

Field Day and Potluck Tomorrow

The News Digest

We have another **Auction Update** from Monica Finkelstein Page 1

If you use the Farmington bus system, you need to check out the
Bus News to see what days you need an alternate route Page 1

We have an item for our **Wish List**. Page 1

Ms. Hoff gets ready to teach the Constitution **We the People**. Page 2

Recycling Help Needed! Please let us know if you can drop off for us Page 2

Enjoy the end of the summer, and help out the school, with the
Ice Cream Fundraiser Page 2

Ms. Powell talks about teaching about the states in **Crossing
the United States** Page 2

Wondering why we don't advance overall grades? Kiyu explains
How We Place for Grade and Classroom Page 2

Ms. Morse wants to know ... **Who is Your Hero?** Page 2

We need a **SPARC Field Trip Coordinator**, how about you? Page 2

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Research Already? Page 3

Fencing Started Tuesday, and they've already picked a captain Page 3

Please remember to leave space for **First-in-Line @ Dismissal**. Page 3

Dr. Morse gives us a **Computer Class Overview**, including
the software used (you can get a free copy for home!) Page 3

Steppingstone 2008-2009 Parent Directory

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Douglas Corrigan
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Holden M. Dwyer (248) 347-6327
Joseph Dwyer
Kendel Dwyer

David Mondrusov (248) 615-3855
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Sara G. Velasco (248) 960-8035
Paul C. Velasco
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Intermediate Elementary: Janelle Schultz

Isabel M. Collazo (248) 478-0763
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Natalie K. Corrigan (734) 495-9459
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Garrett J. Kucharski (248) 777-0089
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Wendy Mayer

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Jacob J. Lampi (248) 960-1488
Kevin J. Lampi
Jenifer H. Lampi

Michael W. Robbins (810) 225-9319
John Robbins
Jacqueline Robbins

Maya Sheth (248) 497-7403
Apur Sheth
Susan Sheth

Sydney A. Warner (248) 547-1621
Craig Warner
Lori Warner

Upper Elementary: Linda Hoff

Lea N. Baker (248) 258-9770
Marc Baker
Catherine-Nenita Baker

Diego E. Collazo (248) 478-0763
Luis Collazo
Doris Collazo

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Thomas Joseph Collins
Cindy Marie Collins

Alexander P. Dekker (248) 414-9481
Cathy Dekker

Emily A. Finkelstein (248) 542-1766
Meir Finkelstein
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Paul A. Gilmore
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Jessica A. Kahn (248) 788-0663
Anthony Kahn
Sherelyn Kahn

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Reji Thomas
Anu R. Thomas

PHS: Keiko Morse

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Thomas Joseph Collins
Cindy Marie Collins

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Eric Epshteyn
Aleksandra Epshteyn

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David William Gaines
Vicki Lee Gaines

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Bhagavathi Kalyani

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Richard Houdek
Nancy Warkentin-Houdek

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Anthony Kahn
Sherelyn Kahn

Mollie R. Litt (248) 489-8179
Elanor L. Litt

Milan S. Shah
Sanjiv Shah
Cindy Shah

Joseph M. Varns (248) 615-0285
Michael Varns
Kari Varns

Melissa Wood (248) 848-1362
Scott Wood
Demet Wood

Field Day and Potluck Tomorrow

Upcoming Events ...

FRI, September 11
9 am, Field Day
6 pm, Welcome Back Potluck

MON - FRI, September 14 - 18
Kite Week

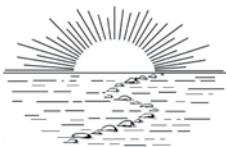
WED, September 16
9 am, Steppingstone Seminar and Tour for visitors

FRI, September 18
4 - 6 pm, SPARC Family Fun Movie Night

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

Email articles to:
jroder@steppingstoneschool.org

cc:
therbst@steppingstoneschool.org



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.

28555 Middlebelt Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
Phone: 248.539.1666
Fax: 248.539.1929
www.steppingstoneschool.org



Getting to know you in Drama class



Auction Update from Monica Finkelstein

Thanks to all of you who have signed up as volunteers since our last newsletter. I truly believe we will have a tremendous evening because we have so many dedicated parents willing to make it so. Something I had not mentioned in the last newsletter was that Dr. Ellen Fiedler will be our keynote speaker.

President of the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education and a nationally recognized speaker, Dr. Fiedler will talk about nurturing the "whole gifted child." She will focus on how parents can cultivate a gifted child's intellect while fostering his or her physical, emotional, and social well being. Her talk promises to be engaging and informative for all Steppingstone parents, so please don't forget to purchase your tickets soon.

You can contact Sandy Blay at (248) 539-1666 or write a note in your child's planner requesting a ticket order form. Remember, for only four payments of \$16.25, you can make a difference in the life of your son or daughter at Steppingstone. How many of us spend more than this per month at Starbucks?

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Bus News

There will be NO bus transportation for Steppingstone students on the following dates:

- Nov. 3
- Nov. 25
- Dec. 4
- Feb. 18
- Mar. 19

Please make alternate arrangements for these dates.

Wish List

Coupons for Michael's for the Art Teacher, Mary Gage, to purchase at least cost. Like the rest of us, she is practicing frugality in anticipation of purchasing our own property for next fall.



We the People...

By Linda Hoff, Upper Elementary

Many years ago, our Founding Fathers found it necessary to establish a set of rules that would guide our country. These rules became known as the United States Constitution. The Constitution also includes the Bill of Rights, which guarantees its citizens certain, specific rights.

This year the Upper Elementary will explore the Constitution and Bill of Rights; why, when, and where they were written and who was involved. We will begin through various literature connections and by establishing a set of classroom rules and procedures. As the year progresses, students will respond to text selections through discussion groups, vocabulary activities, and writing prompts, all of which will assist the student with the analysis of historical data.

Frequently, students will be asked to explore current internet or newspaper articles that bring the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights to life. Research indicates that integrating subject matter with the student's everyday world facilitates the retention of information. This approach makes learning more meaningful and interesting.

Recycling Help Needed!

We need volunteers to pick up our paper and plastic recycling bins once a week. If you can donate your time, please notify Ms. Schultz by note or e-mail at: jschultz@steppingstoneschool.org

Thank you in advance!

Ice Cream Fundraiser

Steppingstone will be holding a weekly ice cream fundraiser on the last school day of each week, for as long as the weather holds out. The ice cream will be sold for \$2 each.

The ice cream will be sold from a Carvel ice cream cart out in the parking lot, so that it doesn't interfere with student pick-up. Please do not leave your car in the circular drive to purchase ice cream after 3:55 pm.

Crossing the United States

in Ms. Powell's Early Elementary

Next week in social studies, students will begin a regional study of the United States that will continue throughout the school year. Our travels will begin on the Atlantic Coast, as we study the Northeastern states of Maine and New Hampshire. Each week two new states will be introduced from the Southern, Western, and Midwestern regions – until we reach Michigan!

Students will learn what makes each state unique: symbol, natural and historical landmarks, geography, nicknames, culture, language, and, of course, foods. Once we arrive in Michigan, we will research the history of our own state.

Parents, to help prepare for our trip, "From Sea to Shining Sea," look at a US map and point out states that your family has visited. Fasten your seat belts and prepare to "Cross the United States!"

How We Place for Grade and Classroom

Grade placements are generally made dependent on a student's age on September 1 of any school year. This is used at Steppingstone for tracking purposes only. Students are not placed in instructional groups based on grade.

Classrooms are assigned based on the personal development of the student rather than the academic expertise. A Second Grade student who is ready for Fourth Grade instruction in math and spelling would ordinarily still be best placed in the Intermediate Classroom (mostly First and Second Grades) and not the Upper Classroom (mostly Third and Fourth Grades). This practice ensures that a young student is not expected to be more responsible or carry a heavier load of work to complete at-home than is developmentally appropriate; it also ensures a closer social development match.

Who is Your Hero?

in Ms. Morse's Pre High School

If you ask someone, "Who is your hero?" s/he may have a hard time answering—especially if it is a child. Many students do not know what, exactly, a hero is. We often think of heroes as those who do impossibly amazing acts such as saving the world from plague or an amazing athlete. However, we always seem to be let down by the antics of these athletes or the weaknesses of the super heroes. A hero is often hard to find in this day and age.

This will be the topic of the PHS class' literature discussions. Students will be examining what it means to be a hero by reading about the different types of heroes that can be found in real life—those who don't do amazing things like save the world but are heroes of the moment. They are not perfect all the time, and they may have made mistakes (and will continue to make mistakes), but in crisis, they rise to the challenge.

This is your warning to be prepared for that time when your child comes home with his/her At Home assignment and asks, "Who is your hero?" Children need to know who their parents admire and why so that they can also look for those qualities in their friends and the adults in their lives. Having a hero helps you to aspire to do greater things and to learn lessons through others that might be hard to learn on our own.

Therefore, parents, your homework is to answer the question: Who is your hero?

SPARC Field Trip Coordinator

If you have ideas for field trips or workshops that would be related to this year's studies, please let your child's teacher and Sherry Kahn know. Sherry has volunteered to coordinate field trips for teachers this year. Just send a memo in your child's planner or call the office.



Research Already???

from Ms. Schultz in the Intermediate Elementary

It is hard to believe, but the Intermediate Elementary classroom is preparing to write a research report. We are going to get a head start on the research writing foundation skills that need to be ready for our Social Studies Expo. Although the Social Studies Expo is weeks and weeks away, for the students to be comfortable and successful, we found it necessary to prepare and teach the fundamental skills for research writing early in the year.

This week in writing, we will be choosing our research topics. But, before the students can really get this piece of writing underway, they will need to do some heavy research. What will be extremely important at this stage is to provide your child with as many resources as possible by taking trips to your local library, monitoring Internet searches, and even sifting through your personal library at home to help transition your child smoothly into the writing process.

Now, research writing can be a really tough process but when supplied with adequate resources and support, it will be one of the easiest papers to produce...and, just possibly, one of the most fun!

Happy hunting!

Fencing Started Tuesday

First Captain, Leighton Gaines

Coach Jerzy Radz measured the PHS students for their fencing kits last Tuesday. Parents, if you have not already paid for them (\$150.00), you can send your check to Sandy Blay, Business Manager, or wait for the first billing of the school year. If you find that this is a financial hardship, please contact Ms. Blay.

In addition to being measured, students were given an introduction and orientation to this sport and were asked to elect a captain based on responsibility, respect, and punctuality. The honors went to Leighton Gaines. Congratulations, Captain!

First-in-Line @ Dismissal

Remember that the position of First-in-Line in the circular drive at dismissal goes to Celina Yamamoto and her car-pool drivers. Her parents bought this privilege at the auction, but it will be up for grabs again on March 20, 2010, at our 17th Annual Benefit Auction.

Please leave space for their car at the head of the line, and if you would like a chance for that auction item next spring, buy your tickets now!

Computer Class Overview

from Dr. Morse

All Steppingstone students meet for approximately one hour each week for formal computer training. Once they have received the week's lesson, they may use what they have learned on the computers in the various classrooms to practice. The focus of the computer classes is to provide students with the tools they will need in the future for critical thinking, problem solving, and programming. It is anticipated that students will want to use the class software at home. All software is free; access sites are provided below.

Early Elementary uses Scratch; it is available at www.scratch.mit.edu

Intermediate Elementary uses Alice; it is available at www.alice.org

Upper Elementary uses Python; it is available at www.python.org

Pre High School uses Blender; it is available at www.blender.org

ADMINISTRATION

Head of School	Kiyo Morse
Assistant Head	Thomas Herbst
Admissions Director	Donna Coffin
Special Programs Director, & Office Manager	Donna Coffin
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

INSTRUCTORS

Art	Mary Gage
Japanese	Mieko West
Spanish	Ana Maria Gonzalez
Mandarin Chinese	Hong Lin
Computer Tech	Dr. Reef Morse
Extended Day	Mary Gage
Fencing	Jerzy Radz
Drama	Kathy Nellett

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Vice President	Tom Collins
Secretary	Susan Sheth
Treasurer	Sherry Kahn

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