

Garden School News

April 11, 2008

Volume 7 Issue 11

Headmaster's Column

One section of almost every self-evaluation instrument involves the idea of a school as a community which may be defined in many ways..

Schools are made up of a community of learners, of teachers, of parents, of staff, of grandparents and of alumni. Each segment of a school community works in different areas of school life; however, the one constant, the connective ligature among all the diverse element of a school is the mission, i.e. the guiding principle that all parts of the school work towards the same end, which is the good of the school.

As communities, schools develop a very particular culture that reflects the interests, the viewpoints, the philosophy of its founding and on-going role within the educational community.

That role may be slightly modified over time, as the institution responds to changes in educational practice and technological development. However, the mission of the school and the commitment of those who work, serve, and support all have to be toward the singular end that the more we do for the school, the more it can do for its children. While we may disagree about certain practices and techniques, the independent school community always treasures its role as the caretaker of a precious, valuable and, at times, vulnerable community. Through the good will and hard work of generations, the community of the school remains strong.

Poetry

April is National Poetry Month and classes in grades K-12 have been reading poetry and writing their own poetry. Your child has the chance to select one of the poems he/she has been working on in class or to write a new poem for submission to the *Pine Tree Poetry 2008 Collection* for the chance to have their poem published. The *Pine Tree Poetry 2008 Collection* is a collection of student poetry, from students in grades K-12 from across the country. There are no limitations in regards to subject, style or length. Your child should submit their poem to Miss Sarran in the library with his/her full name, home address (for mailing permission slips), school name, grade and teacher's name. The deadline for submission in May 10th. If you have any questions feel free to contact Miss Sarran or visit their website at www.pinetreepoetry.com. This is the perfect way for your child to receive recognition for writing accomplishments.

Dates to Remember

Monday, April 14
Faculty Development Day
School Closed

Thurs.—Sat. April 17-19
PTA Book Fair

Monday & Tuesday
April 21 & 22
School Closed

We are pleased to invite you to join us for Garden School's General Assembly
Thursday, April 17, 2008
@ 7:00 pm
in the Gymnasium

Nantucket

Mr. Pigman, Mr. Chung, Ms. Smith and Ms. Yu along with 38 Upper Division students embarked on an adventure through New England during Spring Break.

Their journey began as the bus left Jackson Heights for Newport, Rhode Island. These active travelers went on a twelve mile hike along Newport's famous Cliff Walk. The sights were amazing as each mansion was more impressive than the last.

Finally, after taking a ferry from Hyannis, Massachusetts, the excited students arrived at the Brass Lantern Inn, Nantucket. They were able to explore the island on bicycles for two full days. Each biker enjoyed riding new

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Lower Division Highlights

In Reading, second graders did an excellent job creating their own "Roxaboxen", an imaginary place with its own set of rules. They did this by writing a summary of their imaginary place as well as presenting intricate and creative dioramas. Students drew inspiration from the story *Roxaboxen*, a short story by Alice McLerran from the reader. They eagerly anticipate starting *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, a retold chapter version from the Mark Twain classic.

This month, second graders are in the midst of presenting their book reports on Chinese culture. Selected works range from Chinese folktales to non-fiction. Students are "teaching the class" with their own creative approach to lesson plans that include visual aids, posters, and handouts. Ms. Macy and Ms. Sarran are also reading aloud selected stories from Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories* such as "How the Camel got His Hump." Next week, students will start working on their own "Just So Story."



After completing a unit focusing on the Middle Ages in social studies, the sixth grade had the opportunity to bring the concepts they learned to life on a trip to the Cloisters in Manhattan. This unit and trip set the stage for the students' spring break project of constructing their own cathedrals, burghers, manors, exploration routes

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Lower Division Highlights Cont..

and castles, using their new ideas and their own creativity. The projects were a tremendous success and can be viewed on the top floor of the Lower Division for the next couple of weeks. Aside from being aesthetically pleasing, these projects are sufficiently researched and accompanied by biographical information.



In order to increase understanding of historical events, the fourth, fifth and sixth graders have read historical fiction novels. Patricia MacLachlan's *Sarah, Plain and Tall*, set in the early 1900s in the Middle West is being read by the fourth graders. *In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson* discusses United States immigration. Upon completion of Bette Bao Lord's novel, the fifth graders researched their families' roots and traced their immigration patterns. Sixth graders are discussed World War II while they read *The Cay*, by Theodore Taylor. This novel also extended the lower division's island theme.

Report Cards were distributed on Thursday, April 10th.....

Please be sure to sign and return to your child's homeroom teacher no later than Tuesday, April 15th, 2008



Nantucket... Continued Book Talk - Mr. Vogel Recommends

trails involving different terrains. Breaks from biking included lunch at the beach and an energetic game of beach touch football.

Students left the trip with new friendships, memories and for one.... a new skill..... how to ride a bike.

Each looks forward to the trip next year.



Loving Frank by Nancy Horan

This novel appeals to those who appreciate Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie style architecture, as this traces years of building and furnishing his famous Taliesin, in Illinois. It also chronicles a portion of his life, the love affair with Mamah Borthwick Cheney taking place in Europe, Japan and the United States. Equally as important, it touches on Mamah's involvement with women's rights and the messages proffered by the Swedish feminist Ellen Key.

While this book is a quick read, the personal struggles of characters are torturous –to dissolve marriages, to live apart from family, to be financially responsible for debts, to see life end tragically. Yet, tenderness, love of languages, purity of design, and harmony with one's self and nature prevail!

