

W.V. Montessori School

FOLLOW the CHILD

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Winter 2017

“Inspiring Children Who Will Change the World”



The 2017 Spring Gala Committee: Lori Murphy, Monica Hoang, Corrin Stella and Valarie Nat. Absent from picture: Karen Kile, Neda Danniel, and Dee Thomas

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Winter edition of our Quarterly Newsletter! Since our last edition, a number of activities have taken place among which was a special showing of the “Polar Express” held in the Great Room just before the holiday break, the Annual Science Fair sponsored by King’s College, our Chinese New Year celebration, a Martin Luther King Jr. Day presentation by Lower Elementary and our Winter Concert. It was remarkable to see the excitement in the children during each event. My sincere thanks to all the parent volunteers and staff who made the above events possible. If

you haven’t noticed, our school’s mission statement has been revised to read “Inspiring Children Who Will Change the World.” A revision in our statement was recommended by our consulting group ISM so that the statement would best capture the essence of our school’s mission. Our Board worked diligently in making the revision.

Soon, you may hear some pounding when you arrive in the morning as our roof in the Upper Elementary building is being replaced, and new rain gutters are being installed. This project, along with others, demonstrates the Board of Trustees’ continued commitment to updating and improving our facilities.

Finally, please support our Spring Gala, which will be held at the Woodlands Inn and Resort on March 31, 2017. Corrin Stella is this year’s chairperson, and she and her committee are planning a fabulous event. In addition to having a wonderful night out, you will be helping support our financial aid program and helping provide a wonderful education to those students who might not otherwise be able to attend WVMS.

Dennis Puhalla

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TODDLER PROGRAM (Ages 18 months - 3 years old)



During these cold winter months, we could all use more warmth and coziness. In January, our toddler classes warmed up by cooking pancakes! We read the story "Pancakes, Pancakes" by Eric Carle and then used the same ingredients to make our own pancakes. The toddlers took turns opening, pouring, and mixing, but their favorite part by far was tasting!

In addition to "Pancakes, Pancakes," we read lots of books about snow and winter. Some of these were, "Hello, Snow!" by Hope Vestergaard, "Snow is Falling" by Franklyn M. Branley, "Boots" by Anne Schreiber and Arbo Doughty, and "Shoveling Snow" by Pat Cummings.



As we headed into February, the toddlers had fun making valentines for their families and friends. They used various media, including paint, stickers, glue, sequins, and pompoms to create their artwork.



The sensory tables also had a Valentine's Day theme, as did the "open and close" work. Baby washing was a huge hit at the water table! Some of our toddlers practiced their fine motor skills with "push pin work," where they use a giant push pin to poke holes along the lines in a shape or a letter. They were very excited when they held their work up to see the light shining through all the tiny holes they had made.

PRIMARY PROGRAM (Ages 3 – 6 years old)



The Primary classrooms have been enjoying the mild winter so far. Spring is right around the corner and soon we will be looking forward to summer! Nature walks and more time spent outdoors is on the horizon! The primary students have studied and observed the changes in the seasons and learned about daylight savings and the rotation of the earth around the sun.

In our geography curriculum, we have traveled across the pond (the Atlantic Ocean) from North America to Europe and as far south as the globe will take us to Antarctica and the South Pole, learning about foreign lands, languages, indigenous people, animals, national heritages, and the cultural traditions of people from other parts of the world.

In February, we began our Asian studies, kicking off the month with our annual Chinese Lunar New Year celebration. The children formed a larger-than-life-sized dragon, paraded through the school building and Lower Elementary classrooms, stomped bubble wrap (simulating firecrackers), played Chinese hand drums, and enjoyed a sampling of Chinese food during our lunch period. It was so much fun! Still ahead throughout the coming months, we will continue on our travels around the globe to the continents of Africa, South America and Australia.

Art in the Montessori primary classroom takes many shapes and forms. Children are encouraged to explore different types or mediums of artwork through a variety of materials and supplies, planned crafts, spontaneous creations and the exploration of art masters. Our most recent artist master of study was Henri Matisse, known for his bold use of color. The children learned about Matisse's biography and the history of his artwork from his bold, beautiful paintings to his enormous paper cutting creations, chronicled in his book "Jazz," after illness rendered him bound to a wheelchair.

Each of the primary classrooms chose different works to inspire their own Matisse renditions such as *The Fall of Icarus*, *Sorrows of the King*, *Goldfish*, and *The Sheaf*. You can see these works of art currently displayed in the primary classrooms. You may also see the Japanese artist Katsushika Hokusai's *The Great Wave* in our cultural or geography areas along with Chinese cherry blossoms, Chinese symbols and calligraphy.





The cultural area of a Montessori primary classroom includes geography, history, botany, zoology, science, art, foreign language and music. The study of cultural sciences at the preschool and kindergarten level encourages a child's natural curiosity and fosters a lasting interest in discovering the truth about the fascinating world around him. Through cultural studies children learn to analyze, hypothesize, critique, investigate, discover and create. They begin to explore similarities between their culture and others; and they begin to develop a global awareness, appreciation and respect for cultural differences.

At WVMS, we welcome and celebrate the cultural diversity of our student body and their families. There is so much to learn from one another! We eagerly anticipate any opportunity to learn about our friends and neighbors from other cultural backgrounds and consider our school to be enriched beyond measure by the peace, love and tolerance that we share and enjoy together.

On Monday, February 27, the kindergarten students of all three primary classrooms hosted their first Heritage Day. They worked diligently with their families to research and investigate a part of their own cultural heritage, choosing one country of origin from their family background to explore. Each kindergarten student, with the help of his/her parents and family members, wrote a report, made a poster and presented his/her finished project to peers and teachers throughout the month of February. They all did such a beautiful job! And we all learned so much about one another and even more about ourselves.

Later, the kindergarten students, together with their parents, displayed their posters and shared their heritage with the rest of the school. Thank you to those of you who came by to support our kindergartners who worked so hard. We hope you learned something new about another culture and enjoyed the sampling of traditional foods from around the world! Ciao! Adios! Auf Wiedersehen! Au revoir! Zai jian! Da svidaniya! Shalom! Until we meet again...



ELEMENTARY PROGRAM (Ages 6 – 12 years)



Lower Elementary students began work on their annual play production in early February. This year's play "Snow White and the Seven Kachus" is a hilarious story of Snow White presented in a humorous style. Students love learning how to put an entire set together from brainstorming to painting the background together. They enjoy learning the timing and the lines of each actor and of course donning their costumes. Lessons of practicing patience, working collaboratively, public speaking while having fun ingrained throughout.

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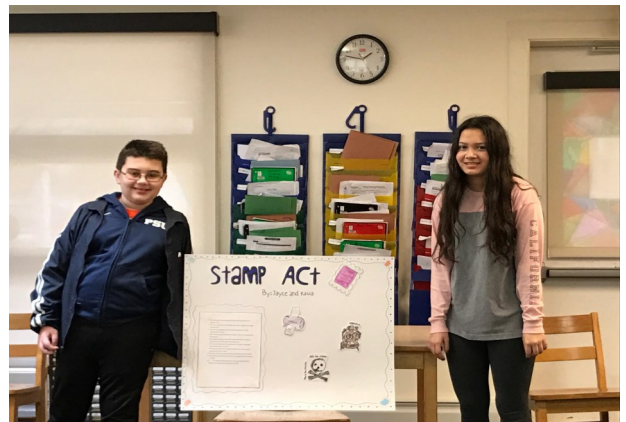
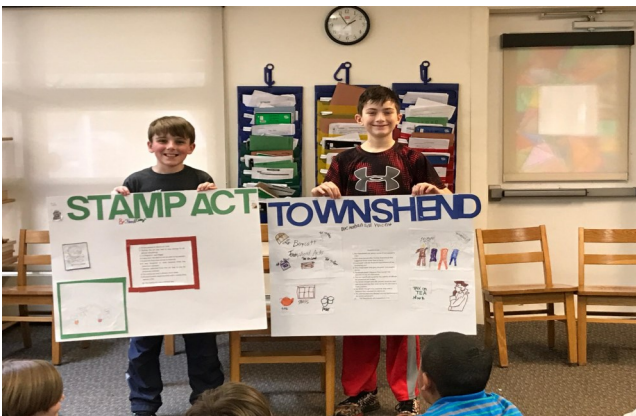
American History Study in Upper Elementary

The Upper Elementary students have been studying Colonial America this school year. The students began their studies by exploring the search for freedom in America. Students learned about religious, economic and political freedoms that many in England were trying to find in the New World.



All the students in the Upper El classroom received lessons and completed projects on the Jamestown Settlement, Plymouth Settlement and The Massachusetts Bay Colony (Puritans). Each student completed a PowerPoint or a report about a key person during this time. Some of the key persons included Anne Bradstreet, Benjamin Franklin, John Smith, John Winthrop, George Washington, Jonathan Edwards, William Penn and many more. The students presented their PowerPoints and/or reports to their peers in the Media Center using the Smartboard.

The students have also studied the colonization of The New World and learned about the history and creation of the original 13 colonies. Each student created a poster representing one of the colonies. This allowed the students to see how the colonists began to spread out to all of the colonies from the original settlements.

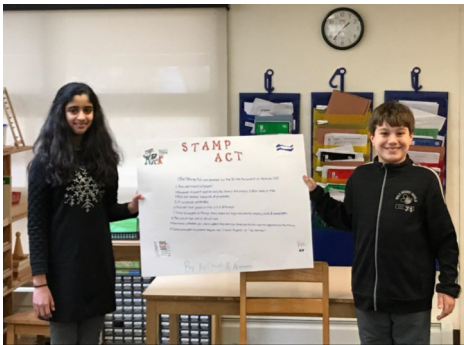


ELEMENTARY PROGRAM (Ages 6 - 12 years old)



The French and Indian War has also been a topic during this year's history studies. The Upper El students have just completed a large project on some of the taxes that were implemented by the British after the war. Some of the acts that the students studied were the Sugar Act, Currency Act, Stamp Act, Quartering Act and Townshend Act. Each student worked with their partner to create a poster on their research of their chosen act. This allowed the students to discover the feelings of anger at this time by the colonists

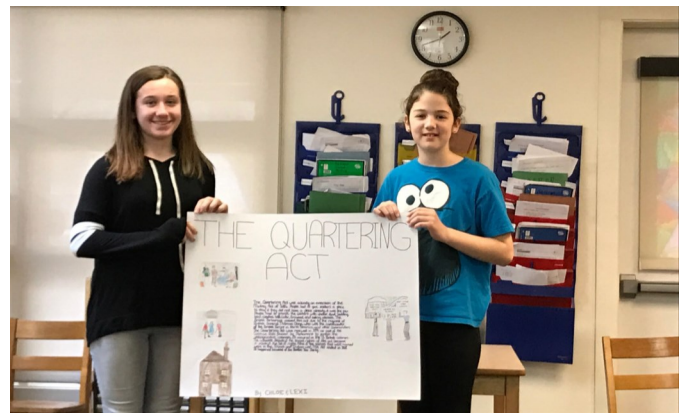
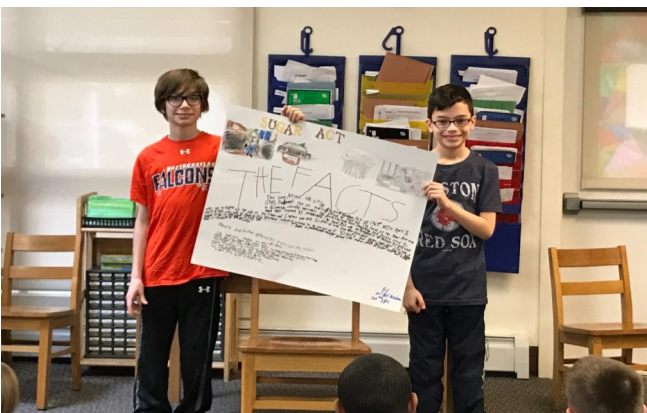
because of all the taxes being enforced by the British government. The students spent an afternoon presenting their posters and Acts to their peers.



All of these studies are leading to our study of the American Revolution. The students are currently learning about the Boston Massacre and how this was a pivotal point in the beginning of the revolution against the British. The students have been exploring propaganda and bias based on their reading and account of the Boston Massacre.

In the coming weeks students will explore and study the leaders of the Revolutionary War from Samuel Adams to John Hancock. They will also receive lessons on the Tea Act, Boston Tea Party, and Intolerable Acts, etc.

We will conclude our study this year with the Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution. All of these lessons will come together with a 3-day, 2-night field trip to Boston, Massachusetts in May to explore many of the places and events that we have studied throughout the year. The students will be able to see exactly where many of the events they have studied took place. This study will also continue into next year with a focus on after the revolution and the growth of our nation.



Did You Know? Famous Montessorians

Alexander Graham Bell founded two of the first Montessori schools in the U.S. and Canada.

Thomas Edison founded a Montessori school in the U.S.

Jean Piaget, noted psychologist, was head of the Swiss Montessori Society.

Woodrow Wilson created a Montessori classroom for his daughter in the White House.

Famous Montessori Alumni



Joshua Bell, violinist

Jeff Bezos, founder & CEO of Amazon.com

T. Berry Brazelton, noted pediatrician

Sergey Brin & Larry Page, founders of Google

Julia Child, celebrity chef and author

George Clooney, actor, director and producer

Sean “P. Diddy” Combs, rapper, producer and entrepreneur

Anthony Doerr, author and finalist for the National Book Award for Fiction

Peter Drucker, management guru

Anne Frank, WWII diarist

Helen Keller, political activist, author and lecturer

Beyonce Knowles, singer, songwriter, fashion designer and

16-time Grammy award-winner

Katherine Graham, past owner and editor, Washington Post

Anne Hathaway, Academy Award-winning actress

Helen Hunt, Academy Award-winning actress, film director, and screen writer

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Nobel Prize winner for Literature

HM Queen Noor of Jordan, U.N. Advisor, humanitarian activist, memoirist

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, former First Lady and book editor

Devi Sridhar, youngest-ever American Rhodes Scholar

Prince Harry of Wales

Prince William of Wales

Will Wright, video game pioneer, creator of the Sims



Montessori parents: Prince William and Duchess Kate of Cambridge; Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia; former President Bill Clinton and former US Secretary of State

Hillary Rodham Clinton; Willie Nelson; Steve Tyler; and Yo-Yo Ma

Montessori advocates: Erik Erikson, Sigmund Freud, Buckminster Fuller, Mahatma Gandhi, the Dalai Lama, Fred Rogers, Bertrand Russell, Leo Tolstoy and Alice Waters

IMPORTANT DATES at WVMS



Re-Enrollment Contracts Due

Re-enrollment contracts along with a 5% non-refundable deposit will be due March 15, 2017. Immediately following this deadline, WVMS will enter into an open enrollment period and will offer contracts to new students based on the remaining availability. Nearly all programs are projected to be at or near capacity next term. As such, during Open Enrollment, contracts returned with required deposits will be accepted in order of receipt regardless of a family's status as new or returning.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Conferences will be held on Thursday and Friday, March 23-24. There will be early dismissals on both days. Toddler and Primary students will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m. Elementary students will be dismissed at 11:45 a.m. Afternoon child care for students will be available from dismissal until 5:30 p.m. on both days. Space in the group is limited to children with advance reservations. Child care staff cannot admit walk-ins. Please call the office as soon as possible to make reservations for afternoon child care on the conference days. Your child may go to afternoon child care during your conference time at no charge. Remember you must still reserve in advance.

Spring Gala Update

Our Spring Gala is quickly approaching on Friday, March 31, 2017. We'll chat, dine and dance the night away while raising money for the scholarship/financial assistance program. Wyoming Valley Montessori School is truly priceless! However this environment does come at a price. Attending the 2017 Spring Gala is a great way to show your support and help ensure each child is given the opportunity to experience a Montessori education. The evening will feature a number of fabulous items including a week-long stay in sunny Florida. The walls of the Grand Ball Room at The Woodlands will serve as the backdrop for some familiar faces that you are sure to take home with you. Hope to see you there!

WVMS Green House UPDATE

Spring is around the corner and it is time to start growing seeds in the Wyoming Valley Montessori Greenhouse. We are excited to announce money has been donated by the Wilkes Barre Chamber to buy a heater for our greenhouse. This will allow us to grow more plants throughout the year. We are extending an open invitation to all parents who would like to get involved in our greenhouse project. The greenhouse is part of the Children Feeding Children Project to fight local hunger. The seeds grown in our greenhouse are used in our school garden and donated to other community gardens to grow produce for the Al Beech West Side Food Panty. This year we hope to expand the garden and build on a farm-to-table concept. Students will sell seedlings as a fundraiser for our school. Please look for a short survey in backpack mail and complete to show what plants you would be interested in purchasing for your home garden. Together we are building a stronger and healthier community.