

Let it Snow! Let it Snow!

The News Digest

Update: Capital Campaign

We are finishing the appeal to individuals and beginning the grant applications. If you have skills and can help research or pursue grants, please let JaNele Jordan or Donna Coffin know.

Return Your Raffle Tickets!

If you have not already returned your unsold raffle tickets, please do so. We are required by law to keep track of all raffle tickets.

- Page 1 *Cross-Country Ski Day: Watch for New Date*
- Page 1 If you haven't done it yet, *Return Your Raffle Tickets!*
- Page 1 More fundraising info in *Update: Capital Campaign*
- Page 2 Ms. Powell tells about *Writing with Patterns*.
- Page 2 *LaReta Roder Presents Life in the 1780s* for the Upper Elementary class.
- Page 2 *Off We Go!* The Intermediate Elementary will be visiting the Cranbrook Institute of Science.
- Page 2 We have news about the building in *Update: Property*.
- Page 2 Mrs. Morse has an article about *Empowerment of Students*.
- Page 3 The PHS class is *Fighting the Persian Wars*. Check it out.
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- Page 4 Mrs. Finkelstein has another *Auction Update* for you.

Update: Property

There was a one-week delay in completing the Phase-I, but the environmental engineer has issued a preliminary report that there was nothing out of the ordinary. The engineers will be pursuing a follow-up grant for a Phase-II.

Parents, you should be assured that acceptable levels of potential contaminants is regulated by the State of Michigan. It is not an option. If the property meets the requirements, we will be allowed to operate a school. If the property does not meet the requirements, the contaminant would need to be removed or abated before a Certificate of Occupancy would be issued.

Empowerment of Students

We want to be sure that parents and students understand that empowering a student to confront an antagonist is for his/her personal development. However, it is only one piece of the protocol, and responsibility for effecting change of inappropriate behaviors or situations belongs to the teacher and/or administration.

Depending on the issue and its longevity, follow-up will involve a discussion with the student, parent, teacher and/or staff as a whole. It may also involve a consultation with a psychologist, either at the parent's recommendation or with one of the school's consultants. Updates occur at weekly Faculty Meetings.

Parents, if you ever have a question or concern about an incident at school, please do not hesitate to give Kiyo a call. We maintain very close supervision, but we cannot notice everything, and we cannot correct a situation if we are unaware of it. The sooner an inappropriate situation is addressed, the higher the likelihood of a quick and successful correction. We will appreciate that call. Thanks!

Let it Snow! Let it Snow!

Upcoming Events ...

THURS, Jan 28
1:45 pm, Swim Departure

Deadline: Fridays, one week prior to Thursday publication dates.

Email articles to:
jroder@steppingstoneschool.org

cc:
therbst@steppingstoneschool.org



Thank you, LaReta Roder (alum parent) for Upper Elementary Early American Social Studies Workshop

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Cross-Country Ski Day: Watch for New Date

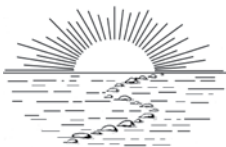
The Cross-Country Ski Day was canceled due to lack of snow. Stay tuned and watch future newsletters for an alternate date. Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

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Steppingstone is an independent, state-approved 501(c) (3) non-profit elementary school (K-8) for gifted students. Steppingstone does not discriminate based on race, color, creed, gender, religion, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of any school policy or program.

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Writing with Patterns

Ms. Powell, Early Elementary

Learning to write poetry with patterns is engaging. Stories and songs with patterns of rhythm, rhyme, and repetition encourage participation and make poetry writing fun. Singing "The Itsy Bitsy Spider" and reciting "Hickory Dickory Dock" are first presented in the classroom, then students write their own adaptations. Next, students will learn to incorporate poetic language in their original pieces. Using personification, students will give life to non-living things. Finally, a favorite of all young writers is the use of onomatopoeia to bring the action to poems alive with words like "bim, bam, crash."

To help your child prepare for this exciting poetry lesson, help them to create a list of their memories, favorite stories, or brainstorm new words and phrases that create vivid images. No matter what you do, children will have fun in poetry "Writing with Patterns."

LaReta Roder Presents Life in the 1780s

Mrs. Hoff, Upper Elementary

What do voyageurs, betty lamps, court-ing candles, and snuff boxes have in common? They all were part of life in the colonies and unclaimed territories during the 1780's. While the colonies were writing the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, the French voyageurs were heavily involved in trade in the Great Lakes area.

Last Friday, Upper Elementary students had the opportunity to enjoy a presentation by Mrs. LaReta Roder, Jason's mother, about American life in the 1780s. Students participated in a game called "What is this?" as they viewed reproductions of everyday items from the 1780's. Mrs. Roder also explained how sayings such as "Looking for a needle in a haystack" and "Sleep tight, don't let the bed bugs bite" came into existence. Students learned what a pocket is, as referred to in the child's nursery rhyme: "Lucy Lockett lost her pocket. Kitty Fisher found it." Patriotic songs of the period were enjoyed, and reproductions of voyageur clothing and trade items were also shared.

It is important that history not be taught in a vacuum, and Mrs. Roder helped it come alive! Students learned that while life was different in the 21st century, many similarities still remain.

Off We Go!

Ms. Schultz, Intermediate Elementary

As a part of our Native American studies, our students will have the opportunity to experience the Cranbrook Institute of Science Museum. While there, students will have the privilege of experiencing two hands-on activities to bring history to life and thereby help them discover how Native Americans interacted with the natural world to meet their daily needs.

The first presentation will cover the history of the First Americans. Students will investigate the contrast between Southwest and Northwest Coastal tribal groups, the saga of the Plains tribes and their clashes with the expanding United States, and the famous African-American "buffalo soldiers."

The second presentation allows the children to explore the world of the eighteenth century French fur trader and his Native American counterpart in the Great Lakes. This program takes place in an authentic Great Lakes wigwam and mixes hands-on experiences with tools and fur pelts to reveal the delicate interplay between two very different cultures.

I am excited to share this preview with you and cannot wait for our adventure to begin!

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Fighting the Persian Wars

Last week in Social Studies, the PHS class studied the Persian Wars. For the activity, they also learned a little about Greek drama and listened to a sample of the chorus, usually 15 men who commented on the action in the play. They then wrote their own poems that included chorus lines and a messenger who talked about four different battles. Here are the poems (proclaimed to be "Greciantastic" by the students!):

The Battle of Thermopylae

by Evan Houdek, Pranav Gopalakrishnan, and Spencer Lacy (who was visiting)

Chorus

Dead is our king Darius
His son Xerxes is nefarious
A bridge built at his command
To go invade the Grecian land

Messenger

On the pass we met the Greeks
Among them was a traitor.
He showed us another way around
Leonidas was killed along with his army.

Chorus

The rocks were all stained blood red
And all 300 Spartans dead
The bridge fell down, the Persians stopped them,
And that was the end of the battle way back when.

The Battle of Marathon

by Milan Shah, Jamal Nichols, and Leighton Gaines

Chorus

The beaches of mud
All flooded with blood
No help to arrive
Closed off on all sides
Here the runner speaks for the dead

Messenger

All of them slain in their deathbeds,
Miltiades led the attack
Forcing the Persians to fall back,
On the excursions

Chorus

All but a failed Persian
Can all live in peace
The persons now dead, they lay deceased.

The Ionian Revolt

by Mohit Bansil, Joey Varns, and Mollie Litt

Chorus

The Ionians began to revolt
They rode on horses and colts
They came and they went
They paid and they spent

Messenger

Messenger I am
From Miletus I come
Darius attacked
And Athens is dead

Chorus

This town is now lonely
And totally "bone"ly
Nobody around
It isn't a pleasant town

The Battle of Salamis

by Melissa Wood, Jacob Kahn, and Sabrina Brogniart (also visiting!)

Messenger

When Athens heard about Thermopylae
They decided in horror that they must flee
Athenians sailed for the island in a hurry
The army they brought along was in a state of worry
Xerxes and the Persians came to Athens

Chorus

Meanwhile the Athenians were hiding in the channels of the sea
Where they set a trap to end the Persians painfully
When the Persians followed the Greek summons
They were met by the Greek fathers and sons
The Greek fleet was outnumbered ten to one
But in the end it was their brain power that was why they won.

Cast List: The Sound of Music

Cast:

Maria: Korina Deming
Captain: Evan Houdek
Baroness: Allison Epshteyn
Uncle Max: Jacob Kahn
Mother Abbess: Mollie Litt

Liesel: Taylor Seaman
Friedrich: Noah Finkelstein
Louisa: Emily Finkelstein
Kurt: Danny Mondrusov
Brigitta: Alaina Lurie
Marta: Natalie Corrigan
Gretl: Brittany Butler

Sister Berthe: Olivia Deming
Sister Sophia: Heather Gilmore
Sister Margaretta: Melissa Wood
Sister Catherine: Lea Baker

Nazis: Pranav Gopalakrishnan, Milan Shah, Joey Varns
Butler: Jamal Nichols

Puppets:

Goatherd: Filip Jevtic
Prince: Ian Gilmore
Men w/ a Load to Tote: Jake Lampi, Garrett Kucharski, Alex Dekker
Men Drinking Beer: Diego Collazo, Thomas Robbins, Ryan Learned
Girl in pale pink coat: Katarina Jevtic
Mama: Savitri Anantharaman
Baby goat: Melissa Corrigan

Chorus (plus all Cast and Puppets when applicable):

Dylan Allen, Natasha Asmi, David Mondrusov, William Lock
Isabel Collazo, Noel Dyde, Michael Robbins, Maya Sheth, Sydney Warner
Jessica Kahn, Ann Thomas
Leighton Gaines, George Elias, Mohit Bansil

Chorus:

"My Favorite Things"
"DO-RE-MI"
"Lonely Goatherd"
"So Long, Farewell"
"Edelweiss"
"Climb Ev'ry Mountain"

Tech Crew:

Leighton Gaines, George Elias, Mohit Bansil



Pre-Auction Party Coming Up

Do I hear \$50...\$50 dollars? How about \$100? Anyone have \$100 dollars?

Attention, parents! The Student Pre-auction Party is coming up on Thursday, March 4, and we are in need of your help.

Auction items are needed. On this special day, students are given the opportunity to apply their economic skills to real life applications such as wants vs. needs, supply vs. demand, and cost vs. total. If you are able, please donate any gently used or new items for the students to bid on. Please send the item(s) to the office and tell Sandy or Donna that they are for the Student Pre-auction Party.

Food is also needed and is typically provided for the students during this event. If you are able to donate, please send a note with your name and the name of the food item to Janelle Schultz. Examples of great snack foods are cheese and cracker or vegetable trays, hummus and pita/chips, or fruit dishes. Healthy snacks are appreciated by students – and staff! – to keep brains active and tummies full!

Auction Update

If you have not yet bought your tickets for the auction, please don't forget that today and tomorrow are the last two days where you can receive your "early bird" discount. All you need to do to order your tickets is to call the Steppingstone office at (248) 539-1666. It's that simple. Starting next week, the ticket price will increase by five dollars.

Also, today your child brought home a form for you to place your tribute to him/her in our special Auction Keepsake Catalog. All who attend the auction receive a Keepsake Catalog. This is something your children will look at for years to come. Don't forget, all the children compete to have their original art put on the front cover of the Keepsake Catalog and the two runners-up also have their artwork placed on the inside cover. So, the children are invested in the Catalog and what better way to honor them and show your love for them than to put a personal tribute that they can keep for years to come? It's simple and inexpensive. Please take a few minutes just to look over the form.



Created by Sydney Warner, age 8

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Assistant Head	Thomas Herbst
Admissions Director	Donna Coffin
Special Programs Director, & Office Manager	Oliver Thompson
Business and Facilities Manager	Sandra Blay

STAFF

General Assistant, IT Specialist	Jason Roder
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FACULTY

Early Elementary	Carol Powell
Intermediate Elementary	Janelle Schultz
Upper Elementary	Linda Hoff
Pre High School, Faculty Chair	Keiko Morse

AIMS/TSC Representative

Carol Powell

INSTRUCTORS

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Japanese	Mieko West
Spanish	Ana Maria Gonzalez

Mandarin Chinese

Hong Lin

Computer

Dr. Reef Morse

Extended Day

Mary Gage

Fencing

Jerzy Radz

Performing Arts

Oliver Thompson

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