

THE MESSENGER



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CALENDAR EVENTS:

- 12/3 and 12/5 *Seussical, Jr.*
- 12/7 Annual Board Meeting
6:30 pm
- 12/8 Diversity Committee
Meeting 9:15 am
- 12/9 Art Show
Winter Concerts
All Violins 10 am
EL/MS Violins 5:30 pm
Winter Show 6:15 pm
- 12/10 Hoffman Carwash
Sale Ends
- 12/10 Book Fair at Barnes
& Noble
- 12/11 Hanukah Begins
- 12/13 MS Drop & Shop
- 12/17 MS Hot Lunch
- 12/18 Art Show
Primary Winter Show 10am
- 12/21-1/1 Holiday Recess
Enrichment Available

NO ENRICHMENT
12/24, 12/25, 1/1

Dear Parents,

The re-accreditation process was very successful. Although we have not officially received our accreditation, we had a very positive oral report and look forward to the final written report. Once this is received, we will schedule a meeting to share the information. Sincere thanks to all who participated in this process. Our school has already and will continue to benefit from this process of self-reflection and improvement.

The WHMS Drama Club performed an outstanding rendition of *Seussical, Jr.* on Thursday night. They will be performing another show on Saturday at 12:00. Tickets are available at the door. There will also be a craft fair to benefit kids who wish to travel to Tanzania as part of the water club. Come to the show – you will not be disappointed!!

On Monday, December 7, at 6:30 pm, we have our Annual Board Meeting. During this short meeting, I will briefly give some highlights from the previous year and initiatives for next year. Our Treasurer, Marianne DeMario, and Business Manager, Sue Evans, will give an overview of our finances, and our Board President, Michael Endler, will say a few words about some of our goals for the upcoming year. All are welcome to attend! **We still need 58 proxies** to welcome our new Board members Diana Ehrlich and Vince LaBella.

We look forward to our upcoming concerts! On Wednesday, December 9, all violin students will be performing in the morning at 10:00 am. Elementary and Middle School violin students will be performing at the 5:30 pm concert. Following the violin concert The Annual Winter Concert will be held at 6:15 pm. During this concert, all Elementary and Middle School students will perform, with a special performance featuring the Chorus, Band and Hand Bells. On Friday, December 18, we will have the Primary Winter Concert at 10:00 am during which all primary students will perform.

Best wishes for a peaceful holiday season,

Susan

The Mayflower Has Landed at Woodland Hill!

Thank you to the Ledet family for donating the incredible model of the Mayflower on display in the lobby. The model, built in 1958 by Joseph Saritelli was carved at his kitchen table from a three-foot block of pine. Working on the replica nights after work or on days off, in his spare time it took him over two years to complete.

What a beautiful addition to our lobby!



BARNES & NOBLE BOOK FAIR

Barnes & Noble Book Fair
Play for Power – the Water Project
Thursday, December 10

Play for Power-the Water Project is holding a book fair December 10 at Barnes & Noble to raise money for teachers and middle school students to participate in the 2010 July trip to visit our sister school in Babati, Tanzania.

Just bring one of our vouchers to Barnes & Noble at Colonie Center on Wolf Road on December 10 and hand it in with your purchase. A percentage of your purchase will go towards the Water Project! (If you forget the voucher, just mention the school's name when you check out.)

Visit our table at the fair to learn about the water project and our sister school in Tanzania. Meet the students who visited Tanzania and plan to go again this summer. Meet the engineers who designed the playground. Hear students from the African drumming club perform and enjoy story time with our teachers - events will be scheduled throughout the day.

Books, maps, games, music, and café items, anything the store sells (except gift cards and membership cards) count toward the fundraiser.

Faculty and staff will have wish lists for items for their classrooms that parents and other supporters can purchase. We plan on having a dedicated wish list table for the Sinai School in Babati as well. These items will be displayed, and can be purchased, on the day of the fair – providing both materials for the classrooms and support for next year's trip.

Supporters can also pre-order cheesecakes and café items to be picked up and paid for on the day of the fair. The Cheesecake Factory-made cheesecakes (\$35) will be frozen so you can keep them for the holidays. Pre-orders are due December 2 – but don't worry if you forget, they'll have extra on hand so you can still pick one up December 10.

Visit our website to download a voucher and Cheesecake order form.




REMINDER....



School picture payments or any unwanted pictures were due back at the office on Monday, November 30.

Please send in your payments or return your pictures on Monday, December 7.

Thank you,
 Diane McGinn, *School Picture Coordinator*



MIDDLE SCHOOL LUNCH

The Middle School will provide a school lunch on Thursday, December 17. If you choose to order the lunch, we will deliver it to your child's classroom during lunch time. We will be making macaroni and cheese served with (or without) green beans, a homemade cookie and apple juice. The cost is \$4 for a child and \$5 for an adult. Please return the forms to school by Tuesday, December 15.

Download an order form from our website www.woodlandhill.org

WILL MY CHILD BE PREPARED FOR FIRST GRADE?

At Woodland Hill Montessori School, we are always seeking to ensure that we are fulfilling our mission to serve students and their families well. On November 23, 2009, we surveyed the 26 families who had Kindergarteners move-up to the Lower Elementary program at WHMS or who have moved on to first grade at their local public school or another independent school.

Results have been compiled with 65% of the families surveyed responding to our request for information, with half of the students enrolled in public school, half at WHMS and one family at another independent school.

- 100% of our families found that their children were prepared for first grade, with 88% indicating that their children were very well prepared.
- 94% of the children transitioned successfully to first grade, with 77% "transitioning very well."

We received wonderful, thoughtful feedback Read parent comments on page 3.



ANNUAL FUND DRIVE YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Make your donation to this year's Annual Fund.

Donate on line at: <http://www.woodlandhill.org/giving.htm>



Annual Fund 2009-2010

With Many Thanks

Leadership Circle

Anonymous
 Karen Cavanagh & John Mason
 The Edmunds Family
 Michael Endler & Lise Hafner
 Sarah Hazel

Investors

Frederick & Laura Galt
 Marianne DeMario & Paul Simeone

Benefactors

Anonymous
 Tom & Sarah Crowell
 Susan & David Evans
 Kelli Flansburg & Patrick Cartwright
 Susan & Jim Kambrich
 Robert & Jocelyn Kivort
 John & Stacey Millet
 The Wynne Family

Friends

Anonymous
 Cody Anderson
 Cheryl Bovair & Michael Ardman
 Liz & Tim Cahrenger
 The Chan Family
 Mark & Barbara Changizi
 Emmy & Jim Cole
 The Day Family
 Pat & Emil DeToffol
 Rahim & Salimah Dhanani,
in honor of Zoya & Maheen Dhanani
 The GE Foundation
 The Gernert-Dott Family
 Wendy & Charles Gilman
 Bob & Nina Green
 Laura & Holland Hopson
 Gina & Stephen Kasper,
in honor of Gabby Kasper
 Laura Koennecke & Jim Moore
 Diane Lanci

Susan LaVigne
 Marion Newton & Christian Heller
 David Nichols & Kathryn Eastman
 Laura & Josh Mandel
 Daniel & Emilie-Anne Michaud
 Meg Parascandola
 Moira Rienzo
 Janis & John Rink
 Luke, Maggie & Molly Schmonsky
 Paul & Megan Stackelberg
 Bradley White, Gilda Augustine,
 & Nicolo White, *in honor of*
Andrew McClain & Sandy Blakeman



*as of December 3, 2009

Here is a sampling of some of the comments from our survey:
 "Will my child be ready for first grade?"

"Riane was not only very prepared academically for first grade, but the social skills she learned at WHMS helped her immensely to make new friends and fit in well in her new environment." Shenendehowa, *Ranjani Richard*

"The independent studying habit from WHMS made my child a role model for her classmates in her public school. We are grateful to WHMS for preparing my child that way." Public school, *former parent*

"So far things have been good. If anything, he may be a little bored as he seems to be ahead of his class." Public school, *former parent*

"She did find the math curriculum in Public School far below her expectation. In fact she was mentioning that "Why do I get to learn something that I learned during my second year in Montessori." Guilderland, *Kumar Krishnan Kishore*

"Our child flourished at Woodland Hill building both the academic and social skills she needs to be a life long learner. She has great problem solving skills, is a fountain of knowledge on a wide variety of topics and is a kind, thoughtful friend. We couldn't have picked a better start or school for our child. Thank you." Public school, *former parent*

"We loved it. It was a beautiful nurturing environment. We're grateful that our daughter was able to go there for three years." Public school, *former parent*

"Sophie's graceful and easy transition confirms what we know - you are doing so very much right at WH!" Averill Park, *Tanja Eise*

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 If you have any questions or concerns about preparation for, and transition to, first grade please contact Susan Kambrich or Kris Gernert-Dott. The complete survey analysis is available from Kris Gernert-Dott.

# THE BEATLES EXPERIENCE



On Friday November 6, Meg, Ashley and the After Care students took a trip to the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall to see The Tribute - a Beatles cover band.

The band opened with "All My Loving," and rocked the night away with classics like "8 Days a Week," "Can't Buy Me Love," and "Hard Days Night." The concert ended with an encore of

"She Loves You," and the crowd screaming for more!

Meg said, "If I hadn't known better I would have thought I was at a real Beatles concert. The band members stayed in full character all night! I don't think there was a disappointed fan in the Music Hall.

As the night came to an end we left the building and rounded the corner where our ride was waiting. There we ran into three of the band members who had stepped out the side door for some air! We actually got to meet them and Patrick Evans was able to have his picture taken with them."

Haylie Gernert-Dott was one of the After Care students who attended. Haylie said, "They are the most

legendary band ever! Of course, they were Beatles impersonators, but I'm not entirely sure that John, George, Paul and Ringo weren't actually in the building, they were that good. Their voices were the same as I've always heard on my iPod.

Thank you to Meg and Ashley, for giving us this chance to have a Rock-n-Roll experience. Five of us got to have a *true* Beatles experience, or as close as we will ever get."

"The adventure was a great success," Meg said, "and we look forward to offering similar opportunities. The children got to experience a great musical legend first-hand at the beautifully historic Troy Savings Bank Music Hall."

## Go Green and get Green for our school!

Recycle your paper at WHMS.

WHMS received \$60 from Green Fiber so far this year. Bring your recyclable paper to school and add it to our Green Fiber dumpster. All recyclable paper products are accepted—even phone books!

## JOIN US IN OUR NO EFFORT FUND RAISING

This year we are, once again, focusing on the following programs:

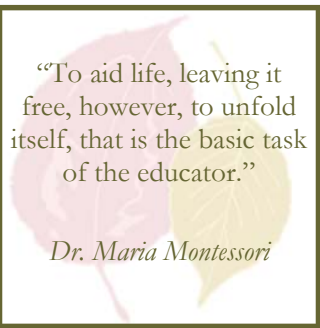
- Price Chopper Tools for Schools
- Hannaford Helps Schools
- Target Take Charge of Education
- Funding Factory

WHMS greatly appreciates your involvement in any of these programs.

Participation is, of course, voluntary but we hope that each family will find a way to chip in.



## AUTHORS' TEA



As part of our Writers' Workshop, students in Maryann and Ann's Lower Elementary class decided to write and publish their own books.

Students studied personal narrative, picture books and practiced different elements. They spent class time writing, revising and editing (being sure to correct capitalization and punctuation) and illustrating their books.

Very pleased with their accomplishments, the class celebrated by hosting an Authors' Tea and proudly shared their original, illustrated stories with

their fellow students, parents and WHMS staff members.

Each story was written and read by the author, who then asked their listeners to write a comment about the story.



Congratulations to all of our young authors!

## DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

The WHMS Diversity Committee is an inclusive working group of parents, teachers, staff, and students, who are committed to increasing the awareness of diversity issues within the school community. Through an active admissions recruitment and administrative hiring process we are growing a diverse school community that recognizes and respects differences across race, ethnicity, religious, socio-economic class, physical ability, sex, sexual orientation, and gender ex-

pression. In accordance with the philosophies of Maria Montessori, who believed education should assist children in being socially responsible citizens of the world, the Diversity Committee values a multi-cultural and anti-bias focused curriculum. We seek to provide a safe, open environment where children are exposed to non-sexist, multi-cultural learning experiences and are able to explore bias issues in an age-appropriate way as part of their daily routines.

The Diversity Committee's purpose is to increase awareness and appreciation of the benefits of diversity for all of our children and the entire school community.



### Call for Members

If you are interested in participating in the diversity committee, or have any issues or topics which you feel should be addressed, then please contact the committee chair, David Devaprasad at [sdd@danielsporco.com](mailto:sdd@danielsporco.com)

The next Diversity Committee meeting is on Tuesday, December 8 at 9:15 a.m.

**DROP AND SHOP**

Are you having trouble finding time to buy holiday gifts for your children? Do you want an afternoon to get errands done or enjoy a nice lunch? On Sunday, **December 13**, the Middle School is providing you with this opportunity. Download a form from our website:

[www.woodlandhill.org](http://www.woodlandhill.org)

# THE WHMS DRAMA CLUB PROUDLY PRESENTS...



## Seussical Jr.

*Oh the thinks you can think,  
when you think about Seuss!*



**Final Performance:  
Saturday, December 5 at 12 PM**

**Tickets: \$7.00 for Adults  
and just \$4.00 for Children**

**"I think we need to rename the school Woodland Hill  
Montessori School of the Performing Arts.**

**I can't tell you when I enjoyed anything that much.  
Everyone of those children gave it their all."**

*~ Sue LaVigne*