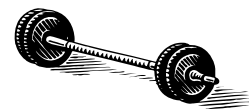
- Trucks for outdoor play
- Balls
- Frisbees



HEALTH AND WELLNESS WITH JAKE

Do you have a weight bench and/or free weights you're not using? Consider donating them to WHMS. Jake is looking to expand his **Health and Wellness** unit for elementary students. If you have a weight bench or free weights (any unit) that you no longer use, contact Jake at s.jacob.colwell@gmail.com.

Thanks to **Kathy Eastman** for donating the Nordic Track and **Emmy Cole** for the treadmill.



RECENTLY AT WHMS

- **Jonathan Crowell** placed 31st in a National Fencing Tournament - the Cobra Super Youth Tournament. Congratulations!

- **Lego Heads** - Conor McGinn, Sandeep Alampalli, Jonathan Picchione and Edward Lo participated in Junior First Lego League Expo at University at Albany on February 6. The theme was 'smart move', where team had to connect technology with the real world and consider modes of transportation beyond daily routine. The Lego Heads team chose to demonstrate an escape pod as their complex transportation system. The pod would let the astronauts escape from the spaceship in case of an emergency. Their model included an escape pod, space control station and living quarters, built entirely out of Legos. The model had many moving parts incorporating seven simple machines to perform various operations. The team exhibited their model and poster board and presented their project to the judges. The boys learned the importance of team work through this project. Sixteen teams participated in the expo, and Lego Heads team won "Complexity and Decoration" award for their project.



- **Woodland Hill vs. Parker** On March 3, the two teams faced each other for a nail-biting game of basketball. The teams played while fans from both schools filled the sidelines rooting for their teams. Parker pulled it out in the end beating WHMS. We'll get 'em next time!



- On Tuesday, Kevin Wynne (a WHMS Parent) came in to talk to the students about the physical forces involved in doing an egg drop. On Friday, about 20 **HVCC engineering students** came in and gave the children their directions and materials for doing a 20 ft. drop. The kids were very creative about how best to protect their eggs from the forces that would soon be thrust upon them. When the springs, packing, and parachutes were employed most of the eggs came out looking as fresh as the day they were hatched.



MS students applied a unique form of studying this week. Teams played **Jeopardy** in class to study important facts, dates, laws about colonial America and the American revolution

- Thank you to Ryan Decker (Alison's Dad) for the real-life story of a firefighter. Ryan showed students in Valerie and Julie's class how a firefighter gets ready for a call and the myriad of equipment needed to keep him safe.






- The **Elementary** students performed their skills in gymnastics. Incorporating skills learned in P.E. class, the students included balancing, tumbling, vaulting and teamwork to create unique routines.

- On March 5, the Middle School enjoyed dancing to the sounds of Cool Cat Entertainment. On the 10th it was the Upper EL's turn to dance the night away.
- Our **basketball teams** each held a celebration to mark the end of our first season. Coaches Justin Hurlburt and Fernando Febus hosted an awards banquet for the junior team at Moscatiello's. For the older players, coaches Paul McBath and Ken Wise threw a year-end pizza party!



PLAYING FOR WATER, POWER, PEACE
A non-profit charity



You are cordially invited to attend a FREE and exciting event of Science, Song, Photography, Wine & Culinary Arts with special guests from the UN, Tanzania, State and Local dignitaries.

Event Schedule:
5:30-6:30 PM Reception-Hors d'oeuvres prepared by Rob Gavel-private chef, catering and events, Lily and Rose Catering of Saratoga Springs
Meet & Greet world renowned Master Photographer and member of the Photography Hall of Fame, Jay Stock and friends. Experience their photography exhibition of "Playing for Water, Power and Peace".
Wine tasting courtesy of Joseph DeFronzo, SMD Selections, LLC
Live Music and the Science of Sabre Companies
6:30-7 PM An uplifting Multi-Media Show
7-7:30 PM Live Auction featuring Los Angeles comedian Sara Burrows
7:30-8 PM Desserts & Coffee

The evening is strictly limited to 400 people.

March 24, 2010 At Proctor's GE Theater, Schenectady, New York

Hosted by the ElectriCity Arts and Entertainment District and the Sabre Companies

SCOOTER CITY NEEDS YOUR HELP

As a long-held tradition at WHMS, our new PE teacher, Jake, is pleased to follow the road signs back to "Scooter City."

In the past, parents and other members of the WHMS community got involved in the manufacturing of "Scooter City" buildings.

To keep things organized, Jake asks that anyone who is interested helping to build this year's scooter city, please contact him as soon as possible so that he can plan out the city's course.

"I have heard that, in the past, there was grocery stores, fire and police stations, gas stations and even a Star-

bucks. I am taking this as an opportunity for us to create a whole new type of "Scooter City" where a wide variety of lessons and skills can be taught."

If you are interested in helping out, or would just like to make a suggestion, please email Jake at s.jacob.colwell@gmail.com.



Socrates said, "There is nothing in the mind that is not first in the hands." And it is the touching of these concrete materials that begins the building of the mental processes in your child. Traditional education begins with intellectual development hoping to make the abstract concrete. Montessori education begins with the development and refining of the senses, allowing your child to build this concrete knowledge one step at a time until he is ready and poised to make the great intellectual leap into the abstract. In Montessori education, it is the child's own develop-



mental timetable that causes this explosion of solid (and unprecedented) learning to occur. It is not an artificial timetable based on age or calendar but a continual cultivation and development of the child's growing intellectual power that is being fed day by day in a manner that allows your child to appropriate and practice the tools and skills that will form his intellectual abilities for a lifetime.

All this time the child is building within himself this intellectual capability. Montessori education is very much like the construction of a jetty. Rock after rock is submerged in the water, seemingly lost beneath the surface but then the day comes when the latest rocks begin to become visible and break the water's plane. Your child is building a very concrete foundation for all further intellectual development one achievement at a time.

These processes and achievements, in many ways, are very private for your child. Your child often doesn't speak of them – or want to speak of them until after (sometimes long after) they have become operative and well established in your child. It is not that they want to exclude you from their developmental journey but they guard it –

not jealously – but protectively, as if speaking about it would jeopardize its development.

This is why your best ally in understanding your child's development and progress is the teacher and not random pieces of paper that wend their way home. The teacher is a good guide to share with you your child's progress because much of what the teacher does in the classroom is to observe and document this progress. Montessori education is never just a question of teaching or presenting materials but of presenting and teaching at the ap-

propriate time and in the appropriate way. Each child has a different learning style – one size doesn't fit all. And it is this different learning style of your child that is celebrated and used to your child's advantage in the learning process.

It is not so much what is put into your child that creates this tremendous Montessori learning explosion but what comes out of your child – out from their personality, their talents, gifts, and temperament. Montessori is about aligning learning with the way your child learns. There may not be another time in his life where the whole world is bent to give him every advantage and opportunity to learn as quickly and as effortlessly as possible.



Every day your child is absorbing the whole world around him trying to make sense of it, trying to master the parts he can. And it is in his Montessori classroom that this world is made tangible and accessible. He can't always tell you when he is going to make the discover-

ies that will propel him on to new and even more exciting discoveries. ("Did you know that three times two is the same as two times three? The windows are rectangles and so are the tables.") Instead of being given the answers – which he would be expected to put down on paper – which could go home; he is given the questions and allowed to discover the answers for himself. This joy of discovery is hard to put on paper.

There are two ways better than paper to know what your child is learning. Ask his teacher. She has the great joy of daily watching the discoveries light up your child's eyes, of watching your child work the challenges of learning and the joy that comes to your child from mastery. She is watching the emergence of your child's personality, watching his character form and his intellect develop. When you are talking with the teacher listen to the excitement of her voice as she relates your child's progress and read in her eyes the joy she shares in your child's discoveries and accomplishments. Much better than paperwork.

Second, ask your child. But don't ask him what he learned today – he may not be able to tell you (and it still may be private but he'll share with you when he is ready.) Ask him what he sees out of the window. He may just read the street signs to you (which isn't bad for a three year old.) Ask him about his friends. Ask him about colors or dinosaurs or cars – and then listen. He will tell you all

kinds of things. He will use all kinds of words – vocabulary and concepts you didn't even know he knew. And if you keep listening you'll learn not only what he learned but you will set a pattern

for conversation and discussion that will take you well beyond the teenage years – much more satisfying and important than paperwork.

OUR CARING WHMS COMMUNITY~

TourdeCure®

WHMS Board President Mike Endler, and Board member Rob Kivort, would like to invite the Woodland Hill Montessori School community to ride with us in the 2010 Tour de Cure to benefit the American Diabetes Association. This year's ride is on June 6th and starts and finishes at Saratoga High School. There are many different rides, ranging from 10 miles to a 100 miles, to match your level of fitness. Kivort Steel is sponsoring the team and all members will receive a limited edition, Kivort Steel, cycling shirt!!!

To find out more about the event, and how to join the Kivort Steel team, go to Kivort Steel's web page at kivort-steel.com and click on the link to Tour de Cure 2010.

Dinner for our friend Christine

Our dear friend Christine Bruck, mother of Justin in the upper El, and parent at our school for the past 10 years, as well as volunteer and extracurricular coordinator, has been battling cancer. To support Christine, Justin, her husband Rob, and their entire family, the Woodland Hill Community gathered to share a dinner, celebrate with Christine as she navigates her road to recovery and to raise money for the mammoth amount of medical costs incurred.

*Hold a true friend with
both your hands.*
Nigerian Proverb

